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Foreword

Since the Bible talks more about money than any other subject, it must be important. This teaching material is devoted to this all important area of the Bible, which has such a profound effect on us. Thank God for the Word, it provides us with revelation truth concerning God's view on money. There is a lot of misinformation and misunderstanding concerning what the Christian perspective on finances should be. The goal of this study is to provide a framework of practical principles and applications to live by. Ignorance in this all important area of our life is costly. So let's go for the gold, God's highest and best for our lives, and for the furtherance of the Gospel throughout the world- blessed to be a blessing.

2 Corinthians 10:15-16

Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you.

So why is prosperity God's idea in the first place?

- An expression of the Heart of God to His creation
- Brings Glory to His Name
- Funds His Kingdom on the Earth

James 1:16-18

Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Why is prosperity such an important subject to us as Christians?

- In order to survive on earth we need to prosper in order for our human needs to be met
- To siphon money from the world's system into God's Kingdom
- Experience the joys of giving and being a partner, vessel and steward for God

Acts 20:35

In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Why does the devil fight the subject of Prosperity so much?

- The enemy does not want God's Covenant and purpose for man to be established
- The devil is covetous and it chaffs him to see God's people being blessed
- Money is power, and the devil does not want that power in the hands of God's children

We are so blessed to be living under the New Covenant where we can give and receive God's highest and best for our lives by His grace. Therefore, our giving is as the Spirit leads us rather than by the law- Galatians 5:18, *"But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law."*

I. Prosperity – The Will of God

If we want to know God’s will on any subject, let’s read His will in His Word. Suppose a lady should say, “My husband, who was very rich, has passed away; I wish I knew whether he left me anything in the will.” I would say to her, “Why don’t you read the will and find out?” The word “testament,” legally speaking, means a person’s will. The Bible contains God’s last will and testament, in which He bequeaths to us all the blessings of redemption; and since it is His “last will and testament,” anything submitted later is a forgery. A man never writes a new will after he is dead. If prosperity is in God’s will for us, then to say that prosperity is of the past or under the Old Covenant is virtually saying what is the opposite of the truth, that a will is no good after the death of the testator. Jesus is not only the testator who died, He was resurrected, and is also the mediator of the will. He is our lawyer, so to speak, and He will not beat us out of the Will, as some earthly lawyers do. He is our Representative at the right hand of God. It seems that the New Covenant, like the Old Covenant, makes God’s people rich!

Proverbs 10:22 AMP

The blessing of the Lord — it makes [truly] rich, and He adds no sorrow with it [neither does toiling increase it].

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.



If a billionaire were to appear before an audience of a thousand people, with the announcement that he was **able** to give each one a million dollars, this would be no basis for any faith for a million dollars, because faith cannot rest on ability alone. If he should go further, and say, “I will give **fifty of you** a million dollars each,” even then there is no basis for anyone in the audience to have faith for the million dollars. Were you to ask one of them if he or she were “fully assured” of receiving a million dollars from the billionaire, the answer would be, “I need the money, and hope I am among the lucky ones, but I cannot be sure.” But, should the billionaire say, “**It is my will** to give all of you a million dollars each,” then everyone in the audience would have a basis for faith- it’s a sure thing, no more guess work. Everyone would undoubtedly say to the rich man, “Thank you! I’ll take my money now.”

Since faith begins where the will of God is known and God’s Word is God’s will, it would behoove us to study the Bible, open the will and find out what is included in our inheritance in Jesus- 1 John 5:14.

A. Prosperity Under the Old Covenant

We are going to look at a few examples of financial prosperity in the lives of God’s covenant children in the Old Testament. This should provide a good comparison point for Christians today, living under the New Testament with better promises under a better Covenant. So if the Old Testament Saints had it good materially speaking under their Covenant, how much more should we expect God’s will under the New Covenant to be even better.

1. Beware of a Poverty spirit

There has been a scourge to the Body of Christ over that last few centuries concerning religious traditions of men that poverty and godliness go hand in hand. In other words, God purposely holds His children back from becoming rich in order to keep them humble. The notion espouses that to be Christ like and financially secure, are at odds with each other.

1 Timothy 6:10

For **the love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

Just like Paul's thorn in the flesh, religious folks read into this Scripture things that are not there. Money itself is not evil, it's the love of it that gets folks into trouble. The big danger of having a poverty attitude is that it makes us beggars and whiners. It also causes us to shrink back from God and faith because of an inferiority complex, condemnation and fear.

God does not mind His children being rich, He just does not want us to be covetous and seek things instead of seeking first His Kingdom. We need money to finance the Great Commission and build His Kingdom! What a tremendous witness and testimony to the world when they see God's children well taken care of.

Deuteronomy 8:18

But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who **gives you the ability to produce wealth**, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

Proverbs 13:22- A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

The generation of Job and Abraham did not know anything other than God blessing them financially. You can't sell that old lie of the devil that God brings poverty on all of us to keep us humble, to the Jewish folks, because their Bible does not say that- neither does ours. The source of that kind of teaching partly came from Zen Buddhism, through the study of Eastern religion by European people at the turn of the 19th century. That philosophy worked its way from there and started a trend of poverty vows and poverty oaths which are not in the Bible nor a part of the New Covenant, but is actually in violation of the Covenant. Then it came over into North America. Beware of this Poverty spirit of religious piety to stay humble. It's just the devil trying to steal from God's children and keep finances out of God's Kingdom. Yet on the other hand watch out for the spirit of materialism and consumerism that is pervasive in our society, that detracts from God's Kingdom priorities. Certainly the Bible condemns greed, and we will expand on that point later on.

Colossians 2:18-23 There is such a thing as false humility:

Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: "Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!"? These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their **false humility and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.**

As we will explore further down in the material, “poverty” is a curse, it is not a blessing; even common sense will tell you that. Since the Scriptures are quite explicit about God’s people enjoying abundance in their lives, to believe to the contrary is simply Biblical ignorance.

Religion- Man made Traditions – Contrary to Scripture!

So when it comes down to it, the greatest hindrance that we have standing in our way of experiencing God’s full prosperity in our lives, is getting our souls to prosper and become renewed in this area. Overcoming the lies and deception of religious ideology passed down from generation to generation. Overcoming a poverty spirit or a poverty mentality, we need to say, “I’ll never be broke another day of my life.” Now our heads will fight us on this because of the traditions of men in this area, passed down to us from one generation to another. Poverty mentality is this, “I’m not going to have enough, I’m going to run out and I don’t know where it’s going to come from.” It just boils down to faith versus fear.

Job 36:16

“He is wooing you from the jaws of distress to a **spacious place** free from restriction, to the comfort of your table laden with choice food.”

Nehemiah 9:21

For forty years you sustained them in the desert; **they lacked nothing**, their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet become swollen.

Deuteronomy 8:7-11

For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land — a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and **you will lack nothing**; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills. When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

Psalms 37:25-26

I was young and now I am old, yet **I have never seen the righteous forsaken** or their children begging bread. They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be blessed.

Psalms 35:27 NKJV

Let them shout for joy and be glad, Who favor my righteous cause; And let them say continually, “Let the Lord be magnified, **Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.**”

So if God takes pleasure in the prosperity of His children, for us to fear and worry about need is a lack of faith and that is sin- Romans 14:23, “*and everything that does not come from faith is sin.*” God is our source and He has billions of channels that He can use to get it to us if we will just believe. God’s will for us is that we never experience lack, become behind and have need. Sure experience or even present reality may dictate that we have been behind on our bills, had things repossessed, gone in foreclosure and even filed for bankruptcy. Well we have also sinned by not walking in love, and failed to obey God in other areas of life, but we repent, get up and keep pressing for the mark- forgetting what is behind. God is the God of new beginnings, new mercies and fresh starts. He is extending His hand out to us to try again, and trust Him and take Him at His Word- let’s get our mouth in line with the Word. Do our words make any difference to what happens in our life- emphatically yes!

Philippians 3:13-14

Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Lamentations 3:22-25 NKJV

Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!" The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, To the soul who seeks Him.

The Poverty Mentality Test:

Let's see how much of this poverty and scarcity thinking is in us. It's not hard for God to get money to us, we are the ones who hinder the flow of God in our lives- it's all up to what we believe. It's not according to the ability of God, but according to our faith and our vision to expect great things from God- let's get free from small thinking. What is prosperity mentality, "I'll always have more than enough!" Poverty mentality, "Bills will come up, but the money won't be there."

- 1) Do we save, keep and hold onto everything? Do we keep stuff long after it's worn out. Do we have tons of stuff that we have not used in years and years- like a pack rat. Do we struggle to turn things loose. Why do we keep all those things anyway- usually fear, just in case we need it? It's one thing to be a good steward and avoid waste, but it's another thing to be hoarding out of fear.

Proverbs 11:24-25

One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

Acts 5:1-2

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

- 2) Do we always have to clean the plate, and eat it all until there is nothing left; eating like there is no tomorrow. How about rinsing the shampoo bottle with water three times before breaking out a new one- like water in the ketchup bottle trick. That is a poverty mentality, when it's excessive. Like keeping one year of survival food, in fear of bad times; don't expect problems and lack or to fall on hard times. Now if the Lord leads us to put some money aside, fine, let's not get into fear. Do we calculate the 15% tip to the last penny- let's get beyond being stingy, narrow and limited. Do we consider God filling our cup to running over as wasteful?
- 3) Are we occasionally, frequently or always complaining about how much things cost. Commenting about the cost of living, paying taxes and complaining about paying bills. When is it ever okay to complain according to the Bible? Never! Here is a phrase I want us to eliminate from our vocabulary, please do not say it again, "We can't afford it." When we say this, we are trusting only in ourselves, well what about God, can He afford it? Saying we can't afford things teaches our kids not to trust God and builds a poverty mentality. Let's teach our children to sow and pray the prayer of agreement, and believe God for increase. Why do so many Christian parents not pray with their children for things, maybe they are afraid that little Johnny or Suzie will be disappointed- obviously we don't believe it themselves.

Philippians 2:14-16

Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life.

Mark 9:21-23

“From childhood,” he answered. “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” ““If you can?”” said Jesus. “Everything is possible for him who believes.”

- 4) Are we always trying to get it for less or for free? Do we bug the salesperson and wear them down excessively, bargain, bug, plead and dicker them down to next to nothing. It's fine if people offer us a great deal because we believed God for favor, but we should not begrudge the salesperson from making something on it. Do we have a compulsive disorder to collect coupons? Beware of asking for Christian discounts, “This is for the church, can't you give us a better deal? Well I am a Christian brother, can't you come down and help me out?” Do rich people talk like that? Do we burn a tank of gas to save five dollars by driving to the other side of town. Sometimes it can be a good witness to pay full price, be a blessing, and show people God is not broke- be led by the Spirit!
- 5) Do we not even bother to look at the highest priced items that are for sale. The mentality is that those expensive things are for somebody else. If God can't get us to see ourselves in it, He can't get it to us. Vision is so important, faith needs a target, or a goal- something specific to shoot for. The challenge is not God doing it for us, but seeing ourselves receiving it. Can we see ourselves writing those big checks for the offering? Have you ever written a \$10,000 check to the church? We will never do it until we first see ourselves doing it first. How about seeing a missionary need, and go ahead and buy it for them- we must see it first. But one may say, “But I'm on a fixed income and I can't!” Quit that cussing, just quit it! Say it out loud, “I'm rich, I'm rich!”

Hebrews 11:1 AMP

NOW FAITH is the assurance (the confirmation, the title deed) of the things [we] hope for, being the proof of things [we] do not see and the conviction of their reality [faith perceiving as real fact what is not revealed to the senses].

- 6) Are we bothered by what other people spend, have or do- does it bother us? Do we think it is wasteful for someone to spend \$10,000 dollars for a watch- “Just think what they could do on the mission field with that kind of money!” Well that sounds good to say that doesn't it? But do we know who that exactly sounds like- Judas! People who talk this way are envious and jealous hypocrites, judgmental and critical. We don't know if that was something the Lord wanted to bless them with, who are we to accuse them of being wasteful, or a bad steward. Are we giving all we can to the poor, if not, than we should keep our mouths shut. If we are giving 50% of our income to God and someone comes along not even giving 10% judges us on the nice things we have believed for- how dare them! What business is it of theirs if I have 5 vacation homes and 25 cars, I am outdoing what they are for the Kingdom of God. Remember God wants us rich, He does not want us covetous. If I sow big, should I not reap big. If God uses someone to bless me with something big, should I feel bad and apologize for it? No! We will never prosper in our life if we have issues with others prospering, and judging them- finding fault and talking about it. Why should the ungodly have all the best things in life. We should be thankful and praise God when we see our fellow Christians blessed- Lord give them more! Why, because there is also plenty for us, we are in the same blessing line!

John 12:1-8

Six days before the Passover, Jesus arrived at Bethany, where Lazarus lived, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. Here a dinner was given in Jesus' honor. Martha served, while Lazarus was among those reclining at the table with him. Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, "Why wasn't this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? **It was worth a year's wages.**" He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. "Leave her alone," Jesus replied. "[It was intended] that she should save this perfume for the day of my burial. You will always have the poor among you, but you will not always have me."

1 Timothy 6:17

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment .

Proverbs 13:22

A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

We need to work on more mind renewal with the Word of God. We need to become as comfortable to say I am rich as I am saved. Let's try that right now, say out loud, "My Father's will is that I become rich, having a full supply that just keeps running over with all kinds of good gifts, lots of money and material blessings." Now did you cringe when you said that; did your mind throw up some red flags? Now be honest! If so, than this teaching material is definitely for you, because the Bible talks more about money as a topic than anything else- it's not all on the negative side either. But some will say with a pious voice, "Well we should just be content with going to heaven and not expect much in this life; you are just pushing a 'Prosperity' Gospel." That's right, it was and still is God's idea that we prosper. Everything about "Salvation" is prosperous in nature when we examine it in the Bible. Our whole problem has been a lack of expectation and according to our lack of faith, we are likewise lacking in the financial arena. God's will is that we enjoy heaven here on earth before we get there- Matthew 6:10.

Psalms 23

The Lord is **my shepherd, I shall not be in want.** He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; **my cup overflows.** Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

I would like to bring to our remembrance, the table that the Lord has prepared for us in the midst of our enemies like: sickness, poverty, oppression, fear and the like in Psalms 23:5. The table of the Lord is full of healing, life, forgiveness, prosperity, peace, joy and so much more. Suppose in the name of trying to be humble a believer approaches this banquet table sheepishly, and apologetically; only taking a couple of scoops from the plate of forgiveness and that's it. He looks next to him and sees one of those "Full Gospel" folks, just digging in. I mean, he is taking huge helpings of everything on that salvation table, he just wants to try everything. Meanwhile, our religious brother, looks forlornly at his meager sampling. In jealousy, he begins to chide his other brother for being greedy, arrogant and selfish to presume that he can help himself to the master's table and partake of whatever and as much as he wants.

He tells him, “What, do you think this is all for your benefit? You need to show some restraint brother, first prove your loyalty to the Lord and suffer lack, sacrifice and suffer hunger and pain for the Master-who do you think you are!” Just then the Lord interrupts and says to this pious one, “Who told you to carry the burden of sin and the curse that only I could bear for humanity. Why are you shrinking back from what I have provided for your benefit and cost me everything. It is right and proper to be excited as a little child and jump in and enjoy the Salvation I have richly provided for you.”

Certainly, the Bible teaches us to be content and thankful for what we have. And I am not condoning that we raise up disciples for Christ who are only interested in themselves, who are spoiled and self-centered. What I am presenting is the truth as the Word of God presents it and trying to avoid the ditches



on both sides of the road- a poverty spirit and self-indulgence. God is glorified and pleased when His children enjoy the “good life” that He has provided for us in salvation. Just as natural parents derive immense pleasure and satisfaction when they see their children enjoying the good life provided for them. So let’s approach the table of the Lord with boldness and confidence and dig into all that God’s salvation entails; taste it all, have seconds and thirds- really don’t stop eating. No

apologies, no excuses and no denying oneself for the sake of religious piety. Also, be sure to take some to go and give it to others so they can get an appetite for the things of God, and take their place at the Table of the Lord.

Psalms 34:8-10

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

2 Corinthians 6:1-2

As God’s fellow workers we urge you **not to receive God’s grace in vain.** For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.

Hebrews 4:16 NKJV

Let us therefore **come boldly to the throne of grace,** that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Our God, “*richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment,*” according to 1 Timothy 6:17. The same God who by “*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness...*” in 2 Peter 1:3. I am convinced that many Christians when they get to heaven will realize that religion had cheated them out of so many legitimate blessings from God.

This example reminds me of the reaction of the older brother in the story of the Prodigal Son. The older son represents the faithful Christian, who serves the Lord faithfully for years. However, when he/she sees other Christians, who may be uncommitted get healed, it chaffs them. They get all bent out of shape and mad, thinking God owes them something. However, they fail to realize that the promises of God have been provided as a gift and so must be received by faith. Good works does not get us saved nor do they get us healed or prospered; only faith in God’s Word appropriates the provision of God in one’s life.

Notice how the father pleads with his older son in the story, *“everything I have is yours.”* In other words, all you had to do was ask, according to John 16:24, *“Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”* Everything the older brother wanted or needed was at his finger tips. It’s not the father’s fault if his son does not take advantage of what already belongs to him.

Luke 15:25-32

“Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on ‘Your brother has come,’ he replied, ‘and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ ‘The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, ‘Look! All these years I’ve been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!’ ‘‘My son,’ the father said, ‘you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’”

2. Examples of Old Covenant Prosperity

The Bible is divided into two divisions: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The word testament comes from a Latin word, *testamentum*. The more proper name for these two divisions however, is “covenant.” So the Bible is really the story of an Old Covenant and a New Covenant.

Now, in the Bible, the word covenant means a binding agreement between two parties. The Hebrew word for covenant is *Berith*. The Greek word is *Diatheke*. It actually means to “cut covenant.” By definition, it is an agreement to:

“Cut a covenant by the shedding of blood and walking between pieces of flesh.”

So the two divisions in the Bible are about an Old Blood Covenant and a New Blood Covenant!

Abraham

We see through Scripture that God entered into blood covenant with Abraham as a vehicle for the establishment of a nation of covenant people in preparation for the coming of the Seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15. The people of God, the nation of Israel were to be a light to the nations, and be God’s ambassadors on the earth to the Gentile world, just as the Church of Jesus Christ is today with the Gospel during this New Covenant dispensation we live in today. The matter of blood covenant is very pertinent to the subject of prosperity.

The first covenant recorded in the Bible was between God and Adam and Eve, when an animal was slain and its skin was used as a covering for them in Genesis 3:21. Job had a covenant with God, a life keeping Covenant. He was delivered from his troubles when he finally got his mind on his Covenant instead of his problems. We can’t get anything from God with self-pity which is selfishness in manifestation. God cut Covenant with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. The subject of blood covenant is huge in the Bible, without it, there would be no salvation for mankind- PERIOD!

A Covenant of blood, or the covenant of strong friendship; for example, Abraham through blood covenant becoming the friend of God. The covenant God cut with Abraham was a covenant of strong friendship, but the New Covenant Jesus cut on our behalf was a Covenant of adoption into the family of God- a much stronger covenant relationship.

The Hebrews had a blood covenant ritual that was similar to the other nations around them. All nations practiced blood covenant because man instinctively sought this relationship. So this practice was not unique to the Hebrews.

So what are some reasons people enter into covenant?

Protection- A covenant partner is bound to come to your aid when in trouble.

Provision- What is yours is mine and what is mine is yours.

Posterity- Descendants are covered and benefit from the relationship.

Relationship- A deep love, devotion and respect for each other.

Since a blood covenant was a lifetime commitment, it was very ritualistic in nature in order to press home the finality and seriousness of the matter- like marriage is suppose to be. In one of the last steps in sealing the covenant between two parties, they stand before witnesses and give the *terms of the covenant*. I say, "All my assets are yours. All my money, all my property and all my possessions are yours. If you need any of them, you don't even have to ask. Just come and get it. These terms are referred to as the Law of the Covenant. Marriage between believers is a covenant relationship before God, sealed in blood when it is consummated in the marriage bed. The couple share everything from having the same last name to accessing the same checking account and filing a joint income tax return.

1 Corinthians 3:21-23

So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future-all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

What's mine is yours and what's yours is mine. And if I die, all my children are yours by adoption and you are responsible for my family. But at the same time, you also get all my liabilities. If I ever get in trouble financially, I don't come and ask you for money. I come to you and say, "Where's our checkbook?" We are in covenant, everything I have is yours and what's yours is mine, both assets and liabilities. So we stand there and read off, before witnesses, our list of assets and liabilities.

That is exactly what Jesus did for us, He took on our sin liabilities so we would be made righteous with His righteousness. Jesus became sick with our sicknesses, so we would be healed. He also took on our financial liabilities so we would be made rich with His glorious riches. We understand all this as Jesus' great substitutionary act of redemption to ransom us from Satan's authority.

2 Corinthians 5:21- God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Isaiah 53:4-5

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Philippians 4:19

And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

All this is made possible through the instrument of blood covenant. So the reason Abraham was made righteous before God, healed, protected and made rich is the same reasons we are today as Christians- Blood Covenant!

Hebrews 9:15

For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance — now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

The blood covenant is a very sacred covenant. It is the most sacred covenant that mankind has ever known or has ever adhered to. Dr. Livingstone and Mr. Stanley were in Africa for many years as missionaries, and in all that time, they never heard of a covenant being broken. So let's look at some passages of Scripture that point out Abraham's financial earnings in the covenant:

Genesis 13:1-2

So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold.

Genesis 13:5-6

Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together.

Genesis 15:1

After this, the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision: “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your very great reward.”

Genesis 24:34-36

So he said, “I am Abraham's servant. The Lord has blessed my master abundantly, and he has become wealthy. He has given him sheep and cattle, silver and gold, menservants and maidservants, and camels and donkeys.”

Abraham was rich materially only because of his covenant relationship with God, not because he was special or God was showing partiality as some rare occurrence or fluke event. So if we have a better covenant with God through Jesus Christ than what Abraham had, what is the obvious conclusion- at minimum, we should be as rich as he was. Our expectations have been way too low in this matter.

Hebrews 7:22- Because of this oath, Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant.

Hebrews 8:6

But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises .

But some will say, “Yea but I'm not rich like Abraham!” That is not God's fault, it's in the Covenant! If we would just exercise our rights and cash in on what Jesus has already paid for in blood for us to have, we would be eating the best of the land. Jesus had rebuked the religious leaders for not teaching the people about healing in the covenant of Abraham, so people were needlessly suffering sickness. On the same token, couldn't people also be needlessly suffering under the curse of poverty as well- is that God's will?

Just because people go without is no indication that such an absence validates God's will as being done in one's life; it just means they are being ripped off through ignorance, a lack of faith or disobedience.

Luke 13:16

“Should not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has kept bound for eighteen long years, be set free on the Sabbath day from what bound her?”

Romans 3:3-4

What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness? Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar.

Isaac

Like his father Abraham, Isaac was in covenant with God and was enjoying the same benefits.

Genesis 26:12-14

Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the Lord blessed him. The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him.

Notice when Isaac was well advanced in years, the time came for him to pass on a blessing before he died. As you know, Jacob impersonated his brother Esau and received it instead.



Genesis 27:28-29

“May God give you of heaven's dew and of earth's richness — an abundance of grain and new wine. May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed.”

Genesis 28:3-5

“May God Almighty bless you and make you fruitful and increase your numbers until you become a community of peoples. May he give you and your descendants the blessing given to Abraham, so that you may take possession of the land where you now live as an alien, the land God gave to Abraham.”

Jacob

No surprise that Jacob did very well in the prosperity arena as his father Isaac and grandfather Abraham did. However, Esau hated his brother because of his deception and its success, Esau resolved to murder him; only waiting until the death of his father Isaac. Rebekah, informed Jacob of Esau's intent, and advised him to flee to her brother Laban in Haran. Obtaining Isaac's consent by saying that he wished Jacob to marry one of his kinswomen and not a daughter of Canaan. Isaac blessed Jacob again and sent him away- Genesis 27:41-28:5.

On his journey to Laban, Jacob stopped at Luz for the night and had a vision of a ladder, where angels were ascending and descending on it. There God confirmed to him the promises given to his fathers and promised to protect him on his journey, and provide a safe return home.



Jacob left Beersheba and set out for Haran. When he reached a certain place, he stopped for the night because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones there, he put it under his head and lay down to sleep. He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. There above it stood the LORD, and he said: “I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south. All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.”

Genesis 28:10-15

Arriving at Haran, Jacob met Rachel, Laban’s daughter, by whom Jacob’s coming was made known to her father. After a month, Laban inquired what wages Jacob desired for his services, and he asked for Rachel’s hand in marriage on the condition of seven years’ of service. At the expiration of the time, which seemed to Jacob “but a few days because of his love for her,” Laban availed himself to the customs of the country and substituted his elder daughter, Leah, for Rachel. Upon the discovery of the deception, Laban excused himself by saying, “It’s not the practice in our land, to marry off the younger before the first-born.” So another seven years of service from Jacob was required for his beloved Rachel.

After Jacob’s fourteen years had expired he was induced by Laban to remain six years longer for the purpose of acquiring wealth. Jacob made a deal with Laban that for his wages, Jacob would take into his possession all the sheep that were speckled or spotted, and every dark-colored lamb.

Genesis 30:32

Let me go through all your flocks today and remove from them every speckled or spotted sheep, every dark-colored lamb and every spotted or speckled goat. They will be my wages.

Now for a little pay back, Jacob comes up with a fascinating plan. He takes fresh-cut branches of poplar, almond and plain trees, and made white stripes on them by peeling the bark and exposing the white inner wood of the branches. He placed these branches near every watering trough and near the sheep when they mated and the results were astounding.

Genesis 30:38-40

Then he placed the peeled branches in all the watering troughs, so that they would be directly in front of the flocks when they came to drink. When the flocks were in heat and came to drink, they mated in front of the branches. And they bore young that were streaked or speckled or spotted. Jacob set apart the young of the flock by themselves...

Prosperity is God’s Idea

He even went so far as to only set the strips of wood in front of the stronger females, when they were in heat, but if the animals were weak he did not place them there. I have to give it to Jacob, he was crafty.

Genesis 30:42-43

So the weak animals went to Laban and the strong ones to Jacob. In this way the man grew exceedingly prosperous and came to own large flocks, and maidservants and menservants, and camels and donkeys.

I see a great lesson of faith in this, "*calling those things that be not*" in Romans 4:17. Jacob called for what he wanted, spotted sheep, and got it. I believe God gave him this insight in keeping with the covenant to make Jacob wealthy. Apparently Laban changed Jacob's wages 10 times (Genesis 31:7), yet when the wage was changed to spotted sheep, the young were born spotted, when the wage was changed to streaked sheep, the young were streaked- God confirmed this with a dream in Genesis 31:10-13.

Joseph

As you know, Jacob had twelve sons, who became the clan leaders of the twelve tribes of Israel. Joseph was sold as a slave due to the envy of his brothers and wound up in Egypt as a servant of man named Potiphar. Joseph behaved himself so discreetly in the service of Potiphar, and was so led of God, that he found great favor with his master, who gave him the direction of all his affairs. We see again how God gives favor, wisdom and success to those in covenant with Him.

Genesis 39:2-6

The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master. When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant. Potiphar put him in charge of his household, and he entrusted to his care everything he owned. From the time he put him in charge of his household and of all that he owned, the LORD blessed the household of the Egyptian because of Joseph. The blessing of the LORD was on everything Potiphar had, both in the house and in the field. So he left in Joseph's care everything he had; with Joseph in charge, he did not concern himself with anything except the food he ate.

Even before the 10 commandments were given Joseph, understood that adultery was wicked. He refused the seductive invitations of his master's wife, and for his integrity he gets into trouble- Genesis 39:6-20. Even in prison, God made Joseph to prosper and have success in everything he did- God gave him tremendous favor. You can't keep a covenant man down! God was with Joseph, granting him favor in the eyes of the governor of the prison, so that he entrusted all the prisoners to his care, leaving everything to his supervision.

Genesis 39:20-23

But while Joseph was there in the prison, the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor in the eyes of the prison warden. So the warden put Joseph in charge of all those held in the prison, and he was made responsible for all that was done there. The warden paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did.

Joseph was able to interpret dreams by revelation from God, which made the way for him to become second in command next to Pharaoh. You know the story, there was to be seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. During the seven years of plenty, Joseph prepared for the years of famine that were to follow by carefully husbanding the grain, which was so abundant, as to be beyond measurement. Since the famine hit the land of Canaan hard, Jacob and his family were greatly affected.

To make a long story short, Jacob learned that Joseph was indeed alive and was directed by the Lord to move to Egypt. Through Joseph, the Lord saved Jacob's family from starvation and so preserve the covenant promise given to Abraham.

Genesis 46:2-4

And God spoke to Israel in a vision at night and said, "Jacob! Jacob!" "Here I am," he replied. "I am God, the God of your father," he said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes."

The Nation of Israel

Jacob's family upon arriving in Egypt was very small, only 70 in all. Yet 400 hundred years later the decedents of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will have multiplied to a few million.



Genesis 15:13-15

Then the Lord said to him, "Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated four hundred years. But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions."

The Lord is so good, He made sure that the Israelites had received their back wages for 400 years of hard labor in Egypt. The Scriptures say that the Israelites had "Plundered the Egyptians." That reminds me of Proverbs 13:22 which states, *"a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous."*

Exodus 12:31-36

During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said, "Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, worship the LORD as you have requested. Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me." The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country. "For otherwise," they said, "we will all die!" So the people took their dough before the yeast was added, and carried it on their shoulders in kneading troughs wrapped in clothing. The Israelites did as Moses instructed and asked the Egyptians for articles of silver and gold and for clothing. The LORD had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people, and they gave them what they asked for; **so they plundered the Egyptians.**

In recap, we learned how God reconfirmed His covenant with Abraham, by promising to come to the earth and cut the covenant through the Seed (singular) of Abraham- Jesus. But first Abraham's descendants would be in bondage for 400 years (Genesis 15: 13-36) in a strange land, Egypt. But this is a blood covenant that God must honor. He must bring them out of bondage into the Promised Land.

How God remembered the covenant is recorded in Exodus chapters 2-3. Exodus 2:23-24 says, *“In the course of those many days the king of Egypt died. And the people of Israel groaned under their bondage, and cried out for help, and their cry under bondage came up to God. And God heard their groaning, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.”* (RSV) Later, God miraculously appeared to Moses to reveal His plan for deliverance.

Exodus 3:6-10

Then he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.” At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God. The LORD said, “I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey — the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.”

The Promised Land

The place is Kadesh Barnea on the outskirts of the Promised Land; at last the people of Israel are on the verge of entering into their land flowing with milk and honey. This is the same land that God had promised Abraham for his decedents to inherit. After all this time, God’s promise was about to be manifested. This is one of the great Old Covenant stories, for it teaches volumes on the principles of faith.

Hebrews 11:8-10

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

It appears that Moses initially told the folks to just go straight in and take possession of what God had promised, but the people wanted to send in spies first. One leader from each tribe to explore the land of Canaan- 12 men from the twelve tribes of Israel- that decision to hesitate will cost them dearly!



Deuteronomy 1:21-25

See, the Lord your God has given you the land. Go up and take possession of it as the Lord, the God of your fathers, told you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” Then all of you came to me and said, “Let us send men ahead to spy out the land for us and bring back a report about the route we are to take and the towns we will come to.” The idea seemed good to me; so I selected twelve of you, one man from each tribe. They left and went up into the hill country, and came to the Valley of Eshcol and explored it. Taking with them some of the fruit of the land, they brought it down to us and reported, “It is a good land that the Lord our God is giving us.”

I love how Moses told the people, “Go for it, reach out and take what belongs to you; that which God has graciously promised on oath to your forefathers!” Notice he said, don’t be afraid or discouraged, these are the same stumbling blocks we have to deal with today, when it comes to us entering into our New Covenant Promised Land. Satan will try to use circumstances, fear and intimidation to get you and me to back down from receiving our blood bought inheritance in Jesus Christ!

The Days of King Solomon

The glory days of Israel during the reign of Solomon were meant to last for all times. The Lord was showcasing the nation to the world as a people who were in covenant with God. This visible display of power, wisdom and great riches, lured people from all nations to find out the secret to their great success- it was the Lord of course.

1 Kings 10:21-27

All King Solomon’s goblets were gold, and all the household articles in the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon were pure gold . Nothing was made of silver , because silver was considered of little value in Solomon’s days. The king had a fleet of trading ships at sea along with the ships of Hiram. Once every three years it returned, carrying gold , silver and ivory, and apes and baboons. King Solomon was greater in riches and wisdom than all the other kings of the earth. The whole world sought audience with Solomon to hear the wisdom God had put in his heart. Year after year, everyone who came brought a gift — articles of silver and gold , robes, weapons and spices, and horses and mules. Solomon accumulated chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses, which he kept in the chariot cities and also with him in Jerusalem. The king made silver as common in Jerusalem as stones, and cedar as plentiful as sycamore — fig trees in the foothills.

Oh the incredible potential they had of blessing and protection, to be God’s special people on the earth, if they would have just obeyed His commands- that was it, simple right? Sad to say, the majority of the history of Israel was that of tragedy, oppression and lack. It was not because God had failed or changed His mind; the people were unfaithful, idolatrous and a rebellious nation. They opened the door to Satan, time and time again to come in and kill, steal and destroy them.

Deuteronomy 7:11-12

Therefore, take care to follow the commands, decrees and laws I give you today. If you pay attention to these laws and are careful to follow them, then the Lord your God will keep his covenant of love with you, as he swore to your forefathers.

As God’s covenant people under a New and Better Covenant in Jesus Christ, we have the same potential to display the awesome and mighty works of God, but we also are liable to fall under the same snares and traps of the enemy if we do not stay alert.

1 Corinthians 10:6-7

Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry.”

In Proverbs 14:34 it states, *“Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.”* America has experienced such prosperity and quality of life because it was originally founded as a Christian nation rooted in Biblical principles. Other nations that are struggling to develop are not short on natural resources and potential; it is the forces of darkness through false religions and ignorance of Jesus that impedes them. However, America is in decline as she abandons her Christian roots.

3. Good Gifts from a Good God

It saddens me to say that the goodness of God is not fully settled in Christians minds. There seems to be some lingering doubts that our Lord withholds and afflicts us for our ultimate good. Religious ideology has done much to tarnish and obscure the accurate Biblical view that God is a good God- all the time! Certainly there are many aspects to God's nature and character. He is a holy God who does execute judgment and punishment on the wicked. He also disciplines His children according to Hebrews chapter twelve. However, the manner in which discipline is carried out is primarily through His Word and the lessons we learn when we fail to repent. Thus reaping the consequences of our own actions when we open the door to the devil. I make this little clarification in order to avoid be generalized and branded into a narrow view of God; that He is feel-good, candy man like deity who is only interested in giving His children goodies.

Scripture reveals that the Father God is primarily interested in our character development and spiritual maturity; being conformed into the image of Jesus Christ from glory to glory. And yes, all of us believers in Jesus Christ will have to stand before His Judgment Seat one day to give an accounting of our lives on earth. Our greatest passion in this life should be to live a life so that one day we hear the Master say, "Well done my good and faithful servant." However, the scope of this teaching material is on the subject of prosperity as it pertains to redemption, and for obvious reasons, the mere subject draws attention to the goodness of God in our lives to meet our every need. Therefore, our central focus will be upon this theme, which does not diminish all the other aspects of our Great and Awesome God!

Our view of our Heavenly Father, whether true or false will have a tremendous affect on our relationship with Him and our ability to receive from His hand. If we have had abusive dads on this earth, more than likely our perception of God will be distorted. If we have been intimidated, belittled and unloved by our earthly father, we may be suffering from what I call the "Oliver Twist" syndrome. This story of an orphaned boy who's childhood was marked by dominating males. He suffered from an inferiority complex that conformed him to a beggar. He was still hungry and wanted some more gruel- soup.



Please sir, may I
have some more...

When we approach our heavenly Father like Oliver, begging, pleading, groveling and slobbering at the throne of Grace, that is not being humble or reverent- that is really ignorance in light of Scripture. So instead of fogging up the window, and looking in from the cold, let's open the door and sit at the Master's table and dig into the glorious redemption and precious promises He has freely given us. Now it's up to us to take possession and claim this New Covenant Promised Land- let's come boldly to His Throne of Grace! If we shrink back for whatever reason, it's not God's fault, we need to grow up and stop expecting God to spoon feed us all the time. Let's mature and learn how the Kingdom of God operates and maximize this mighty redemption for God's glory!

Hebrews 4:16- Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.



There are generally two reasons why an earthly father will be pleased with his child. The first reason is based on performance-how the child behaves and how he grows and develops over time. When his child's morality, work ethic, and overall disposition are positive, the father will tend to have a more positive attitude toward him.

The second reason and more importantly, why an earthly father loves his child is simply because he's his child- the fruit of his loins. This kind of love goes much deeper than his child's performance, looks, skills, intelligence, or success. However, this is still natural human love and is very limited in scope.

Matthew 7:9-11

“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!”**

Jesus sets aside the stigma of the perverted fatherly role model of this earth that is domineering and insensitive to a child's needs. God is our Father. He loves it when we try to please Him, just as He loved it when Jesus sought to please Him. In this sense, God's words, *“This is my Son, my Beloved, in whom I am well pleased”* can apply to us when we choose to follow the way that God has set before us.

3 John 4- I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

However, it is more fundamentally true that our Father in heaven loves us simply because we are His children. His love for us doesn't grow or fade based upon what we do or don't do. Separation from God as a result of our disobedience may cloud our view of His love, but it doesn't diminish it. God's love is still there, as powerful as ever. So when we repent according to 1 John 1:9, we will find that He is still there waiting for us. In Hebrews chapter twelve and verse nine, we are told that God is the Father of our spirit. In Christ we have been born into His family, and we have the right to call Him “Abba Father” which means “Daddy, Daddy” according to the book of Romans 8:15.

Romans 8:15-17

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

He may be God to the World, but He is Father to me!

John 1:12-13

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

With all the absentee father's in our country's homes today, the spirit of "abandonment" runs rampant. The statistics for teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol abuse, suicide and dropout rates are significantly higher in single family homes. But oh, what a promise we have in God our Father.

Psalms 68:5-6

A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

Hebrews 13:5-6

Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

Jesus Himself said that He would never leave us in Matthew 28:20, *"And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."* Even when we are faithless, sin and blow it in our Christian lives, He remains faithful- 2 Timothy 2:13, *"if we are faithless, he will remain faithful, for he cannot disown himself."* We serve a good God, full of mercy and overflowing with compassion. We can always count on the Lord- Hebrews 13:8, *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever."*

Mark 1:40-42

A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.



Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits- who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Psalms 103:1-5

Mark 6:34

When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

If Jesus was compassionate towards the sinner, the sick and the demon possessed; it's not much of a leap of faith to connect the dots into seeing in Scripture that He is also compassionate concerning our finances or perhaps the lack thereof. Notice in Mark 6:34, that the Lord's compassion for the multitude was to teach the Word of God. Not only did Jesus on occasion feed the multitude bread and fish, but more often than that, He taught them. This makes sense when we understanding that it's the truth that makes us free. In the Body of Christ today there needs to be a greater revelation that God is a good God, all the time- Good God versus Bad devil, simple theology that keeps the record straight. When we mix the two and confuse God with what the devil does alone through trials, tests and temptations, we are in trouble.

When it pertains to Christians, the Lord is about giving life and the devil is about taking it, never shall the two entwine— John 10:10. The very ministry of Jesus was a deliberate showcase of deliverance and freedom for all of mankind; for every area of their lives. As a matter of fact, Jesus quoted from a messianic prophecy concerning Himself in Isaiah 61:1-2 in Luke 4:18.

Luke 4:18

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.

Besides being born into God's family, which is the greatest miracle of the New Covenant, what would good news mean for the poor I wonder? That's right, they don't have to be poor anymore! Financial prosperity is God's idea and is part of our redemption!

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

As soon as we get our thinking straightened out in this area of God wanting His children to be prosperous, blessed and even rich, the sooner we will experience the reality of His redemptive provision for our lives. Please, don't take my word on it, the Bible is full of passages that explicitly detail out in no uncertain terms, God's will on this matter!

James 1:16-18

Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

1 Timothy 6:17-18

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

Philippians 4:19-20 AMP

And my God will liberally supply (fill to the full) your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. To our God and Father be glory forever and ever (through the endless eternities of the eternities). Amen (so be it).

Unit 1 Review:

What's the purpose of reading a will?

Where does a "poverty spirit," philosophically have its roots in, and how does it affect the Church?

Which of the "poverty mentality" questions do you have challenges with and why?

What should our mentality be when we approach the "table of the Lord" in Psalms chapter 23?

Why is the subject of "blood covenant" important to the topic of prosperity in the Bible?

Why is our view of the Father's "goodness" so important to this subject on prosperity?

B. Redeemed from the Curse of the Law

Galatians 3:13-14

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”

Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law according to Galatians 3:13. I think it is common knowledge that anything that has a “Curse” attached to it is a bad thing. So what is the curse of the law you may ask? The only way to answer that is to look in the book of Deuteronomy where God had revealed to Moses and the children of Israel the consequences of breaking God’s law which is sin.



God’s revelation to humanity concerning the Law of God or the Ten Commandments was significant for many reasons. So let’s provide a little background so we can fully appreciate what the “Curse of the Law” represents.

First of all, the law reveals the holiness of God and His righteous standard of conduct to make all mankind accountable.

Romans 3:19-20

Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Secondly, the law defines clearly right from wrong. There is nothing obscure or relative about God’s law- it is what it is. God’s righteous standard of holiness is eternal, it represents who He is and what He requires of us in order to have fellowship with Him.

Romans 5:12-14

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.

Romans 7:7

What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “Do not covet.”

Thirdly and most importantly, the purpose of the law is to frustrate man. That may sound strange, but the sheer genius of it is remarkable. One of God’s greatest gifts to mankind is the revelation of what He requires of us, and to know right from wrong.

The problem is this, because of the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, we are all born into sin with a sinful nature inherited by Adam in our physical body. As a result, when we all reach the age of accountability (knowing right and wrong- Romans 7:9-12), we all sin and receive from Satan a spiritual sinful nature that dooms us to hell. So how is this a good thing you may ask.

Well, the law and our sinful nature speak to us in no uncertain terms that we need a Savior to save us from this impossible predicament as the disciples figured out in Luke 18:26-27, *“Those who heard this asked, ‘Who then can be saved?’ Jesus replied, ‘What is impossible with men is possible with God.’”*

Romans 8:3-4

For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

When man tries on his own to live the perfect life, only to fail, and to fail every time, what is left is a stark realization of the utter hopelessness and futility in making oneself right with God. The religions of man which are nothing more than a works based system, only serve in applying an external veneer of self-righteousness that the Bible calls filthy rags- Isaiah 64:6.

Nothing that is man-made can change the heart of man which is desperately wicked outside of Christ- Jeremiah 17:9, *“The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”* What man needs is a spiritual new birth. The “New Birth” is a rebirth of the human spirit and Jesus spoke of this in John chapter three:

John 3:3-8

In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” “How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.”

John 6:28-29

Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

So getting into heaven and becoming a child of God is completely dependent on receiving a spiritual new birth through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. So the purpose of the law is to point people to the Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world- John 1:36.

Galatians 3:19-20

What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.

Galatians 3:21-29

Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

So getting back to the "Curse" of the law and what it is. First of all, the curse of the law is experienced when God's law or His Word is broken, we call that sin. If you have lived for any length of time, you have come to realize that sin, is an easy thing to do. Sin is anything less than perfection.

Romans 14:23- and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

James 4:17- Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

When we sin, the Bible calls us a lawbreaker, which in turn invokes the curse of the law which is the consequence of breaking it. The curse of the law is simply death; which is a manifestation of the work of Satan, either directly or indirectly as a result of the fall of man.

James 2:10-11

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1. Poverty is a Curse

Death is more of a who rather than a what, and I am not talking about the grim reaper either. As far as the Bible is concerned, who is the father of sin or who committed the first sin? That's right, it was Satan himself. Everything that results in death is a product or the handiwork of Satan. In John 10:10, Jesus stated that Satan's mode of operation is three-fold; to kill, steal and destroy everything he gets hold of.

Ezekiel 28:15-17

You (Lucifer- now Satan) were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.

Hebrews 2:14-15

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

The only way legally Satan can get his hold on folks lives is through their sin. Sin subjects humanity to Satan's dominion, jurisdiction and authority. Sin is rebellion against God which is what Satan is the father of. All who sin come under his control and ownership and share his doom. Therefore, all that is bad, sickness, pain, evil, poverty was created by and perpetuated through Satan's kingdom of darkness.

Romans 6:16-17

Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey — whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

John 8:34-37

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

That is why Jesus came 2,000 years ago, He came to take away our sin and ransom us from Satan's tyranny according to Hebrews 9:15. Only through faith in Jesus Christ (Confess Him as Lord- Romans 10:9) do we receive the gift of eternal life, and receive our deliverance from the curse of the law- Satan's cruel and miserable oppression.

Colossians 1:13-14

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

So the curse of the law and Satan are one and the same. So let's look at how Satan operates to make life a living hell for people that are under his control. The whole account or explanation of Satan's operations are found in Deuteronomy 28:15-68, but we are going to specifically focus on the areas of the curse that affect our financial and material areas of life.

Deuteronomy 28:15-19, 38-40

However, if you do not obey the Lord your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: You will be cursed in the city and cursed in the country. Your basket and your kneading trough will be cursed. The fruit of your womb will be cursed, and the crops of your land, and the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. You will be cursed when you come in and cursed when you go out. You will sow much seed in the field but you will harvest little, because locusts will devour it. You will plant vineyards and cultivate them but you will not drink the wine or gather the grapes, because worms will eat them. You will have olive trees throughout your country but you will not use the oil, because the olives will drop off.

What I want to make clear here is that God does not administer, nor is He the agent of death and the curse of the law. Reading these Scriptures in the Bible would lead us to believe that God Himself puts sickness and affliction upon His people, for it reads, "The Lord will send on you..."

Dr. Robert Young, was a Hebrew and Greek Scholar (Old Testament was written in Hebrew, New Testament was written in Greek), and the author of *Hints and Helps to Bible Interpretation*. He says in this book, that in Exodus 15:26, the literal Hebrew reads "... I will permit to be put upon thee none of these diseases which I permitted to be brought upon the Egyptians, for I am the Lord that heals you." The original Hebrew of these scriptures was in the permissive tense, but because the English language has no corresponding permissive tense, the verbs were translated in the causative tense.

The KEY to understanding these different passages of Scripture lies in knowing that the active verbs in Hebrew have been translated in the causative tense when they should have been translated in the permissive tense. So, Deuteronomy 28:27 should have been translated something like, *“The Lord will allow/permit these plagues to be brought upon you...”*

So please keep in mind that Old Testament Scripture language frequently attributes directly to God what He merely permits. Many other verbs were translated in the causative sense in the KJV. For example, Isaiah 45:7, “Does God create evil?” Well the answer would be no. That would make God a devil. God may permit evil, but He does not create it. If God commits or creates evil, then He has no right whatsoever to judge man for sinning. We need to take the whole counsel of God’s Word into consideration when interpreting these Scriptures, God is not responsible for evil, He only permits evil. There is a vast difference between commission and permission.

Isaiah 45:7 KJV

I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.

Amos 3:6 KJV

Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?

In speaking of the Passover night when the children of Israel were in Egypt, notice that Exodus 12:12 gives the impression that God personally went through the land of Egypt to deal out death and judgment. However, when we read down to verse 23, we see that when the blood was applied to a house, the Lord would not permit the “Destroyer” access to that home. Well, who is the “Destroyer” then?

Let’s look at Revelation 9:11, *“They had as king over them the angel of the Abyss, whose name in Hebrew is Abaddon, and in Greek, Apollyon.”* There is a small letter beside the name “Apollyon” in my Bible, and the interpretation for that name is “Destroyer.” The king spoken of here in the book of Revelation is Satan or Beelzebub, being interpreted, “Lord of the flies” in Luke 11:15-18. So who was directly responsible for the deaths of the first born in Egypt, that’s right it was the devil, God merely was allowing or permitting it to happen.

Exodus 12:12- “On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn — both men and animals — and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord.”

Exodus 12:23

When the Lord goes through the land to strike down the Egyptians, he will see the blood on the top and sides of the doorframe and will pass over that doorway, and he will not permit the destroyer to enter your houses and strike you down.

Hebrews 11:28

By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

What we see over and over again throughout Scripture is that God is passing judgment that allows the destroyer access to people in the Old and New Testaments. So often when studying the nation of Israel, when they backslid from God, the Lord would warn them of impending judgment and grant them a period of time to repent. When they ignored God’s warnings and refused to repent, the Lord simply lifted His hand of protection over them, and their enemies rushed in like a flood. Satan through these enemies of Israel came in like a plague to kill, steal and destroy them.

Judges 2:14

In his anger against Israel the Lord **handed them over to raiders who plundered them. He sold them to their enemies all around, whom they were no longer able to resist.**

Psalms 78:61-62

He sent [the ark of] his might into captivity, his splendor **into the hands of the enemy. He gave his people over to the sword; he was very angry with his inheritance.**

Revelation 2:21-22

I (Jesus) have given her time to repent of her immorality, but she is unwilling. So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they repent of her ways.

When the children of Israel had enough suffering and misery, they would repent of their ways and God in His mercy, faithfulness and loving kindness would restore His hand of protection and deliver them from the hand of Satan and their enemies. God would restore their health, prosperity and protection until in the course of time, the people would forget and give into the same temptations of the devil who was looking to regain access, and put them through hell on earth all over again. Therefore, the vicious cycle of Blessing, Backslidden, Warning, Judgment, Repentance, Blessing... would continue all throughout the history of Israel. Now 1 Corinthians chapter 10 was written to point out this scenario so we would learn from Israel's mistakes and understand how sin opens the door to the devil to kill, steal and destroy. God permits it because He is not about to become a willing accomplice to our sin when we refuse to repent. Satan could challenge God's justice if the Lord refused to turn unrepentant children of God over to him to be judged.

1 Corinthians 5:4-5

Then you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, **hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.**

1 Timothy 1:19-20

Holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have **handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.**

1 Corinthians 11:29-32

For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. But **if we judged ourselves, we would not come **under judgment**. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.**

So we are seeing in Scripture, to be judged by the Lord, is to be turned over to the hand of the enemy. And what does the enemy promptly do? Set out to destroy our lives, because that is what he has been wanting to do all along, he has just been waiting for the right opportunity when individuals had expended God's mercy for them to repent, and like a lion he pounces on them with sickness, calamities the like. Sin opens the door to the devil when we fail to repent, that is not just talking about sexual sin, but also giving into fear or unforgiveness as well- Romans 14:23; James 4:17. We can open the door through the simple admission of ignorance and a lack of knowledge. That too is a way of opening the door, it does not have to be legitimate as far as the devil is concerned.

The Bible does not say he can devour anyone he wants to. It is stated in 1 Peter 5:8, that he is looking for someone that he can devour, because they allow him to. If we resist him by claiming the blood of Jesus and by speaking the Word, he can't devour us- Praise the Lord!

Luke 4:13- When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

1 Peter 5:8

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Some people think God is quick to judgment, not so, just look at how He dealt with Israel, who were more times than not, steeped in rebellion, idol worship, sacrificing their children to demons and the like. Still God was so merciful and longsuffering, He gave them years to repent and sent prophets to warn them. However, they would kill the prophets, and what would God do, send them another prophet and they would kill him as well. What would you do if you were God? Well, thank God you are not!

The key to understanding these different passages of Scripture is found in knowing that the active verbs in the Hebrew have been translated in the causative sense when they should have been translated in the permissive sense. Someone might say, "Well, maybe God didn't exactly send the poverty on them, but he permitted it," implying that since He permitted it, He had some purpose in it. It was not God's will or purpose that an entire generation of the children of Israel should die in the desert because of unbelief, they never made it into the Promised Land. Just because God permits something doesn't mean He has a purpose in it. For example, it was not God's will for Israel to have an earthly king- God was to be their king- 1 Samuel 8:4-9. Just so we don't get too lopsided in talking about the curse of the law and Satan's activities. Let's see what God is directly responsible for when we fulfill God's Law through faith in Jesus Christ and receive His perfect righteousness, which makes it legal for God to pour out His blessings upon our lives.

Deuteronomy 28:1-14

If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God: You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock — the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed. You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out. The Lord will grant that the enemies who rise up against you will be defeated before you. They will come at you from one direction but flee from you in seven.

The Lord will send a blessing on your barns and on everything you put your hand to. The Lord your God will bless you in the land he is giving you. The Lord will establish you as his holy people, as he promised you on oath, if you keep the commands of the Lord your God and walk in his ways. Then all the peoples on earth will see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they will fear you. The Lord will grant you abundant prosperity — in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground — in the land he swore to your forefathers to give you. The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. The Lord will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the Lord your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom. Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today, to the right or to the left, following other gods and serving them.

2. Requirements for Prosperity

I wish that prosperity was as automatic as breathing, but it is not. When we look at the promises of God in the Bible, we readily see that there are conditions associated with them. It is not about deserving or earning the blessing of God, but it boils down to simple obedience and faith.

Deuteronomy 11:26-28

See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse — the blessing if you obey the commands of the Lord your God that I am giving you today; the curse if you disobey the commands of the Lord your God and turn from the way that I command you today by following other gods, which you have not known.

- Knowing the will of God concerning prosperity
- Renew our minds and get our thinking, talking and actions in line with the Word
- A lifestyle of honoring God and putting His Word first place in our life
- Consistent application of the principles of God's Word concerning prosperity

The Israelites under the Old Covenant had to obey the whole law. The Law of the New Covenant is that we walk in love- Romans 13:8-10; John 13:34. Walking in love is manifested by obeying God's commands as Jesus said in John 14:15, *"If you love me, you will obey what I command."* Everything we receive from God must be appropriated by His grace and through our faith.

1 John 5:2-3

This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome.

So the promises of God must be individually appropriated in our lives through faith in God's Word. Through the New Covenant, God has given us thousands of promises that cover our lives today on earth, and the life we will experience in heaven. What is important to realize is that in the life we live today, particularly in the area of financial prosperity, God has made ample provision through the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 1:18-21

But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not "Yes" and "No." For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by me and Silas and Timothy, was not "Yes" and "No," but in him it has always been "Yes." **For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.**

2 Peter 1:2-4

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us **everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very **great and precious promises**, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.**

According to 2 Corinthians 1:18-21, it is plainly stated that all the promises of God are "Yes," not sometimes "Yes" and sometimes "No." Only "Yes" in Christ. However, the promises of God concerning prosperity are not automatically applied in our life, even though they belong to us, and it's God's will for us to enter into this provision for our lives. It requires faith just like it was for salvation; by grace through faith in Ephesians 2:8-9.

Matthew 18:19-20

“Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about **anything** you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”

Mark 11:22-24

“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. “I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, **whatever** you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

John 14:13-14

And I will do **whatever** you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for **anything** in my name, and I will do it.

John 15:7

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask **whatever** you wish, and it will be given you.

John 16:23-24

In that day you will no longer ask me **anything**. I tell you the truth, my Father will give you **whatever** you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for **anything** in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

1 John 3:21-22

Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him **anything** we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.

1 John 5:14-15

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask **anything** according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us — **whatever** we ask — we know that we have what we asked of him.

Mark 9:23- “If you can?” said Jesus. “**Everything** is possible for him who believes.”

Notice how many times the Scripture use the words “Whatever” and “Anything” you ask for.

God is the constant that does not change, and His Word never fails. We are the variable, in that we may or may not believe, and it is our faith that determines whether we receive or not. God’s Word is God’s Will, and that is eternal and unchanging. So if we fail to receive, it is not that God changed His mind or made an exception for us, we simply missed it somewhere. So if we ask God for wisdom in the matter according to James 1:5 and judge ourselves according to 1 Corinthians 11:27-34, we can try again and receive. We are never a failure until we give up!

Matthew 13:57-58

But Jesus said to them, “Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor.” And he did not do many miracles there because of their **lack of faith**.

Mark 16:14

Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their **lack of faith** and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen

Mark 5:34- “Daughter, **your faith has healed you**. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

Hebrews 4:1-2

Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard **did not combine it with faith**.

Roadblocks to Prosperity:

- Willing and Obedient to the call of God and purpose for our life- **Isaiah 1:19**.
- Must give with right motives out of love for His Kingdom- **Matthew 6:33; James 4:3**.
- Can't be motivated out of fear or guilt instead of faith and love- **Galatians 5:6**.
- Greed, selfishness and materialism- **Luke 12:15**.
- Dishonesty in the way we do business or our work ethic- **Proverbs 11:3; 13:11; 20:23**.
- Impatience, these are principles that work with a consistent lifestyle- **Hebrews 6:12**.

If we continue to honor and obey God and His Word, the money and material blessings will come! It won't happen overnight, but it will come in time if we keep sowing the right seed!

Qualifications for Prosperity- Esteem Earthly things lightly, as Temporary

Moses did not put the things of this world first; rather he esteemed the Kingdom of God more than the material world around him- he was looking ahead to his reward. There is a price to following Jesus, but it is not to be sick, oppressed, impoverished and starving to death. Moses gave up worldly fame, prestige and power, but he never lacked any good thing from God- his needs were always met.

Hebrews 11:24-26

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

Remember, it is not wrong to have money, it is the love of money, and following after it instead of the Lord that is wrong. The Lord wants us to be rich, just not covetous; we can't serve two masters.

Matthew 6:24

“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”

Put God's Word first - Obey His commandments

It is not enough to be obedient or just willing; we must be both willing and obedient in order to qualify for the blessings of God!

Isaiah 1:19-20

“If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.” For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

In 3 John 2, God's will for us is to "prosper and be in health," but the apostle John went on to say that God loves for His children to walk in the truth. Spiritual prosperity comes before financial prosperity. Training in godliness must be a priority according to 1 Timothy 4:8. Just as in Exodus 15:26; 23:26, Physical prosperity is a byproduct of spiritual prosperity. When we are first rich in the Word, dwelling in our hearts, than all the blessings of God will be added to us. All the blessings of God begin first in the spirit of man- the kingdom of God is within us- Luke 17:20-21.

We need to get our minds renewed with the Word so we think in line with the Bible:

- God's will is for His children to be blessed to overflowing
- Let's not limit God according to the circumstances of life
- The blessings of God will not fall on us automatically; be diligent in faith and walking in love

If our thinking is wrong then our believing is going to be wrong. If our believing is wrong, then our talking will be wrong- results in not receiving or receiving the wrong things. We have to get our thinking, believing and talking synchronized with the Word of God.

3. Our Authority in the Area of Finances

Isn't it wonderful to know that it was God who created wealth, gold, silver and abundance. When we consider the extravagance of heaven, streets made out of gold (Revelation 21:18), why should we think that the Christian life is meant to be a "barely get along" affair. It was the Lord who had instructed His disciples to pray that God's will be done on earth as it is in heaven- Matthew 6:10

Psalms 50:10, 12

For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is mine, and all that is in it.

Haggai 2:8- "The silver is mine and the gold is mine," declares the Lord Almighty.

Make no mistake about it, money denotes power and influence in the earth. Christian piety alone is not going to get the Gospel proclaimed throughout the earth- it takes money. Fortunately for us, we have an awesome God who gives us the ability to produce wealth and who transfers the wealth of the wicked to the children of God.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

Proverbs 13:22- A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

Jesus has restored our lost dominion in the garden of Eden through His death, burial, resurrection and seating at the right hand of the Father. In Romans 5:17, we see in the Amplified translation of the Bible the phrase, "reign as kings in life."

Romans 5:17

For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness **reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.**



According to Luke 4:5-8; 2 Corinthians 4:4 and 1 John 5:19, Satan being the god of this world system wants to dominate the financial world to fund his enterprises for sin and rebellion. The wealth of the wicked is laid up for us so we can funnel those finances to fund God's agenda, plan and Kingdom in the earth today. The money we need is down here on earth. It isn't up in heaven. God is not going to rain money down here on earth, that would be counterfeiting. I love this picture, it freaks religious demons out who want to keep us poor and humble.

Whatever we need Financially – just Claim it in Faith in Jesus' Name!

We see in Luke 6:38 that it is through the bosom of men that God brings finances into our lives. When men give unto us, (generally speaking) God is behind it. Since the money we need is down here on earth, we have authority to call it into our lives. So whatever we need, just claim it!

Luke 6:38

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

The reason we have a right to claim our needs met is because Jesus came to the earth and defeated Satan. Jesus has given us His Name, in order to keep the enemy under our feet in submission. We're in the world but we're not of the world- John 15:19. Since we still have to live in this world for the time being, we must use our God-given authority to enforce Satan's defeat and enjoy the blessings of God that we have in Christ, including financial prosperity- Colossians 1:12-13. We have authority through the Name of Jesus to pry finances out of Satan's tightly clenched fists.

Luke 10:17-20

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name.” He replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

This concept of, “power of attorney” is foundational in understanding the authority of the Believer. It is defined as a document that gives another person legal authority to act on behalf of another. If we were to create such a document, we would be called the principal or granter (of the power), and the person to whom we gave this authority is called the agent or attorney-in-fact. A power of attorney can even be oral, and whether it was witnessed or not, will hold up in court, the same as if it were in writing.



Jesus gave us the power of attorney, the legal right to use His Name. The value of the Name of Jesus is based on how much power is backing the Name that it represents. So how much power and authority does Jesus have? To the victor belongs the spoils, Jesus has it all, and all the power and authority Jesus has is invested in His Name. Jesus gave us His Name to use in prayer, dealing with demons, ministering healing, water baptism, impartation of laying on of hands. It's all in the Name, the measure of power and ability released in the Name is the measure of the value of that Name. All that is invested in the Name belongs to us, Jesus gave us the unqualified use of His Name! Concerning Matthew 28:18, when we examine the language of the Great Commission, from a legal standpoint, Jesus gave His Church the "Power of Attorney" or the

legal right to use His Name. Again, the value of the power of attorney depends upon how much there is in back of it, Matthew 28:18 gives us insight to how much authority His Name represents.

Matthew 28:18-20 AMP

Jesus approached and, breaking the silence, said to them, All authority (all power of rule) in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go then and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Teaching them to observe everything that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all the days (perpetually, uniformly, and on every occasion), to the [very] close and consummation of the age. Amen (so let it be).

We have been delivered from the authority, rule and dominion of darkness- 1 Corinthians 2:4-6; Colossians 2:13-15. What Jesus did, He did for us and we enter into His victory through faith in Him as Lord and Savior. Jesus as our substitute, as the Last Adam did what the first Adam did not do- destroyed Satan! Therefore we have the authority to tell Satan to take his hands off what belongs to us- including our finances.

We are a good soldier in the occupation army of the Lord until He returns again- 2 Timothy 2:3. In other words, our job today is to simply "mop up" behind what Jesus has already won! We are the triumphant Church, not the warring Church, because we have already won in Christ- just need to enforce Satan's defeat. The Word says we have been given authority over the devil in Jesus' Name and that we can use that authority and claim our financial needs met. So let's learn to think and speak in line with what the Word says.

1 John 4:4- You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

We can have what the Word says we can have, we can do what the Word says we can do and we are what the Word says we are- we are born of God! Therefore, we are of God and we need to know who we are in Christ, but then we must act on it for it to become a reality in our lives.

Colossians 1:27

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

This is the mystery: Through the Holy Spirit we have all (born again believers) been baptized into Jesus Christ. Jesus indwells us through the Person of the Holy Spirit, and we are the Body of Christ.

He is the head, and we are the Body. How can our head have one experience and our body another? No, it's impossible. In the same way, the Lord Jesus' victory is our victory. When He overcame demons and evil spirits, it was for our benefit that He destroyed the works of the devil, the one who held the keys to death and hell. This all has a direct connection to our finances. Since Satan is the god of this world system; Jesus defeated the works of the devil- including poverty and lack!

Colossians 2:15- And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Jesus spoiled and stripped principalities and powers. He reduced them to nothing in regards to their ability to dominate us anymore. Therefore, they can't dominate us financially either. Since these principalities and powers are dethroned, why are they still ruling in the world. Because the world doesn't know that they're dethroned. And because they are still under his dominion through sin, having not yet received Jesus as Savior- 1 Timothy 4:9-10; Titus 2:11. Since they don't know about the Good News, they can't act upon it.

That is why Jesus and His Church today are anointed to preach the Good News to the captives- "You have been delivered!" Jesus has set you free; just receive it and enter into the rest, provision and protection of God. The enemy has been dethroned and brought to nothing. "Well, I'm trying to overcome them," someone said. No, you don't try. You just accept by faith what Jesus already did. What He did, He did for you and me! Christ's victory is your victory- Glory to God.

1 Corinthians 2:6- We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

That is why we just need to claim the money we need- Jesus already became poor to make us rich. Command the devil to get his hands off your finances. Speak the Word concerning prosperity, this releases the angels of God, our ministering spirits to cause the money to come in. We have to exercise spiritual authority in the area of finances. Satan would like to hinder and delay but he can't make it stay, we will prosper anyway!

So when it comes to redemptive items like prosperity, it has already been provided, it just needs to be appropriated through faith! I like to use the 'Car Keys' analogy. If I give you my car keys because you need to borrow my car and the next minute you turn around and ask me again for my car keys, I will say "I already gave you the keys to my car, they are in your hand right now." If you persist in asking me for something I already gave you, well eventually I will get a little frustrated with you. When we ask God to prosper us when He already did so 2,000 years ago, "*through his poverty might become rich*" according to 2 Corinthians 8:9 we are praying when we should be proclaiming what is already an established fact- redemptive provisions need only to be appropriated by speaking the Word from our heart.

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Oh, by the way, the word "might" at the end of the above Scripture does not mean, "Well maybe if it is God's will, you might become rich." Rather it means that it is emphatically God's will for us to be made rich but "it's not automatic and must be appropriated and mixed with faith for it to become a reality in our lives." So in other words, us becoming rich is not up to God, but is up to us to receive individually for ourselves. Just as the New Birth was not automatic, we had to confess Jesus as Lord and believe in our hearts that God had raised Him from the dead according to Romans 10:9.

Hebrews 4:1-3

Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith. Now we who have believed enter that rest...

Hebrews 6:12

We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

Galatians 6:9

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

So don't ask the Lord or pray to God for finances anymore. Whatever you need, claim it in Jesus' Name. Say, "Satan, take your hands off my money," and then say, "Go, ministering spirits, and cause the money to come according to God's Word in Jesus' Name." Angels are sent to be our ministering spirits to see that God's Word comes to pass in our lives.

Hebrews 1:14- Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

Another rule of thumb to keep in mind is that many things in this life can only come through other people. Take finances for instance, God does not counterfeit money. Often times He will impress upon people to give into your life or ministry, but it may not take until the 17th person to obey God and give! Well this burns up time now doesn't it. Suppose we became impatient and spiritualize the situation and reason away, "Well I guess it just wasn't the Lord's will for me to go on this mission trip." Note to self, that statement would torpedo God's plan for them to go on that mission trip.

Luke 6:38

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

The angels that were working, bringing the money in through people, would have to stop in their activities. Our faith in God's Word sets the angels to working, but when we speak doubt and unbelief it brings them to a standstill. Angels are all about seeing God's Word fulfilled in the earth.



Psalms 103:20-21

Praise the Lord, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word. Praise the Lord, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.

No more Bondage but Glorious Liberty!

No more bondage, no more bondage, now I am free from the enemy. I don't have to be sick no more, don't have to be poor no more, don't have to be bound no more by anything; for whom the Son sets free, is free indeed, no more bondage, but glorious liberty!

The angels are a working, bringing the money in! The angels are a working, by faith we always win. By His riches up in glory, my needs He does supply. My God has never failed me, on Him I will rely. God is prospering, everything I do, by His faithfulness, I know He'll always see me through. Though the enemy may try to hinder or delay, he can't make it stay, I will prosper anyway! Just as demonic spirits influence people to do bad, angels of God can also influence people to do good.

Put Pressure on the Word, not on People

Mixing God's Word with faith and action will bring results every time. Yet there is a man-ward side and a God-ward side to receiving the blessings of God- remember Isaiah 1:19. Before we can effectively exercise our faith for finances or any of God's blessings, we must be willing and obedient. Then we must think and believe in line with His Word and walk in the light of it. When we do, our faith will bring into manifestation what God has provided for us in His great plan of redemption.

The Power of Words

Our words set the landmarks of our life; they locate whether we are in faith or fear. They set us free or hold us in bondage. If you have been speaking negatively about your financial situation, simply repent and start speaking the Word of God over your finances.

Proverbs 6:2

If you have been trapped by what you said, ensnared by the words of your mouth,

Mark 11:23 NKJV

“For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.”

Notice in Mark 11:23 that Jesus pointed out to “Say” three times to “Believing” just once. In other words, when it comes to the operation of faith, we are to make speaking God's Word out of our mouths a priority. Most believers understand the importance of believing with the heart, but are weak on understanding and exercising the confession of the mouth. The Word of Faith requires both, the confession and believing of God's Word.

Romans 10:8-11

But what does it say? “The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,” that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

In order for the Word to work for us, it's got to be both in our mouth and in our heart. It can't just be in our mouth. Folks can say things, but if they don't really believe what they are saying from their heart, it won't work. Nor can they believe something in their heart without speaking it, and expect it to come to pass. The spirit of faith that receives the promises of God will only work by believing and saying.

2 Corinthians 4:13

It is written: “I believed; therefore I have spoken.” With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak...

So let's speak God's Word, the promises of God, victory, success and overcoming in Jesus. Let's talk about how wonderful our Heavenly Father is, let's boast in God and how awesome He is- this is how our faith will grow. Training in godliness dictates that we speak life, not death and defeat. If we talk about our trials, tests and temptations, and how the devil is making our lives hard, and how we are struggling financially, our faith will just shrivel. So whatever we think on and speak about will build an image of faith or fear in our spirit, and that is what we will receive in life.

If we talk about a lack of finances or a bad economy, it will stop the money from coming in. Folks need to learn that, but if we'll believe in our heart what the Word of God said and confess it with our mouths, we'll get results. So faith for finances works just like faith for healing, we simply have to claim what we need. Everything in redemption has already been provided for, just have to confess it, believe it and receive it.

Sifted as Wheat

The greatest battle that any child of God will ever fight is the battle of Faith. Which is living out, acting on, practicing in, and putting the Word of God first place in one's life. This is where the rubber meets the road for the Christian. This is where Satan will come with trials, tests and temptations to challenge our belief in God and endeavor to rattle our world so that we abandon any aspirations we may have to live radical for Jesus.

When we follow the life of Peter during the days of Jesus' ministry on earth, he was always outspoken and perhaps a little over confident. He was a diamond in the rough for leadership that Jesus was continually polishing for the days ahead, during the days of the Early Church. Satan observed this as well, and like Job, wanted to prove God wrong and reveal the flaws, weaknesses and try to make failures out of them.

Luke 22:31-34

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” But he replied, “Lord, I am ready to go with you to prison and to death.” Jesus answered, “I tell you, Peter, before the rooster crows today, you will deny three times that you know me.”

What Satan is after is the Word, to steal it out of our lives. The enemy will use persecution to discourage us, temptation to defeat us, and condemnation and a feelings of unworthiness to shame us. Anything at his disposal to keep us from living a life of faith and victory. If that does not work, he will try to get us to compromise, to slow down, and present distractions. Just like in the parable of the sower in Mark chapter four; present desires for other things in order to choke the Word out of our lives.

Hebrews 10:32-39

Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, “He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.” But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.

Revelation 2:10

Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.

But we have encouragement from God in this fight of faith that we are engaged in. We are never failures unless we give up. Keep at it, stand on the Word, speak the Name of Jesus, don't back down, let up or give in- KEEP FIGHTING!

However, if we give into temptation, succumb to the trial, complain and cry during the test, we need to repent and ask our Heavenly Father for forgiveness. A Christian can have 10 miles of tests and trials and not grown an inch unless they act on God's Word in the midst of it and overcome- Romans 14:23, *“Everything that does not come from faith is sin.”*

Hebrews 4:16

Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Matthew 14:26-33

When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.” “Lord, if it’s you,” Peter replied, “tell me to come to you on the water.” “Come,” he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. **But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, “Lord, save me !” Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. “You of little faith,” he said, “why did you doubt?” And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”**

Interesting that Jesus did not coddle Peter and say, “It’s okay Peter that you doubted me, it’s only natural to be afraid of storms, at least you tried- better luck next time.” No, that is not what Jesus did, Peter received a rebuke for giving into fear, because that is sin. Of course the Lord was merciful and saved him when he cried out for help, He will save us too when we experience a faith failure. Now the Bible is clear that we are to show mercy and not judge or condemn our brothers and sisters or even ourselves when we miss it. Christians have a bad habit of shooting their own wounded!

Galatians 6:1-5

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens , and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, for each one should carry his own load.

We claimed the New Birth by confessing "Jesus is Lord," so we can also confess according to Philippians 4:19, "*And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*" When we believe and confess in line with God's Word, we can appropriate what belongs to us in Christ. We can't talk about the negative circumstances, and accomplish much for God.

When we release our faith about a thing, just say it once, after that we can give God thanks and praise as much as we like for the answer. It won't work for us just because we are imitating someone else along these lines. We have to get the revelation of God's Word concerning prosperity in our own heart; become fully persuaded, then speak it out of our mouth and it will work- that is the spirit of faith according to 2 Corinthians 4:13.

There is a confession of God's Word unto faith (Romans 10:8) in order to believe God's Word in our heart- this is done through Bible meditation, speaking God's Word over and over again. In the course of time faith rises from the heart and there is a confession of faith from our heart called the spirit of faith- 2 Corinthians 4:13. The former we do over and over again until we become fully persuaded, the latter we do only once when we finally believe that we receive- Mark 11:23-24. When we say with our mouth, what we believe in our heart, the results will be forthcoming.

Unit 2 Review:

Why is it important to understand that poverty is a part of the curse of the law?

How were many Old Testament passages translated into English – causative or permissive? Why is it important to make this distinction?

What does it mean to be judged by the Lord according to Scripture?

As Christians, will prosperity automatically work in our lives without us doing anything?

Why is understanding the authority of the believer so important to receiving our financial blessings?

Are we to pray for finances; how does the “car keys” analogy help answer this question?

C. Prosperity under the New Covenant

1. The Grace of Giving

As Christians, when we give, the Scriptures declare that act of giving of sowing financial and material seed as an act of God's Grace. Since the subject of God's Grace is such a central theme in the New Testament, we should take special note of it. The Grace of God is expressed through numerous avenues of the Christian life as we see in 2 Corinthians 8:7: faith, speech, knowledge, earnestness, love and giving. In Ephesians 2:8-9, we see that faith and grace go hand in hand; pivotal for mankind receiving salvation. But it does not stop at the New Birth, God's Grace (Power) is meant to be released through our faith in God's Word for all matters than pertain to life and conduct. Therefore, since God's Grace is associated with our giving, the subject of giving and receiving is then elevated to a place of prominence. Thus we are obligated to both understand and practice these all important Biblical principles in our lives.

2 Corinthians 8:7

But just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us-see that you also excel in **this grace of giving.**

First let's define what "Grace" is and where it comes from. Simply put according to the Bible, grace is the power of God at work in us who believe! God's grace is God's Power and is contained in God's Word- the Bible. As we meditate on the Bible, we are ingesting God's power and creative life into our spirit- John 1:17 *"For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."* Note, in verse 1 Jesus is referred to as "The Word" in this chapter. The Word of God = the Grace of God. So God's Grace, God's power for living comes through the Word of God- the Bible!

Acts 20:32

Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Romans 1:16

I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.

Ephesians 3:7

I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

John 6:63

The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.

The secret to living by grace through faith is simply found by getting God's Word from off the pages of the Bible and into our spirit- that is done by meditating or confessing God's Word out of our mouths. Our spirit is the production center, the fertile ground from which the seed of God's Word is planted and grows to produce after its own kind in a multiplied fashion.

Luke 17:20-21

"The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."

Let's now look at the "Grace of Giving" in action; in other words, what does it look like in the life of the disciple of Christ. I believe that 2 Corinthians chapters eight and nine, provides an excellent model for the New Covenant Church concerning the Grace of giving for us to follow today.

Giving without Regard to Self

The believers in Achaia were undergoing severe economic times. As followers of Jesus Christ in the midst of a pagan culture, they were persecuted and oppressed- making ends meet was a constant faith battle for them. In the natural, the human tendency for them would be to hoard and hold onto the little they had due to uncertain times. However, the Grace of God was upon them to such an extent, that they gave with an overflowing joy in rich generosity.

2 Corinthians 8:2

Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.

Giving Beyond our own Ability

When word reached the Corinthian church that their fellow saints in Jerusalem were suffering materially, the love of God that was shed abroad in their hearts (Romans 5:5) stirred them to action. Human sympathy conjures up feelings of empathy, but the compassion of God moves us to act and become a vessel for God to flow through to meet the needs of others. Notice that the Corinthian believers in Achaia gave "beyond their ability" in the natural- that is a clear evidence of the supernatural Grace of God in operation. They were not asked to give, God moved on their hearts to give; not passively, but they urgently pleaded or begged for the opportunity to give. They were not giving out of a sense of obligation or Christian duty, for them it was a privilege to serve their brothers and sisters in Christ in this way.

2 Corinthians 8:3-4

For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

Even under the Old Covenant we see by God's grace, resulting in an amazing amount of generosity displayed by the Israelites who provided for the materials in the construction of the Tabernacle. Even to the point, where the people had to be restrained.

Exodus 35:20-22, 29

Then the whole Israelite community withdrew from Moses' presence, and everyone who was willing and whose heart moved him came and brought an offering to the LORD for the work on the Tent of Meeting, for all its service, and for the sacred garments. All who were willing, men and women alike, came and brought gold jewelry of all kinds: brooches, earrings, rings and ornaments. They all presented their gold as a wave offering to the LORD. All the Israelite men and women who were willing brought to the LORD freewill offerings for all the work the LORD through Moses had commanded them to do.

Exodus 36:3-7

And the people continued to bring freewill offerings morning after morning. So all the skilled craftsmen who were doing all the work on the sanctuary left their work and said to Moses, "The people are bringing more than enough for doing the work the LORD commanded to be done." Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp: "No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary." And so the people were restrained from bringing more, because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work.

Give as unto the Lord

In order to give by God's Grace, we must consecrate our giving first as unto the Lord. We are giving unto the Lord as we put our material possessions into the hands of men. This makes it an act of devotion, and so reaffirms the covenant we have with God through Jesus Christ- all we have is His and all He has is ours! Also notice, that the amount was is to be in conformity to the "will of God" as He deals with each individual as to the amount that should be given. It becomes a personal thing between us and the Lord. Therefore, when various needs come to our attention, our response should be, "How much do you want us to give Lord Jesus?"

2 Corinthians 8:5-6

And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will. So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part.

Grace to Give and Grace to Receive

Bottom line, it takes God's Grace to give and it takes God's Grace to receive. We are talking about divine transactions of sowing and reaping in the supernatural realm, that makes things happen in the natural realm.

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

When we sow financial seed, there so much more that is set in motion than what meets the eye; "*We live by faith, not by sight*" according to 2 Corinthians 5:7. We will explore the spiritual principles of sowing and reaping in greater detail later on in this teaching material. However, I want you to notice that our faith to obey God in giving as He prompts us to, releases His Grace to return an even greater measure of financial seed. This process of giving and receiving, results in a marvelous cyclical growth process called Biblical Prosperity- blessed to be a blessing!

Notice that our giving will make us rich in every way so that we can live a life of generosity which results in thanksgiving to God! I call that a most definite "Win – Win" proposition. Our giving by God's Grace is an act of obedience (Faith) on our part that is necessary in order to meet the needs of God's people. Have you ever stopped to think that the folks we bless, their hearts will go out to us in prayer.

2 Corinthians 9:8-11

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

2 Corinthians 9:12-15

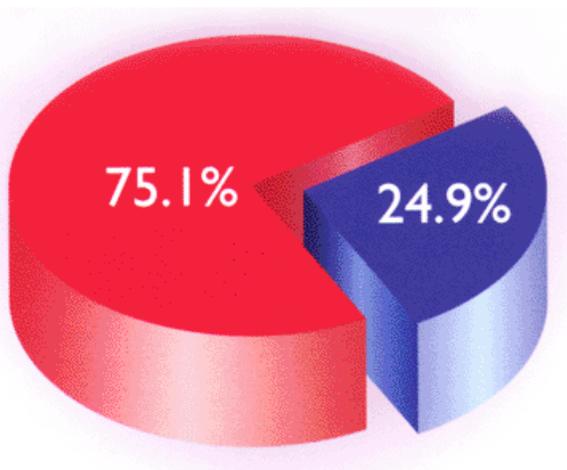
This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

One last point I wanted to make concerning God's Grace and giving is in regards to the motivational gift of giving as a function for believers in the Body of Christ. All of us as members of the Body of Christ have been given grace by God to serve one another with His power and ability. All of us have been endowed with something to give. In a general sense, all believers have a Biblical responsibility to give financially and materially to our local church, missions, the poor and the Kingdom of God in general.

1 Peter 4:10

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

However, some believers have a special anointing to make money for God's kingdom. Whether it is in business or inventions, they have a grace from God to produce wealth, over and above the average Christian. They are called by God to make huge capital investments into furthering God's works throughout the world.



Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Romans 12:4-8

2. God Loves a Cheerful Giver

2 Corinthians 9:7

Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

In the natural, when we see our kids grow up to be generous and willing to share, who are not selfish but consider others better than themselves- our joy knows no bounds! Our heavenly Father is the same way, He delights to see His children live out His nature of love and live to give, and lay their lives down for others. The word "cheerful" in 2 Corinthians 9:7 is translated in other versions as a "joyous or prompt to do it" kind of giver. I love it in the Greek; the original meaning for "cheerful" is being a "hilarious" giver. So when the collection is being passed around, we should be doing cart-wheels and jumping up and down in excitement for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints!

hilaros (hil-ar-os'); from the same as NT:2436; propitious or merry ("hilarious"), i.e. prompt or willing: KJV - cheerful.

2 Corinthians 9:2- For I know your eagerness to help, and I have been boasting about it to the Macedonians, telling them that since last year you in Achaia were ready to give; and your enthusiasm has stirred most of them to action.

When it comes to the subject of giving, it all boils down to a matter of the heart- it's fun to give! If it isn't than something is wrong.

Acts 20:33-35

“I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

God is not looking at the amount, but rather He is looking at the heart, because the Scriptures declare that if the “willingness” is there, that is what makes the gift acceptable, not the value of the gift. When we give with enthusiasm as a hilarious giver with a willing heart, our Father God is well pleased. However, if we are giving out of tradition, obligation and grudgingly, we had better hold onto that gift unto we make a heart adjustment and become willing and obedient.

2 Corinthians 8:12

For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

2 Corinthians 9:5

So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. Then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given.

Isaiah 1:19- If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land...

The Chief Expression of Love is in Giving

The greatest expression of love is giving; for God so loved the world that He gave! Being generous and willing to sow into the lives of others and make eternal investments should be second nature to us. The nature of sin is selfishness and the nature of God’s love is to give.

1 John 3:16-18

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

1 John 4:9-10

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Love for God is to walk in the truth and obey His Word. Feelings or emotions are not the chief expression of love. The world does not know what love is and even some Christians are still unsure.

1 John 5:2-3

This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome...

If we love God, we will surrender all we have to Him, and to others as the Lord prompts us to.

3. Eternal Life

John 10:10

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Jesus came that we may experience the abundant life, but what kind of life was Jesus talking about in the above passage of Scripture. The Greek word translated “life” in this verse is zoe- the God-kind of life. According to 1 John 3:8, *“The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.”* The devil came in the garden of Eden and through the fall of man, worked spiritual death into the human race through Adam’s transgression- Romans 5:12, *“Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.”*

Yet Jesus came to earth as the Last Adam to undo what the first Adam had done, and that was to restore spiritual life to a race of spiritually dead people- Romans 5:21, *“Just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Eternal life is a free gift, it is the ability of God to be His sons- nature/capacity/nobility/strength & fortitude. Eternal life is often misunderstood among Christian circles as meaning a state of existence that begins in heaven- experiencing the ecstasy of paradise, certainly that is part of it. Others simply believe that eternal life means being able to exist forever- all human beings will live forever, the question is where, this depends on what they do with Jesus.

This eternal life He came to give us is the nature of God- John 5:26, *“For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself.”* In John 1:4, *“In him was life, and that life was the light of men.”* Light stands for development, this God-kind of life has made us new creations in Christ Jesus, and it enriches every area of our life mentally, physically and financially.

First of all, we must understand that if you are born again through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, then you have eternal life NOW! John 6:47 says, *“I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.”* Notice the word “HAS” which according to the English language, means “Present Tense”, we have eternal life NOW! 1 John 5:13 says, *“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.”*

We possess in our spirit man the very life and nature of God Almighty right now, that is what eternal life means. If we have the nature of God, we will do the things that the nature of God would do. That is why we are called children of God, 1 John 3:1, *“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!”* and what about Ephesians 5:1, *“Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children.”* We have been born of God and resemble Him spiritually as we resemble our natural parents physically. We must yield ourselves to this new nature in us by renewing our minds with the Word. That is how the good stuff inside us, becomes real and apparent to others around us- showing off the fruit of our re-created spirit according to Galatians 5:22-23.



We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body.

2 Corinthians 4:10-11

The Apostle Paul talks here about the life of God in our spirits being manifested in our bodies. He is not talking about the Resurrection, but about something that happens in this life. I'm convinced that if one learns how to walk in the light of life, and lets that life dominate him, he will live to a great age naturally, if Jesus carries.

There are four different Greek words translated "life" in the New Testament. First, there is *zoe*. Then there is *psuche*. That means natural or human life. *Bios* means manner of life. Finally, there is *anastrophee* which means confused behavior. It seems strange that the church has majored on "manner of life" or "behavior" rather than eternal life (*zoe*), which determines to a large degree our manner of life. We have majored on conduct, conversation and habits because they are in the sense realm. They have always appealed to babes in Christ. We like to be told what we can do and what we cannot do. No matter what manner of life or behavior you have, if you don't have eternal life, it will not amount to anything anyway.

Receiving eternal life is in reality, God imparting His very nature, substance, and being to our human spirits- read 2 Corinthians 5:17-18; Ezekiel 36:26-27. This new kind of life (God's Nature), produces certain changes in a person. You can see the effects of that life almost at once. You can see it in a person's habits and speech. It changes conduct, corrects habits, and forms new ones- Eternal life is the answer to all of man's social ills!

This eternal life in your spirit will also rise up and influence your mentality and physical being if you learn how to walk in the light of it through faith in God's Word. In the Old Testament we know of successful men and women who were operating under the Old Covenant- example Daniel & Esther. How much more should we as re-created children of God succeed and be the best in every station in life, because of the gift of eternal life- the ability of God within us! Boys and girls in their teens who receive eternal life, and let that life dominate their lives, will be 10 to 50 percent more mentally efficient than they were before. Something comes into them that affects their mental processes and governs their morals. All creative ability is in the born again human spirit, that is where God's nature resides. God who is the creator of the universe has put His nature in us; therefore, our human spirit is the fountain out of which all the creative energy flows.

It becomes apparent that pure human reason or sense knowledge has never produced an inventor or a great poet, or a creator in any human culture. What is it about eternal life that makes people to be inventors with cutting edge technology. It does not come from natural human reason or sense knowledge which only makes philosophers of men. But what is philosophy? It is a vain search for reality that is found only in Christ! The fact is, the age old philosophers did not give us anything except mental concepts and theories. It is a remarkable thing that when a man/woman receives eternal life through the new birth, and allows it to develop in him, his creative energy is at once awakened. It changes his mental processes. It quickens his sense of perception; in reality sin makes us dumb, ignorant and bound!

All the knowledge that we have in our colleges, universities, and technical schools has come to us through the five senses. Man apart from God has no means of gaining knowledge except through the five senses. The limitations of sense knowledge are apparent to every thinking individual. Natural man cannot know beyond the contacts that he makes with the five senses. It can only take them to the frontier of human investigation and observation, but can take them no further.

Then revelation knowledge comes to their rescue through the new birth. By being re-united with their creator, the open channels of supernatural information begins to pour in- so superior to sense knowledge. The re-created human spirit begins to function energized by the Holy Spirit to enlighten the human mind with creative revelation, understanding and skills- walking in the flesh hinders this!

Proverbs 8:11-12 (KJV)

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it. I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out **knowledge of witty inventions.**

2 Chronicles 26:15

In Jerusalem he made machines designed by **skillful men for use on the towers and on the corner defenses to shoot arrows and hurl large stones. His fame spread far and wide, for he was greatly helped until he became powerful.**

Begin to confess God's Word concerning who you are in Christ and enjoy the reality of your glorious inheritance here and now! We must learn how to walk in the light of eternal life to enjoy the fullness and the reality of it. Sometimes we think if we have something in the spiritual realm, it should work automatically, but that doesn't work even in the natural- just because we have electricity, does not automatically mean we have a microwave oven. We can have something that belongs to us and not know we have it, so it does us no good. Yes, it's our possession, but until we discover it's ours, it won't do us any good. That is why God gave us His Word, so we would take the time to find out what we have and then walk in the light of it. Unfortunately, we can't enjoy the reality of it in this life if we don't know what it is, what it is supposed to do for us, and how to implement it.

II. Good Stewards of God's Resources

A. God's Plan for Stewardship

The subject of stewardship is significant all throughout the Bible; since the charge God gave Adam in the garden of Eden. How we use the gifts God has given us will be revealed at the Judgment Seat of Christ, when we give an account to God of the deposits we have made in the lives of others. One thing is certain about our God, He entrusts us with His resources, commissions us to do His work, holds us accountable and rewards us for our faithfulness.

Genesis 2:15

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

1 Peter 4:10

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

Matthew 25:14-15

"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey."

Prosperity is God's Idea

The stark reality is as Christians, we are all working for our Heavenly Father right now here on earth. We are working with Him in the family business- seeking and saving the lost. The main reason for life on this earth is simple, to be reconciled with God through faith in Jesus Christ; everything rests on that eternal decision that we all have to make- what are we going to do with Jesus, accept Him or reject Him as Lord and Savior. Humanity receiving “Eternal Life” is our end game, final objective, the Great Commission; to also root and establish those who are saved, in the truth of God’s Word. Everything else is a means to this end goal. So being a financial steward of God’s resources means channeling the money God places in our hands towards His Kingdom work as He directs us.

2 Corinthians 5:20-21

We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Luke 14:23

“Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full.’”

John 3:36

“Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him”

God has given us a job to do. I love how He gives us such rich purpose and meaningful labor in this life both naturally and spiritually. The Father is all about seeing us develop, mature and grow in the things of God. He does not want us idle, burning time away, and living fruitless lives of self-indulgence. As Adam had a purpose to be steward of the garden of Eden, the Father God has entrusted us with great responsibilities and tasks that are of eternal value. What an honor, privilege and responsibility. Such stewardship adds value and meaning to life; with the prospects of an exciting future with great anticipation of future rewards. Therefore, we should be excited and embrace this commitment to work in the Master’s vineyard and harvest field.

2 Corinthians 6:1-2

As God’s fellow workers we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain. For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation.

Luke 10:2

He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Matthew 20:1-2

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire men to work in his vineyard . He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.”

Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

If some of us worked for a human employer as they work for the Lord – they would be fired, Selah!



Stewardship comes down to two simple principles:

Obedience and Fruit

Jesus gave many illustrations of this through His parables as recorded in the Gospels. He used agricultural examples that the people would understand in order to illustrate these significant spiritual principles. Obedience comes down to a choice as we exercise our free will. Even though God has the power to make us do the right thing and work for Him, yet He allows us to choose. We are responsible for the choices we make and the fruit we produce in our lives. There is no one to blame when we make wrong decisions.

Matthew 21:28-31

“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’ ‘‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. ‘Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go. ‘Which of the two did what his father wanted?’ ‘‘The first,’’ they answered.

Matthew 21:33-34

“Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.”

1 Thessalonians 1:3

We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Father wants to see us mature spiritually as we take steps of obedience to do His will, but He also wants a return on His investment and receive the fruit or results in our lives and what we do for others. Seems reasonable to me, God goes to all this trouble to create the material universe and creates us; even though we sinned and fell away, He redeems us and restores us back to Himself. Why shouldn't He expect something back in return from our lives for all He has done for us?

Luke 13:6-9

Then he told this parable: “A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’ “‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.’”

Financial stewardship is like any other kind of stewardship, it requires obedience and fruitfulness- let's show Him the money when He asks for it! We need our minds renewed, that it all belongs to God in the first place, we are only caretakers of God's resources. Our joy in this life is tied to our willingness to be a channel for God to flow through and bless others; if God can get it through us, He can give it to us. Proverbs 11:24, *“One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.”*

John 15:1-8

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. his is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

1. What we have we have Received

We must realize that everything we have, we have received from God, so with that in mind, what should our obvious response be? Make everything available and accessible to the Master when He calls for what is His. I suppose that would make us a thief if we failed to let go of what belongs to the Master already. This is a Biblical perspective that runs contrary to world thinking that espouses, “What’s mine is mine! I worked for it, earned it, paid taxes on it, so it is now mine to do whatever I want with it!”

Deuteronomy 8:17-20

You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. Like the nations the Lord destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the Lord your God.



Consider what the Lord told the children of Israel in Deuteronomy 8:17-20. The reality is that God created the material world and us and without Him we would not exist and have anything at all to claim as ours. It is the Lord who gives us the “Ability” to produce wealth. If we forget this and fail to support His Kingdom work in the earth and become idolatrous, bowing down to the god of materialism and consumerism, then we will lose out on God’s purpose for our lives. We will have opened the door to the devil to kill, steal and destroy in our lives, due to disobedience.

Please don’t misunderstand me, the Lord will bless us with good things in this life to enjoy, we just have to keep our priorities right and seek first His Kingdom and serve Him faithfully with His resources. Remember, our Father wants us to be rich financially, to be a greater blessing- just not covetous.

So if all things are yours according to 1 Corinthians 3:21, we need to remember where they came from as stated in 1 Corinthians 11:12, *“For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.”*

1 Corinthians 3:21-23

So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours, whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or the present or the future — all are yours, and you are of Christ, and Christ is of God.

Everything we have that is good is from God; we have received all these things for a divine purpose. Certainly, to be blessed by them personally, but more than that, to be a blessing. The sooner we accept this truth from God’s Word, the sooner we will be actively going about the Master’s business of investing God’s Grace and goodness into others, because people matter to God.

John 3:27- To this John replied, “A man can receive only what is given him from heaven.”

James 1:16-18

Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

1 Corinthians 4:6-7

Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go beyond what is written.” Then you will not take pride in one man over against another. For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

2. What is Required of a Steward



The Lord requires of us as stewards in His Kingdom, is to be faithful, trustworthy, willing and obedient- with the things that He entrusts to us. It seems like such a simple thing to do, but in reality it is much easier said than done. The selfish impulses of our human nature, the world system and the devil are all pushing us away from godly stewardship. Therefore, to be the kind of steward that God requires, it takes deliberate and decisive actions on our part, through faith in God’s Word in order to release the Grace of God for us to overcome in this all important calling.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must **prove faithful. I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men’s hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.**

Certainly the subject of stewardship has broad applications to the believer in Jesus Christ. For the purpose of this study however, we are applying the general principles of stewardship to being faithful and accountable to God with money and material possessions. Jesus calls a servant faithful and wise who has been put in charge of things, and is a good caretaker, responsible and diligent. Everything that we do as unto the Lord should be done with the utmost quality, excellence and craftsmanship.

Matthew 24:45-51

“Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom the master has put in charge of the servants in his household to give them their food at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whose master finds him doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose that servant is wicked and says to himself, ‘My master is staying away a long time,’ and he then begins to beat his fellow servants and to eat and drink with drunkards. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

I am appalled at the attitude of so many who give less than their best to God. When asked to be on time for a meeting or to serve in helps ministry, they show up late. When they give their word to serve, and people are counting on them, they fail to show up. Brothers and sister, that is unacceptable to the Master. How we regard and treat others with our commitments or lack thereof, is a direct reflection upon the Lord. There is such a lack of respect for the things of God in the Body of Christ today, people show up late for service and leave right in the middle of an altar call. I guess I have a pet peeve about people showing up late. It is such a disregard for others when folks are bumping into us as they squeeze by at a time when we are caught up to the throne of God during praise and worship. Can't they just leave their house fifteen minutes earlier?

Matthew 25:40

“The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”



A tremendous motivation that we have as stewards of God's resources is looking forward to the day when we as believers, must stand before Jesus Christ at the Judgment Seat of Christ. On that great day of accountability, we must all give an account of our stewardship while on earth. This is not about determining whether we are saved or not, it's all about accountability, reward and/or rebuke from Jesus; in regards to how we spent our days as a Christian on the earth- Acts 24:15-16.

2 Corinthians 5:10- For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

Romans 14:10-12 - You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. It is written: “‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.’” So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

B. Eternal Investments

I came across a statement that was used as a slogan at a church years ago that has always stuck with me, “People Matter to God.” The point seems quite obvious, but it seems that we need to be continually reminding about what is close to the heart of God. We get so busy with our natural lives that we can revert back to a worldly mentality of, “us four and no more.”

1. Investing In Others

The sooner we accept the fact that everything we have, we have received for a purpose, the sooner we can start living for eternity, with others in mind. Let’s look at a couple of parables that Jesus gave that helps illustrate the point further. The first parable was about a certain “rich man,” and in the story we see an individual who was overly preoccupied with storing up goods for himself on this earth- just look at how many times “I” is used. Well that is not walking in love is it? How is God’s love motivated to act? It wants to give and be a blessing, rather than hoard things up and heaping it all upon oneself in a greedy and covetous fashion - God has a problem with that.

Luke 12:16-21

And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I’ll say to myself, You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’ “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’” This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.

We need to get this, the prosperity of God is not just about having money and stuff. There are multi-billionaires who are so miserable that they don’t want to live. The prosperity of God is having peace of mind and joy in our soul; sure we can have stuff, and by the grace of God, be able to enjoy it. However, more importantly, be a blessing to others and help fund the Kingdom of God, and make a difference in the earth. Since God is the author of pleasure and life, only by living life His way can we truly enjoy life and have it to the full- our goal is to be rich toward God!

Luke 12:31-34

But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well. “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Remember the story about Zacchaeus who was formerly a greedy stealing tax collector in Luke chapter nine. He had a wonderful salvation experience through faith in Jesus; as a result, he gave back all that he stole and paid back four times as much on top of it. Now Jesus went on to share a parable, all in this same context about the rich noble man who had entrusted his resources to his servants. Then the noble man gave them a very important instruction in regards to the money he gave them- “Put this money to work. Trade and invest the money I have entrusted to you so that it grows; as a result, when I return I can receive it back with a profit.”

The noble man in the parable was made king and the first thing he did when he returned, was to find out how his servants did with investing his money. The first servant was called in and he had multiplied his master's money ten-fold. The master commended him for being a faithful servant over something little, and as a result, rewarded him by making him ruler over ten cities. The second servant multiplied his mina into five and so he was made ruler over five cities. However the third servant did not bother to invest it, he just sat on it. He could have at least deposited it in the bank and gained a little interest. Notice that the master called him a "Wicked" servant, because of his laziness, and by giving into fear.

Luke 19:11-27

While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas.' **Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.' "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.' "He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to **find out what they had gained with it.** "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.' "Well done, my good servant!" his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.' "The second came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned five more.' "His master answered, 'You take charge of five cities.' "Then another servant came and said, 'Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.' "His master replied, 'I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? **Why then didn't you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?**' "Then he said to those standing by, 'Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.' "Sir,' they said, 'he already has ten!' "He replied, 'I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them — bring them here and kill them in front of me.'"**

This was no idle story that Jesus made, it applies to us and what we can expect to experience at the Judgment Seat of Christ based on our faithfulness and diligence to multiply God's grace and goods in the lives of others. The only thing that lasts for eternity is what we do for others for God's glory here and now on planet earth. Not just winning souls, but serving in children's ministry, visiting those in jail, feeding the poor, supporting our local church, giving to missions, and those doing the work of God. Once we get to heaven, there is no coming back, we can't win another soul, encourage and pray for believers. We can no longer store up treasure in heaven, all these wonderful opportunities that we take for granted now on earth will be forever gone- so let's go for it!



Ephesians 5:15-17

Be very careful, then, how you live- not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity , because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Therefore, we are to be busy about making deposits and investments into people in this life with the resources the Lord has entrusted to us both in the natural and spiritual areas. We need to be sharp, on the ball and busy working for God as long as there is breath in our mouths.

At minimum, we should be a salt and light to the world around us, and be doing something. What we do in the lives of others on earth, has eternal implications and lasting effects. We are to be believing the Lord for increase, so when He returns and we give an account to Him at the Judgment Seat of Christ, we can hear those beautiful words, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant!” The more we know about these truths, the more accountable we are to obey them.

Peter 4:10-11

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

Luke 12:47-48

“That servant who knows his master’s will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”

There is no prosperity without investing both spiritually and naturally- not just money, but our whole life. It takes faith to make deposits and it takes faith to make withdrawals. We lay hold on eternal life here and now by enjoying the first-fruits of our salvation in this life.

1 Timothy 6:12-13

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Christians who are making regular deposits in the Kingdom of God over the years, need to learn how to make withdrawals. To say, “Well God knows I have needs” is the same as saying the “Bank knows I need to pay my bills, so whatever they will for my life is what I will receive.” Whose responsibility is it to make a withdrawal and pay our bills, the bank? No! Neither is God responsible for making withdrawals from our heavenly account to meet our needs in this life. If it does not work that way in the natural, why do we presume that it works that way in the spiritual area. We read into Scriptures like, Matthew 6:32, “*For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.*” Jesus is not saying not to ask, because God knows our needs already. It is just stating that God already knows that we have needs and that He has already made provision for them, so all we have to do is ask and receive- Matthew 7:7-8; 21:22 and John 16:24. When we claim our need met, we are making a withdrawal. So we are receiving by claiming it; so the blessings of God are not automatic, but require that we walk in love and release our faith.

Here is some good news, there is a Biblical principle that those who have sown in the Kingdom of God can be reaped by others. Consider, missionaries who spent all their lives sowing the Gospel seed, but never reaped much of a harvest. However, when the next generation of missionaries come on the scene, they are able to reap a bountiful harvest, due largely in part to the hard work of the previous laborers.

John 4:38- “I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”

Learning how to reap or make withdrawals is just as important and necessary as it is to sow seed. We need both in order to get the goods we need in order to further God’s Kingdom on the earth. We will discuss the rules of reaping in more detail later on in this material.

2. Taking Care of the Poor



Right now at the time of this writing, there are around 17% of American families living under the “poverty threshold” and roughly 40% falling below the poverty line at some point within a 10 year time span. Most Americans (58.5%) will spend at least one year below the poverty line at some point between ages 25 and 75. This problem is magnified when the country is going through hard economic times. With America being so affluent, it seems strange for so many individuals who are going without basic necessities. Yet the curse of poverty is harder felt in most other countries around the world.

While Satan is the god of this world system, poverty will continue to be a scourge of humanity. Not until Jesus comes back to rule and reign for 1,000 years and ushers in the Endless Age, will material lack in this world be eliminated. Poverty is a curse and it brings ruin, hardship, suffering and in many cases death to humanity. The curse of the law is three-fold: Poverty, Sickness and Death. Since we have been redeemed from the curse of the law, prosperity is part of our redemption; and if it’s part of our redemption, than it’s also a part of the Gospel message.

Galatians 3:13-14

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor , so that you through his poverty might become rich.

Luke 4:18-19

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

As the angel told Peter and John at their release from jail, so I say to all who read this book, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, contains the good news concerning deliverance from poverty!

Acts 5:20

“Go, stand in the temple courts,” he said, “and tell the people **the full message of this new life.”**

Folks who think that we are insensitive or brash for sharing the prosperity message in the poor in this country or around the world are suffering from case of spiritual political correctness. God’s Word works no matter where it’s appropriated by faith. During the earthly ministry of Jesus, He majored on teaching the people who were harassed, oppressed and helpless, knowing that only the truth will make them free. The anointing on the Word of God breaks every yoke of bondage- Isaiah 10:27 KJV. Before Jesus ministered to the people, in order to heal the sick, cast our devils or feed the multitude, He taught them the Word first.

Material Needs Met

The Bible has a lot to say about taking care of the poor, but there is a right and wrong way about it. Jesus was not so heavenly minded that He was no earthly good. Jesus provided for people in many tangible ways in the Gospel accounts.

- Turned the water into wine- John 2:1-11
- Jesus told Peter to catch a fish, and take a coin out of the fish's mouth to pay their taxes- Matthew 17:24-27.
- Jesus fed the 5,000 one time and 4,000 folks another time- Matthew 16:8-10
- Peter lets his nets down for a huge catch- Luke 5:4-10

John 6:26-27

Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, you are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

However, these solutions were only temporary, but God still cared about them. When things concern us, and we have needs in our life, the Lord is very much interested in seeing those needs met. Yet He wants us to learn how to walk by faith and believe for things to come in and not be dependent upon others all the time. It's one thing to receive some assistance during a few tight times in our lives, it is quite another if we never learn how to receive for ourselves. Remember the saying, "Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach him how to fish and you will feed him for a lifetime." The Biblical pattern for ministering to the poor seems to be two-fold. Not only are we to provide tangible gifts of food, clothing and shelter, but our main objective is to get them saved and understand how they can tap into a glorious redemption that includes prosperity for their lives.

As Jesus said in Mark 14:7, "*The poor you will always have with you, and you can help them any time you want.*" Helping the poor is a responsibility for the church. When I use the term "poor" I am lumping orphans, widows, homeless and the impoverished all together. Let's first look at the book of Proverbs in order to gain insight into how the Lord looks upon the poor and how they are to be treated by others.

Proverbs 10:15- The wealth of the rich is their fortified city, but poverty is the ruin of the poor.

Proverbs 14:31- He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

Proverbs 19:17

He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done.

Proverbs 21:13

If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and not be answered.

Proverbs 22:9- A generous man will himself be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.

Proverbs 22:22-23- Do not exploit the poor because they are poor and do not crush the needy in court, for the Lord will take up their case and will plunder those who plunder them.

Proverbs 28:27- He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses.



James 1:27

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

We have to be careful not to go from one extreme to another when dealing with the poor in our society. On one hand we could just ignore them and pawn them off onto the government to take care of them. This is a copout and the government can only provide a band-aid solution that treats the symptoms of poverty and not the root cause- not knowing Jesus and Biblical ignorance. On the other hand we could devote all our resources to helping the needy with material assistance, but never address the root cause and get the truth of God's Word in their lives that will make them free. We can't show favoritism on behalf of the poor to the exclusion of the financially well off who are impoverished in soul and spirit. It is interesting to note that Jesus made numerous references to taking care of the poor.

Matthew 19:21- Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor , and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

Luke 7:22

So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor."

Luke 14:12-14

Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor , the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

Luke 14:21-24

"The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor , the crippled, the blind and the lame.' " "Sir,' the servant said, 'what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.' "Then the master told his servant, 'Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those men who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.'"

Matthew 25:34-40

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' "The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"

So what does the Bible say concerning the Church of Jesus Christ and her responsibilities to look after the poor, widows and the handicapped? It seems that the Early Church had made it a priority as a means of soul winning, and taking care of their own by looking after the poor in their midst.

Acts 6:1-4

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

Acts 9:36-39

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, “Please come at once!” Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

Acts 24:17- “After an absence of several years, I came to Jerusalem to bring my people gifts for the poor and to present offerings.”

Romans 15:25-27

Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the saints there. For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews’ spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.

Galatians 2:9-10

James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. All they asked was that we should continue to remember the poor, the very thing I was eager to do.

Notice in Galatians 2:10 that Paul specifically drew attention to his ministry to the poor as a top priority. Yet how are we to provide for and be an example of God’s model of prosperity, if we are not blessed to begin with? And many churches are not teaching a Gospel that includes the prosperity message. Just as there is nothing wrong when people who are suffering physically, seek medical attention; likewise when people who are sick financially, go to bankers and borrow money or receive charity because they are in need. It becomes wrong when the sick in body, and those with empty wallets continually look to man for help, and disregard God’s answers for their needs. There is nothing wrong with receiving temporary help, but it should be a means to an end so that we can ultimately become totally dependent upon the Lord and His Word to heal our bodies and prosper us financially.

James 2:14-17- What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed ,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

There are reasons why people are struggling financially and find themselves homeless and broke. Bad decisions and environmental influences all contribute to their present station in life. Again, looking at the book of Proverbs we can readily see some contributing factors, though not an exhaustive list, for some causes for poverty in folks' lives. Some folks hesitate to minister to the poor because they do not want to be guilty of enabling behaviors like addictions or laziness. Certainly, the Bible does not direct us to enable destructive behaviors. The Scriptures teach us to honor God with our bodies and to work hard, be industrious and to mix God's promises with faith. The Bible has some tough love for idle behaviors.

Proverbs 21:17

He who loves pleasure will become poor; whoever loves wine and oil will never be rich.

Proverbs 23:21- For drunkards and gluttons become poor, and drowsiness clothes them in rags.

Proverbs 10:4- Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth.

Proverbs 20:13

Do not love sleep or you will grow poor; stay awake and you will have food to spare.

1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

In ancient Bible times, they did not have the kind of social services like we do now. Back then, one reason for having lots of children was to have them take care of them when they were well along in years. Unfortunately that approach is inherently flawed when unexpected things like war and disease can create orphans and widows. We see in the heart of Christianity, systems in place, even during the beginning days of the Church, where provision was made for those who found themselves in difficult circumstances of life.

For me it seems like Christianity 101 to reach out and minister to the poor in order to lead them to Christ, and help them grow in the truth that will make them free. Even if they don't respond to our ministry, we did our job and they are left without any excuses. If local churches across our country would embrace this Biblical mandate and relieve the federal government of this heavy burden, we will be so far ahead as a nation because we will be fixing the root of the problem of sin and ignorance- James 4:17, "*Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.*"



Poverty often times is a generational cycle that needs to be broken by the anointing of the Word of God ministered to others by compassionate followers of Jesus Christ. We need to give people not just a handout to meet their immediate needs, but a hand up to greater provision and blessing for their lives. This is the kind of love that the world is looking for, where we empower one another and spur one another on toward love and good deeds.

*“As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
Proverbs 27:17*

I have enclosed a sample email that I received that serves as a perfect illustration concerning the needs that are all around us. One great advantage that local churches provide is that they are able to pool resources together in an organized fashion to serve as outreach ministries to the community.

“I got a call from a friend this morning, 2 of the women we ministered to in jail (substance abuse program) have been living in a temporary housing situation for a few weeks and are being evicted by the landlord as we speak. If anyone has any contacts or knows of someone who might be willing to house these women (they want to try to stay together to support each other) please get in touch with me right away. They are still unemployed, but looking for work. They both get food stamps. It would be awesome if we could keep them off the street even if it’s “one day at a time”- they desperately want to stay sober and get their lives together. Challenges abound: jail time, substance abuse, no jobs, no transportation. I am not trying to discourage anyone from helping, just want to be honest about what we are dealing with. Unfortunately, the one sober house they called is full.”

Not only is the community in need of our help, but our own congregations are full of brothers and sisters in Christ who are hurting and struggling in the financial area. The Lord has charged us to make it a priority to take care of our own, especially the weak and helpless.

1 Timothy 5:3-15

Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God. The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives. Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame. If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds. As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to. So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.

One last point I want to bring out concerning generosity in sharing with the poor; which is not to be confused with income redistribution of the wealthy. It means everybody, even the poor widow, putting in what the Lord directs- Mark 12:42-43. Consider Cornelius, who was not even a believer at the time; the Bible states that his generosity to the poor was recognized by God as a, “memorial offering.”

Acts 10:1-6

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, “Cornelius!” Cornelius stared at him in fear. “What is it, Lord?” he asked. The angel answered, “Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God. Now send men to Joppa to bring back a man named Simon who is called Peter. He is staying with Simon the tanner, whose house is by the sea.”

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Unit 3 Review:

What Biblical definition is provided for grace, and how does grace affect our giving?

Is it true that some believers have a specific calling to make money for God’s Kingdom? Explain.

Why is giving “Cheerfully” so important when we give?

Why is “Zoe” or eternal life so important to our financial situation?

What is it about stewardship in general that makes it so important in God’s Kingdom?

When it comes to meeting the needs of the poor, how are we to go about it as Christians?

C. Beware of the Love of Money

With any blessing from God there is a real and present danger that abuses can take place for selfish gain. Material blessings are no less susceptible to be abused. The Bible provides us with many admonitions to guard against things like, greed, covetousness and idolatry. My goal with this teaching series is to be fair and balanced on the subject of prosperity. Too often we overemphasize one side of Biblical truth at the expense of the other. I am of the belief that spiritual maturity is accomplished through balanced Biblical teaching. Consider Solomon in the book of Proverbs:

Proverbs 30:7-9

Two things I ask of you, O Lord; do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

Godly contentment is such a wonderful virtue that stems from the peace of God; resting in the Father’s provision and care to provide for His beloved children- consider Psalms 23. God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness according to 2 Peter 1:2-4. All that is left for us to do now is to come and dine at the Master’s table. We don’t need to be desperate, living in survival mode to scratch out a living; consumed with where our next meal is coming from. When we taste and see that the Lord is good, we can rest assured that we will be well provided for.

Psalms 34:8-10

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. Fear the Lord, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

Psalms 37:25-26

I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be blessed.



But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.**

1 Timothy 6:6-10

Philippians 4:11-13

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

So the urgent need for self-preservation and survival is replaced by a supernatural contentment and peace of God, knowing that He is our source and that we can trust in Him to provide our every need. The Lord wants us free from the love of money, no longer subservient to the god of materialism.

Matthew 6:24

“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”

Worry and fretting about our life is nothing more than a lack of faith that doubts God’s ability to make His Word good in our lives. When we get a revelation of how much the Father loves us and our value to Him (by sending Jesus to die for us), we can stop striving and start living for Him in undivided devotion to the Lord.

Matthew 6:25-34

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?”

So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Things are temporary and the things of this life are to be used and enjoyed but never to illicit our devotion and attention away from seeking first His Kingdom. If God can get things through us, He can get things to us. We are in the world but are not of it; we are not to adopt their world view of thinking. As disciples of Jesus Christ, what preoccupies our lives is God’s plans, purposes and pursuits- at least that is our goal. Having this eternal perspective is critical for us to live in a right way, in undivided devotion to the Lord; otherwise we might as well eat and drink for tomorrow we die-
1 Corinthians 15:32.

Matthew 16:24-26

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?”

1. Beware of Greed and Covetousness

A simple definition of greed is: “The excessive desire to acquire or possess more (especially more material wealth) than one needs.” Unless of course the motive for acquiring more than what one needs is for the purpose of sowing it into others for God’s glory. At the root of greed is selfishness and pride. In order to elevate oneself above others to a position of power, influence, prestige and self-indulgence.

Luke 12:15

Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed ; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”

The Bible calls greed, “Idolatry” in Colossians 3:5, “*Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.*” I have been saying all along, God wants us to become rich financially, and we don’t have to be millionaires to be rich. My definition of rich is to have a superabundance, a full supply, where my cup runs over, in order to place me in a position to be a blessing to others and help further God’s Kingdom. We should view material things as a means to an end, a temporary resource that is conscripted into the Master’s service.

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

2 Timothy 2:3-7

Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs — he wants to please his commanding officer. Similarly, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not receive the victor’s crown unless he competes according to the rules. The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this.

Isn’t it interesting that “Covetousness” is declared in the Bible as the 10th commandment. The very need for this commandment points out a fundamental flaw to sinful human nature; it’s never satisfied, always lusting for more. This aspect is seen more clearly in the principle of “Diminishing Returns.” For example, a drug addict is always looking for a bigger high, and is compelled to go deeper into his addiction until his life spirals out of control and ends in death- James 1:14-15.

Exodus 20:17

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

If we are unable to enjoy contentment at any station of life, than we are covetous and God abhors the covetous according to Psalms 10:3, NKJV, “*For the wicked boasts of his heart’s desire; he blesses the greedy and renounces the Lord.*”

We need to identify areas of covetous, greed or materialism, and seek to eliminate it from our lives. Freedom from covetousness is one of the great difficulties and roadblocks to Christians. Make no mistake about it, greed is a temptation that affects the rich, poor and everybody in between. Paul said in Philippians chapter four that no matter what the circumstances, he learned to be content- notice that he was not born with that ability, but learned it. That does not mean that we just settle for perpetual lack in our lives, it means that during periods of lack we do not postpone our contentment- we continue to rest in God and rejoice in the Lord.



Hebrews 13:5-6

Keep your lives free from the love of money [covetousness] and be content with what you have, because God has said, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?”

Remember that Jesus said where our treasure is, that is where our heart will be. We must purpose in our heart and life to be kingdom minded and seek Him first. That is why we need to be continually making the good investment- in the lives of others with all our treasure, life, time, money and ability. To make it a priority to store up in our heavenly account.

Colossians 3:1-2

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

1 Thessalonians 1:3

We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2:4, 20-22

Each of you should look not only to your own interests , but also to the interests of others. I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests , not those of Jesus Christ.

The Christian experience is a continual dying to the old sinful nature in our body and to all forms of selfishness. We can't take a break or a vacation from this solemn duty otherwise it will pop its ugly head in our lives. That is why Paul said that he continually keeps under his body and brings it into subjection and in obedience to the Word of God. There are some things in the financial realm that we have to die to, and not allow money to control us before the Lord can then safely add more of it to our lives. Jesus is not going to allow prosperity to destroy us if our heart is not yet ready to handle it.

Will we remain faithful to the Lord and keep on serving Him when He makes us rich. Regardless to how much the Lord blesses us, if our attitude is business and usual in seeking first His Kingdom, than the Lord can trust us with material things. We can add things to ourselves, but that is not the same as the Lord adding them to us. And there are different ways of getting things. If some things mean too much to us, we have to die to it. The test if something has us or not is if the Lord were to ask us to give it away, could we? When we die to it and allow the Lord to add it to us, then it will be a great blessing to us. It's okay to enjoy things in our life, but they cannot mean too much to us, and have too big of a place in our life. Often, we go to the extreme, and a good things becomes a bad thing. Sure we need to be a good steward and take good care of our goods, but not to the excess.

Luke 16:10-13

“Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches ? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else’s property, who will give you property of your own? “No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.”

Did you know that the Lord is a jealous God, and when we idolize created things at the expense to our relationship with the Lord, it displeases Him. Anything that takes more of our desire and thought time than Him, He would rather we not have it. The Lord does not care if we have millions of dollars, as long as there is no question as to who is first, and nothing is ever a close second. Covetousness is an issue that must be dealt with in our lives.

Nothing in this world, spouse, kids, career, hobbies etc. are to take the place of Jesus. If He is really our Lord and not just our Savior from hell, then we will honor Him with our life and always put Him first. However, if things become an idol to us, even legitimate things like family relationships, we are in danger of losing it.

Colossians 3:3-4- For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Matthew 10:37-39- “Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

When material things are always on our mind, working for it, serving it as devoted things, then we are idolaters according to Scripture. We have to be willing to let it go. The first principle of prosperity is to seek first His Kingdom. Things are to be enjoyed, but should mean nothing to us, and we should always be willing to give them away when asked to.

Colossians 3:5-9- Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed [covetousness], which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

The meaning of life is to know God and serve Him! Not to see how much stuff we can accumulate on this earth; since it's all going pass away and disappear forever anyway. However, what we do for God and what we invest in people's lives lasts forever- we need to learn to live for eternity not for what is temporal. So it's okay to enjoy things in this life, just let's not be attached to them. Material possessions bring a temporary happiness, but true fulfillment, satisfaction and joy in this life comes only from our Lord Jesus- John 17:3, “ *Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.* ”

Psalms 35:27 NKJV

“Let them shout for joy and be glad, Who favor my righteous cause; And let them say continually, ‘Let the Lord be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.’”

2. The Prosperous Soul

3 John 2 NKJV

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

First of all we need to understand from the Bible that we are a Tricotomy- three part being. We are primarily a spirit being that has a soul and lives in a body. Being born again, our spirit has the life and nature of God in it, and conscience is the voice of our spirit. Our soul, which is made up of our mind, will and emotions is eternal like our spirit- reason is the voice of our soul. The physical body that we live in is our earth suit, and feelings are the voice of the body. Through our spirit we contact God and the spiritual realm, through our soul we contact the intellectual realm; through our physical body and our five senses, we are able to contact this natural realm. So when the Bible states that our “Soul” must prosper it is specifically talking about our spirit and soul first prospering before our physical body prospers, and also our checking account.

1 Thessalonians 5:23- May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Clearly the Lord wants us healthy and wealthy by this and many other Scriptures; sad that some Christians make fun of this prosperity message and mock us as the, “health and wealth gospel club.” But who are they making fun of (God), and what are they making fun of- God’s Word. They call us that “Name it and claim it and blab it and grab it bunch.” But who was it that said :

Mark 11:22-24

“Have faith in God,” Jesus answered. “I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go, throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.”

There is no two ways to interpret this Scripture, either Jesus meant what He said or He didn’t. Clearly Jesus meant what He said, because He practiced it all the time during His earthy ministry. We are not following some Christian fad or Charismatic ministry- we are walking in the footsteps of Jesus, doing what He did. So folks who mock these truths concerning the principles of faith are making fun of what Jesus said. Therefore, we should not back off from it or make any apologies for it because it’s Scripture, and our Heavenly Father desires for us to be healthy, wealthy and blessed in every area of life.

John 14:12- I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

When we read the whole book of the third epistle of John, notice how many times he uses the word “Truth” in his letter. The main theme is about walking in the truth. May I submit to you that it’s God’s will for us to be healed and prosperous in every area of life as we walk in His truth. It’s not an option, but a requirement in order to please and do the will of God. Therefore, to not walk in health and healing would then be sin and disobedience- this is not an option! So in the final analysis, if He wants us rich, will we submit to His will or not? It’s like receiving the Baptism with the Holy Spirit and speaking with other tongues according to Acts 2:4. Many Christians do not realize that this is a command from God to obey according to Acts 1:4-5, it’s not an option. And if it’s a command for us all to obey, then obviously it’s His will for us to receive. His commands take the guess work out of it being His will or not.



This puts a whole new angle on the subject of healing and prosperity when we look at it as a command from God to obey as His perfect will for our lives- Lord, be it unto me according to your Word!

Now the key to understanding how we receive healing and prosperity from God is found in the phrase “just as your soul prospers” according to 3 John 2. This is the key to our lives prospering! Sadly, not many of us understand what it means for our soul to prosper. Our souls prosper through

the Word of God and from fellowship with the Father. As we walk with God and commune with Him in prayer and feed on His Word, go to church and submit ourselves to good teaching ministries etc, our soul prospers in the knowledge of God.

2 Peter 1:2

Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

Prosperity is God’s Idea

Colossians 1:10-12

And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, **growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.**

Ephesians 4:11-13

It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and **in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**

As a result, we begin to know and understand the will of God for our lives. God's Word is God's will, and faith to receive the promises of God begins where the will of God is known. We begin to free ourselves from deceptions and lies, and start to see clearly the way things really are. We set aside the glasses of religious ideology and traditions of men and overcome doubt and unbelief. This is how our soul begins to prosper. Therefore, doors begin to open for our body and finances to prosper. Oh, my dear brother and sister, even though it's God's will for our lives to be blessed, it's not automatic. We have to do these things in order to get ourselves into a position to receive. Therefore, our prosperity in the natural realm is a byproduct of prospering in our spirit and the renewing of our minds with the Word.

Romans 12:2

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.

John 8:31-32 NKJV

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Ephesians 4:14-15

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

Did you know one powerful way to receive revelation knowledge from God is to ask for it. For example, I regularly pray what is known as the "Epistle Prayers" in the New Testament: Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-14; Ephesians 1:17-21; 3:14-21. I attribute many things that I have received from God concerning His Kingdom and everyday life by praying these prayers. So as I dig into God's Word, the Spirit of God imparts spiritual wisdom and revelation so that I can know Him and His Kingdom better.

Ephesians 1:17-19

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

In the Body of Christ there has been a lot said about giving and honoring God with our increase, and that is true, right and Biblical. However, I am now going to say something boldly, it takes more than just giving to prosper. Because we can operate in the sheer mechanics of giving out of: fear that something bad is going to happen if we don't, out of desperation at the last minute, obligation/ritual, greed/wrong motives, following the crowd out of impulse or even feeling sorry for someone. We can be led by need and impoverish ourselves and go broke and not be blessed . It's possible to be presumptuous and follow unbiblical patterns of giving year after year and give in vain if we do not give out of faith, in love and in line with Scripture. In this New Covenant that we live in, everything must be done in faith and God is looking for a willing and joyful heart. We don't live by works to earn or deserve or build up merit points with God, in order to buy the blessings of God.

Psalms 127:1- Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

Proverbs 19:2- It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way .

We have to get free from small religious thinking, from being stingy, from a wrong mentality of poverty thinking. We can give every dime that we have, but if we don't get loose from that poverty mindset, we are not going to prosper. It is the Word of God that changes us from the inside out, not some outward religious duty. As we begin to get free in our mind and heart from lies and deception, we will begin to see the fruit of it or the results in our outward lives. This won't all happen in a week, but when we stick with it, in the course of time, we will prosper in our soul. Which in turn causes us to prosper in our pocket book and enjoy good health in our body.

One of the big keys to being healed is to get the revelation that Jesus took our sicknesses and diseases, bore them and carried our pains; not going to be or in the process of being healed, but by His stripes we were and are healed now- end of story! For someone to say, "Well the Lord has touched Jim, let's just wait for Him to finish the work." Is that a statement of redemptive reality or walking by sight? No, we believe we have already received, and that it's done whether we see any change in the natural or not. So when are we healed? That's right, we are healed Now! We are as healed and prosperous as we are saved. Now 2 Corinthians 8:9 has a certain redemptive ring to it. Jesus, as our substitute became poor in order for us to become rich. Just as Jesus became sin for us so that we would be made righteous, he became sick so that we would be healed.

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

2 Corinthians 5:21- God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Isaiah 53:4-5 NKJV

Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

Praise be to God, Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, which is poverty, sickness and death according to Deuteronomy chapter 28.

Galatians 3:13-14

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.” He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

It was already forever settled 2,000 years ago like our salvation from sin. Are we still waiting for Jesus to save us? No, it was finished a long time ago. So the provision for the remission of our sins, the healing of our bodies, and the financial prosperity for our lives was already bought and paid for. Now it's just up to us to individually appropriate it for ourselves specifically in our lives today. No one else can do it for us, nor is God going to move on our behalf without our faith being involved.

Remember the Biblical principle: By His grace and through our faith according to Ephesians 2:8. By definition, Grace is God's power at work in us who believe. Without faith it is impossible to not only please God, but also to receive anything from Him- Hebrews 11:6. We have to first lay hold of these spiritual truths as revelations in our heart while we are still sick and broke before we get healed and prosperous. Everything in the natural may speak to the contrary, but faith says we are rich according to the Bible in Jesus' Name. That is what it means to be prosperous in our soul. To be rich with the Word of God in our heart and coming out of our mouths as a bold confession; declaring and calling those things that are not as though they were. We walk by faith and not by sight, we walk by the finished work of redemption that was already accomplished in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ!

**I am Saved, I am Healed and I am Rich, Now!
Not Going to Be- Now!**

Colossians 3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

Romans 4:17

As it is written: “I have made you a father of many nations.” He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed — the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were.

We were made rich when Jesus was made poor. Until we get excited about this redemptive reality, we will not be able to walk in the redemptive truth of it. Not until our soul prospers in the area of prosperity and receives a revelation of it, will the manifestation of the promise of God be made real. People are still doing that with healing, “I'm not going to believe I have something that I don't feel that I've got. I'm just being real and stating it the way it is.” Yea, real carnal and really controlled by your feelings! Elevating your logic, reasoning and five physical senses above the eternal Word of God- like doubting Thomas. If God says we are saved, clean and forgiven, I don't care how we feel or what we look like- let's agree with God. If God says we are healed and that He will satisfy us with long life, I don't care what the report says or what happened to uncle George, just believe what God has already said in His Word. I don't care what our checking account balance is or what the economy looks like, God is our source.

If God says we are rich and have a full supply, than we are to agree with what He has already said. Let's just start speaking it out of our mouths over and over again, "I'm rich, I'm rich, I'm really rich!" How about saying, "I'm healed, I'm healed, I'm really healed by His stripes!" Is it scriptural to say, "I'm saved, I'm saved, I'm, really saved and going to heaven, my name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life" and get really excited about it.

Why, because these are redemptive realities in the Bible for us to enjoy today. Does it matter how I feel or what other people say concerning my salvation; if I confessed Jesus as Lord and believed in my heart that God raised Him from the dead, that is the only evidence or proof I need- the Bible says I'm saved.

So if the Bible says I am rich according to 2 Corinthians 8:9 just as I am saved according to Romans 10:9, why do people make such a fuss about it? One word- RELIGION! Everything that we need in this life is found in God's Kingdom and that Kingdom was put in our spirit when we were born again. Through faith in God's Word, the provisions of the Kingdom are drawn out of our spirit, manifest in our lives through the Word of Faith and Spirit of Faith principles.

Luke 17:20-21

Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."

Romans 10:8-10

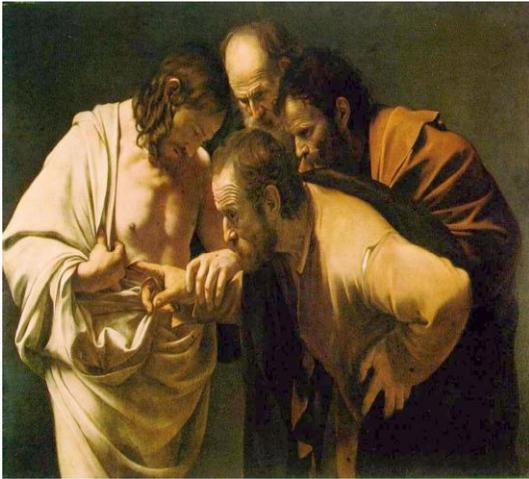
But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

2 Corinthians 4:13

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak"

Sense Knowledge vs. heart Faith

Sense knowledge is based upon physical evidence. One believes in what they can see, hear or feel. Baby Christians who are untaught in the Word are seeking for someone who can pray the prayer of faith for them. The prayer of faith may deliver temporarily relief, but unbelief will annul the effect of their prayer eventually. Simple confidence in the Word is never sensible to the natural man who lives in the realm of the senses, for they only believe what they can see, hear or understand. Faith is giving substance to things that sense knowledge cannot understand or see. It lifts one out of the realm of the senses and into the realm of the recreated human spirit. The Thomas kind of faith is a religion of the senses.



John 20:24-27

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.” A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you!” Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.”

We have been trained to believe in the skill of men. We have more confidence in the surgeon than we have in the Word and because of that, we see little manifestations of real faith in the Living Word. For the skill of man, and what we call science, has taken the place of the Word in the hearts of the people. In the final analysis, many Christians honor God with their lips, but they trust in the arm of flesh with their hearts- doctors, physiologists, lawyers, credit cards etc. Is it wrong to utilize their services, no, but our trust needs to be in God first and follow His leading for our lives- not to be so quick to run to man with our problems, why not consult the Lord first?

Psalms 118:8- It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man.

Jeremiah 17:5-8

This is what the Lord says: “Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the Lord. He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. “But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.”

Faith is a noun. I take a step, having taken the step, I have arrived- so arriving to a place in God is Faith. We come to a place in our Christian life where we have something to show for it- that is Faith, a result of having believed. To believe, then is to act on the Word of God. Faith is the action. Doubting is to question, hesitate, a reluctance to trust in and act on God’s Word. It is usually accented with fear, worry and anxiety- Faith produces a supernatural peace, joy and rest in God- no worries mate!

Luke 24:38-39

He said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have.”

James 1:6-8

But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

There is a big difference between doubt and unbelief. Doubts are in the mind, but unbelief is of the heart. Doubt is unsure of the promises of God stemmed from a lack of knowledge, unbelief is a stubborn refusal to believe the promises of God when knowledge is plentiful. This is what kept the children of Israel out of their Promised Land. It will do the same for us today concerning entering into our New Covenant and our glorious inheritance and redemption. Doubt wavers at God's Word, but unbelief rejects God's Word.

The cure for doubt is to continue to meditate on the promises of God, until Scripture becomes rooted and established as a stronghold in our spirit- Colossians 3:16, "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.*" The cure for unbelief is repentance. Isaiah 1:19-20, "*If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.*' For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Hebrews 3:12-19

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. As has just been said:

**"Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts
as you did in the rebellion."**

Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? And with whom was he angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

Rich people get to write big checks for the local church, world missions, the poor and be a blessing to their fellow believers in Christ. We are not made rich automatically, just because the Bible says we are. The question is, is it true in and a present reality as revelation truth in our spirit for us to act upon. We have to meditate on these truths (I am rich in Christ), day and night, speak them out of our mouths continually until we believe them in our heart and become fully persuaded.

That is where God's incorruptible seed (1 Peter 1:23) gets planted and grows; in the womb of our spirit, the good ground of our heart- Luke 8:11, "*The seed is the word of God.*" We become impregnated with God's Word, and in due season we give birth to the manifestation of the promise of God in our lives.

Joshua 1:8

Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.

Psalms 1:1-3

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

Romans 4:18-22

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead — since he was about a hundred years old — and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, **being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.”**

Psalms 107:2 NKJV

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy

Joel 3:10 NKJV- “Let the weak say, ‘I am strong.’”

Let the weak say I am strong, the sick that they are healed, and the poor that they are rich! Never say “I Can’t, I Never” but “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!” I would rather hear a person cuss than speak doubt and unbelief. Faith speaks the Word in the face of contradiction. When we get five big bills in the morning, our response should be, “I’m rich, I’m rich, Jesus became poor to make me rich!” That is faith and it please God when we boast in Him and His Word.

Mark 4:26-29

He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

Are we the lost or are we the saved; which group do we identify with? Are we the sick or are we the healed, are we the poor or are we the rich? We can’t be both, only one or the other- the choice is ours. I am not the sick, trying to get healed, I am the healed already. It’s just the devil trying to put symptoms on me to mess with me, but I am resisting it, I am rejecting it, because I am the healed. Just because we sin does not mean we identify with the lost, repent and receive your cleansing in the blood of Jesus. Reject false condemnation and get up, and continue to walk with God and say, “I am the saved, I am the righteousness of God in Christ.”

Are we then broke, are we the poor, the middle class or are we the rich? Our wealthy future begins right now in our heart and in our mind, if we will embrace these truths. I am rich in Jesus’ Name according to the Word of God! If we believe it, we will be excited about it. If we are not excited about it, than we have not accepted it yet; we are not convinced or fully persuaded. Perhaps there are still lingering doubts in our minds, originating from religious teachings we heard in the past about false humility. Trying to be humble by being poor- a poverty mentality still lingers. “Well I just don’t know about this prosperity gospel.” Well, unfortunately you just won’t be made rich until you believe the Good News in God’s Word. Thank God for the Word, in that it can renew our minds to think in line with the truth. Just keep meditating on the promises of God and in time that Word will dawn in your spirit and you will get the revelation of it, and then you will get excited.

People have said, “Well all you faith people ever talk about and teach on is healing and prosperity.” Well that is a broad generalization, sure it is a core value that we minister on, but what about those people who criticize us; do they have lots of healings and folks being prosperous in their churches. I don’t believe so because the Bible says in Romans 10:17 that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.

Well if we are receiving and they are not, I wonder what the connection is? In the final analysis, it all comes down to what we teach, which determines what we think, and that results in what speak and also what we will believe. We receive according to what believe- it's just that simple!

There is no doubt from Scripture that it is God's will that we excel in the grace of God concerning giving and receiving. We have a complete redemption, and the Lord did not leave out any area of our lives- spirit, soul and body!

2 Corinthians 8:7

But just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us-see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

2 Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that **in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.**

Hebrews 4:15-16

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

I like 2 Corinthians 9:8 as a complete definition for Bible prosperity! Having all that we need in all things and at all times; that does not sound like lack, or coming up short and doing without? Biblical prosperity covers all our needs all the time and then some! This is so we can have such an abundance, that we are giving everywhere as the Spirit leads us- that is prosperity!

As we grow spiritually and develop our love walk by living according to God's Word (1 John 5:1-5), we will exhibit holiness, sanctification and Christ-like character in our lives. This is what it means for our soul to prosper and this is a prerequisite for us to prosper financially as well. As 1 Timothy 4:7 states that training in godliness is profitable for all things in this life and in the life to come.

John 8:31-32 NKJV

“If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

John 15:7-8 NKJV

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

1 Timothy 4:7-8

Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

Our physical, material, financial prosperity depends on our spiritual prosperity!

2 Chronicles 26:5

He sought God during the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God. As long as he sought the Lord, God gave him success.

It's not all up to God or to us, but together we can see God's perfect will come to pass in our lives. Ephesians 2:8-9- A God-ward side and a man-ward side to appropriating the promises of God. It's up to us to take God at His Word and mix it with our faith in order to release His Grace.

- 1- We have to honor God by walking in the light of His Word that we have, not just some of it
- 2- We don't give primarily to get, that is secondary; we want to see God's Kingdom advance
- 3- Laziness or being idle is condemned in the Bible- all hard work brings a profit
- 4- Living in excess- greed will make money our god and hold us in bondage
- 5- Poor management- not using basic budgeting skills and financial planning

When people get into trouble with credit cards and act extravagantly, that's the flesh; that's not the devil. Just say no and discipline the flesh!

We often wonder why is it so hard to believe God, read the Bible, pray and praise Him. The reason should be obvious enough, we are surrounded by an antagonistic atmosphere that is presided over by the enemy of all righteousness. We are surrounded by currents of fear, doubt and unbelief, so subtle that almost one does not realize them. Satan does not want us to prosper. Not only does he want to make life miserable for us and our family, but also to keep the church poor and unable to fund missions. He will attack our physical bodies so we have a poor testimony to the world; that God cannot make a difference in our lives and keep us well. It also makes it difficult to preach the gospel when we are weak. The attacks of the enemy will come against every area of life. The storms of life have one goal in mind, to sink our faith and if possible get us to turn on God, and walk away from Jesus because it's too hard.

The good news is that this constant resistance builds our faith muscles as lifting weights and aerobic exercises does naturally. What the devil throws at us to destroy is, we overcome it through faith in God's Word and become stronger spiritually in spite of it. What the enemy meant for evil, God turns it around for good, only when we stand on God's Word.

James 1:2-4

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

Unit 4 Review:

What does it mean to have godly contentment, and why is this important?

How do we pass the “Covetousness” test, so the Lord can trust us with more?

Why is our soul prospering so important to us prospering financially?

How do the principles of “by grace through faith” apply to our prosperity?

What is the difference between sense knowledge and heart faith?

Is prosperity all up to God or to us or a combination of the two- explain?

III. The Laws of Giving and Receiving

When it comes to sharing the Word of God with people, only give to them what they have a capacity to appreciate and receive. The Bible talks about having ears to hear. The more we treasure, esteem, and value the Word of God, the more revelation we will get from the Holy Spirit. If folks do not value what you are saying or they are just not yet spiritual developed to receive it, then hold onto it. Don't just throw out all you know, and let the chips fall as they may, like a hit and run. If they do not want to hear it, than we need to be quiet. Don't give precious things to people who have no appreciation for them, isn't that what Jesus said in Matthew 7:6- it can have a negative effect. It's not what they need or what you know, it's what they will receive and the Holy Spirit knows that.

Mark 4:23-25 AMP

If any man has ears to hear, let him be listening and let him perceive and comprehend. And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure[of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure[of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you — and more [besides] will be given to you who hear. For to him who has will more be given; and from him who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away [by force].

Matthew 7:6

“Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces.”

Sometimes it is more needful to deal with other areas that are hindering people first before addressing the main topic that you want to share with them.

Giving is the chief expression of love- John 3:16. We need to obey God when He deals with us, because we may be the only one around at the time for God to use. Even though God deals with people, that does not mean they will obey Him. If He has to, He will use a dog bringing a paper bag full of money to our front door. Just as the Lord used the ravens to feed Elijah in the desert- 1 Kings 17:4.

A. God is Our Source

The Scripture does not say that God meets our needs according to our job, government, parents, inheritance or the economy. Though we may claim that God is our source, in actuality we are looking to these things in this life as our source. We have to get weaned off of these natural sources just like we need to from doctors and medicine for healing. It is by His glorious riches in Christ Jesus. All prosperity and wealth are found in Christ Jesus and released through faith and obedience in God's Word.

Colossians 1:27; 2:2-3

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

1. Abundance Mentality

Just because people have stuff does not automatically mean that God gave it to them. Folks can get things through debt, by stealing and fraud. It is time to look up to higher levels of what we have known and been accustomed to in the world. The Lord is not satisfied with where we are at in the financial arena. Sure, He is pleased that we are making progress, but there is so much more to God's economics that we have not tapped into. Until we can get our eyes off of what we are used to on this earth, we are limiting Him.



We need to develop a mentality of abundance. Beware of always telling your children, "We can't afford that," because it builds a consciousness of lack and limitation in their hearts. Instead, encourage them to believe God for it- Mark 9:23, "*Everything is possible for him who believes.*" By observation we can see that a lot of people have a poverty mentality; more than they think they do. That does not mean that we live recklessly, charge up debt and call that prosperity, because it isn't. Prosperity gets us out of debt, does not put us into it. God's prosperity brings financial freedom, not financial bondage to greed, materialism and decadent living. The only way to keep from passing on a poverty mentality to our kids is to get it out of our lives. Teach your kids to sow and give, and then pray the prayer of agreement with them. Our kids need to learn that mom and dad is not their source, but God is! Let's not limit our spouse and kids to our jobs.

Haggai 2:8- "The silver is mine and the gold is mine, declares the Lord Almighty."

Psalms 50:10- "For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills."

Everybody is suppose to work, and put their hand to something! Even those who are retired, there is no retirement from the Kingdom of God. We do not retire from Kingdom work until our last breath or the trumpet sounds!

Certainly our job is a channel, but God uses many channels to bring provision to us. For He is our ultimate source. His resources are unlimited and are inexhaustible- we need to meditate on His ability and resources. Whatever we look to in the time of crisis and when the time of need arises, indicates what we consider to be our source- whether it is our job, credit cards or God! Some will say, "Well maybe I can do some more overtime or get a second job" but that is not the first place we should look. In the ministry it is the same thing, the congregation is not the source for the church to receive finances. Pastors can't let themselves look to the people, but to God. If we are really in faith as God as our source, we will put no pressure on people- None! Otherwise we are looking to them to meet our needs. Neither should we be putting pressure on our employers for a raise. If we are in sales, putting pressure on people to buy a car is not looking to God as our source. It's the devil and the flesh that pushes us to act hastily rather than in peace, and be led by the Spirit of God and the timing of God.

We don't have to resort to the world's tactics of pressure and manipulation to seduce people into giving or buying our product. That is not love when we exploit folks weakness and squeeze them for money when they really don't need what we are selling. God will honor our integrity, it's not just our effort but the blessing of the Lord that makes the difference.

Jesus is the master for providing from unexpected sources, because He gets all the glory. When we live by faith we are not always going to know through whom and what channel the blessing of God is going to come- often times He purposely makes it a faith test.

Remember how Elijah was fed by birds at a brook during the time of famine. Next, the Lord sends him to a widow woman with a handful of food and starving to death. I am sure Elijah's flesh would have preferred to be led to a wealthy person's house. The Lord is not limited by our circumstances. Remember how He provided for the children of Israel in the desert with manna and water from a rock. The Lord even caused quail to fly in so they could have some meat to eat on occasion.

When Peter needed tax money, the Lord told Peter to go fishing; that was probably not what Peter was thinking they needed to do. Not surprising though since the Scriptures encourage us to lean not on our own understanding. The Lord may ask us to do things that does not fit with conventional wisdom; just make sure it is the Lord. There is no shortage of foolish actions done in the Lord's Name that was not the Lord who was directing them.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.

Matthew 17:24-27

After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?" "Yes, he does," he replied. When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. "What do you think, Simon?" he asked. "From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes — from their own sons or from others?" "From others," Peter answered. "Then the sons are exempt," Jesus said to him. "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

We need to work hard at our job, but it is not our source, let's ask our Heavenly Father to meet our needs! Trust Him for guidance and provision. We need to get weaned off of earthly sources, let's get our eyes on the unlimited source of Almighty God. What is a million dollars to God, how small would that be? The main hindrance to our prosperity is our limited thinking. Our goal is to be in a place where we can give whatever God asks us to give and let God multiply it 30, 60 and 100 times over. In the beginning we work to generate seed to sow, but in time as the Laws of Increase kick in, we can start living off of the return of our giving. God wants us to get to a place where we only have to live on a small portion of the abundance that we have, with plenty left over to give to other ministries and individuals. We need to renew our minds in these areas so we live to give and God's Kingdom becomes our priority. So the main reason we work is to further the Lord's Kingdom and be a blessing to others.

Ephesians 4:28

He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Remember, our job is not our source. Other people should be able to look at our job, and then notice the high standard of living we are enjoying, and wonder- how does that work? And it's not because we are up to our ears in debt! God is our source and He uses many avenues to meet our needs. We don't have to see or know how God supplies our needs. Just sow, believe, claim and receive the provision of God. Notice in the parable of the growing seed in Mark 4:26-29 the phrase Jesus made, "*Though he does not know how.*" When God is our source He can use any avenue to get the money to us. There is plenty of money around in the world. God knows how to get it to us, but we have to get our eyes off the limitation of our jobs, economy and this and that. We work our job to have seed to sow, with the intent that in time we can get to a place in our giving and receiving that we can live on the increase of our giving.

Mark 4:26-29

He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, **though he does not know how**. All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

2. Jehovah Jireh Our Provider

There are those who believe in a historical Jesus, who came and died and rose again, but they are still lost because they have failed to receive Him as their personal Lord and Savior- Romans 10:9-10. But even those who have received Him as Savior from sins, still have to receive Him as their Healer and as their provider.

Mental Assent

In our culture of knowledge and surfing the information highway of the world wide web, what it means to believe with the heart can be quite foreign to us. So what is mental assent? One who agrees with the Bible, that God’s Word is true, but in the time of crisis, he/she turns to the world for help or despairs and cries in self-pity. Mental assent is one of the most dangerous and deceitful enemies to a life a faith. It looks and sounds so religious. It really is the first stage of getting the Word in our heart. Only having a head knowledge of God’s Word is mental assent. Often we confuse natural education with spiritual training. The Word of Faith principles consists of a process of hiding the Word in our hearts through Bible meditation- speaking the Word out of our mouths continually. In the natural, folks fill their heads with facts and bits of information, so from a worldly point of view, that constitutes education. Not so in God’s Kingdom, our goal my dear brother and sister is a pursuit of wisdom which is spiritual revelation that dawns upon the heart of man- exhibited through character development and walking in love.

1 Corinthians 8:1-3- We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. But the man who loves God is known by God.

Don’t just say God is able if He wants to. We all know God can, but is it His will? When it comes to receiving from the Lord, He requires something of us, know and stand on His Word- God will provide.

Genesis 22:7-8 NKJV- But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” And Abraham said, “My son, **God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” So the two of them went together.**

Abraham went to offer his son Isaac as a burnt offering, but just before he went to slay his only son, the Angel of the Lord stopped him. In verse fourteen we see that Abraham called that place “The Lord Will Provide” which in the Hebrew is one of God’s redemptive Names- Jehovah Jireh.

OT:3070 hr\$y! ho*hy= Yehovah Yir’eh (yeh-ho-vaw’ yir-eh’); from OT:3068 and OT:7200; Jehovah will see (to it); Jehovah-Jireh, a symbolical name for Mount Moriah: KJV – Jehovah Jireh.

Genesis 22:13-14

Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place **The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, “On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.”**

There is something very significant that I want you to see concerning the Hebrew root meaning to God's redemptive name of Jehovah Jireh- "Jehovah will see to it." In other words, He sees the needs that we have ahead of time and sees to it that they are met when the actual need arises. For instance, I wonder where was that ram (sacrificed instead of Isaac) was at 5:00am that morning when Abraham got up. I believe that it was making its way up to where Isaac was going to be sacrificed. Nothing takes God by surprise. Just because we made our bed hard does not mean we have to sleep on it. If we get on our face and repent (turn and change) of what got us there in the first place and ask the Lord for mercy, grace and help- the Lord will turn our financial situation around.

Sometimes people pass off human expressions that often contain myths which are passed on as truisms through much repetition- "You made your bed, so now you have to lay in it." But can we find such statements in the Bible; not just what uncle George said or what we sang in the hymn book? If what we hear is not in line with the Word, just don't accept it.



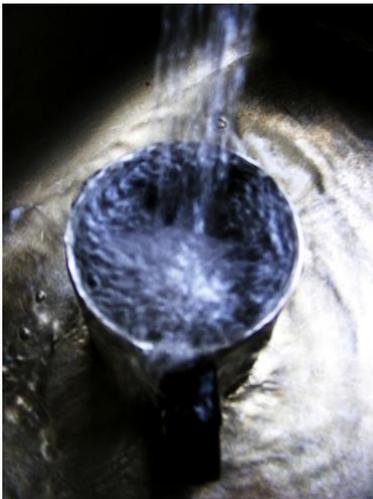
Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Acts 17:11-12

There are many Scriptures about the mercy of God where people sinned and missed it and God restored and delivered them in spite of what they did in messing things up! Just consider the redemption of mankind. One could say, "Well we sinned and made our bed, so now there is no other choice but to go to hell." Thank God for the mercy of God, there is a choice for mankind to die in their sins or not. The devil will try to lie to people and get them to believe that they have to pay for their mistakes and scrape through life the best way they know how- what about the story of the prodigal son?

Matthew 6:31-33- "So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them."

3. Faith Rests on More than Mere Ability



I want you to notice that according to the Bible, when the Lord fills our cup, it's not just half full in order to keep us humble. No, the Scripture does not say that- not even filling it up to the brim. What does Psalms 23:5 say, "*my cup overflows*" well that just sounds wasteful, extravagant and excessive! He must not care if it runs over the top and onto the table and all over the floor and out the door. When you have as much as God has got, you don't care about spilling it over! Just look at creation, three or four kinds of fish would be enough, but there are innumerable species, colors and types of fish- does that say something about our Father God? One thing is for sure, He is not stingy or el-cheapo!

Psalms 23:5-6- You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Look at what the Amplified translation of the Bible has to say about God's nature concerning this matter- There is no god like our God, He does things superabundantly!

Ephesians 3:20 AMP

Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do **superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams].**

God is our provider, He sees our needs and prepares beforehand, and He provides superabundantly!

Psalms 65:9- You care for the land and water it; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.

Psalms 68:10- Your people settled in it, and from your bounty, O God, you provided for the poor.

Psalms 132:15- I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor will I satisfy with food.

Remember, faith works 24-7 in the unseen realm, bringing substances to the things we hope for. The incorruptible seed of God's Word will not return to Him void when we speak it with faith from our heart. The Word works for those who believe it. Now, it's not just making confessions, but obedience that sets in motion God's increase for future provision- we must be willing and obedient. When Abraham obeyed God and offered Isaac, that is what confirmed the covenant. So we hear the promise, believe it in our spirit and then obey it; which results in the manifestation of the promise of God in our life. We can't just decide to be rebellious, selfish, disobedient, run from God, do our own thing and think it's all going to be okay; that God will still wonderfully provide for us anyway. God is not obligated to support anything that is not His plan or His way. Depending on the road we chose to travel on will determine the places, scenery and conditions we will be subjected to. If we get on the wrong road, we can find ourselves in places in life where we do not need to be- called the hard way. But if we choose to take the road of obedience to the will of God, than we are going to pass through greener pastures and go beside still waters. Sure there will still be some valleys to go through on the road of obedience. The devil is not going to stand idly by without throwing a few trials, tests and temptations by our way, but the Lord is with us and His rod and staff comforts us.

Psalms 23:1-4

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

It is not okay to worry about bills or our finances or anything for that matter. When the Bible tells us to do or not do something, our Father provides us with the power and grace; resident in His Word to obey it. It's amazing how people rationalize and justify their doubts and lack of faith- "Well I am just human. I just have bad days like everyone else." It is one thing to say we have had bad days, it's another thing to say that we are expecting to have bad days- prophesying and calling for those things to happen in the future. When tempted to fear, we can resist it in Jesus' Name and speak the Word in the face of contrary circumstances- God will provide! Worrying over our finances is not being a "Responsible" adult; that is what the world does, worry, fret, anxious and full of fear, because they are without God and without hope- they have good reason to be afraid. But we don't! Not when we have the Greater One inside us according to 1 John 4:4. We have Jehovah Jireh seeing to all our needs! Just relax, hold fast to your confession of faith, and keep obeying God by casting your bread upon every wave- Ecclesiastes 11:1!

John 14:1- “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.”

Jesus foretold of preparing ahead of time an unimaginable dwelling for us in heaven. It's being constructed right now, exactly what you want and a lot of things that you could not imagine that you would enjoy. When we get to heaven, the angels are not going to escort us to a half-way house or hotel in order to wait for our mansion to be finished. No, when we get to heaven it will already be prepared in advance- that is just how our God rolls and does things. Our God is never caught off guard, never behind or trying to catch up some backlog. He knows the end from the beginning, and He is always ready.

John 14:2-3 NKJV

“In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.”

Read the Will and Know

If we want to know God’s will on any subject, let’s read His will in His Word. Suppose a lady should say, “My husband, who was very rich, has passed away; I wish I knew whether he left me anything in the will.” I would say to her, “Why don’t you read the will and find out?” The word “testament,” legally speaking, means a person’s will. The Bible contains God’s last will and testament, in which He bequeaths to us all the blessings of redemption; and since it is His “last will and testament,” anything submitted later is a forgery. A man never writes a new will after he is dead. For instance, if healing is in God’s will for us, then to say that the age of miracles is past is virtually saying what is the opposite of the truth, that a will is no good after the death of the testator. Jesus is not only the testator who died, He was resurrected, and is also the mediator of the will. He is our lawyer, so to speak, and He will not beat us out of the Will, as some earthly lawyers do. He is our Representative at the right hand of God.

Faith begins where the will of God is known

1 John 5:14-15

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us — whatever we ask — we know that we have what we asked of him.

The principles of faith work the same for all areas of the Christian life (Born Again, Filled with the Spirit, Healed, Needs Met, Being Led, Protected etc.), but our faith for each individual area must be developed. So a Christian can have strong faith for healing, but little faith for prosperity. Just as they meditated on healing Scriptures until the Word of God was built up in their spirit to produce strong faith for healing, the same must be done concerning Scriptures on prosperity.

Here is another important point that needs to be made. Just because we were strong in faith concerning a particular Bible topic ten years ago, if we just cut that off and stop talking about it, quit thinking and feeding on it, listening and reading about it, we will begin to get weak in that area. Like in the natural, if we get in great physical shape, but then decide, “that’s enough,” and stop working out, what happens? If we were to stop working out a certain part of our body like our legs, our upper body will look great, but our legs will look like tooth picks. The same thing is true concerning spiritual things. If we only major on one area of the Bible, we will be weak in other areas. The key to spiritual maturity is to have a balanced diet. Certainly there will be times when the Holy Spirit wants us to major on a specific area, but never at the long term exclusion of other areas. That is why the Lord leads our pastors to cover significant areas over and over- so we stay strong in that area!

That is also why our pastors will invite guest ministers who are specialists on certain Bible subjects to give us a concentrated dose of the Word and revelation in certain areas. We can't get all fat and sassy in our Christian walk and say, "Well I heard that before." Oh really, if it's old to you then it was never real to you in the first place. Spiritual things never get old, when Bible revelation gets in our heart, we don't mind hearing about the same thing a thousand times, it's just as fresh and real to us as when it first dawned on our spirit. Look at how many times the Bible talks about the principle of repetition and being reminded of what we already know- so we don't get rusty in those areas.

John 14:26

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

1 Corinthians 15:1-2

Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

Philippians 3:1

Finally, my brothers, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you.

2 Peter 1:12-15

So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

4. The God of Abundance

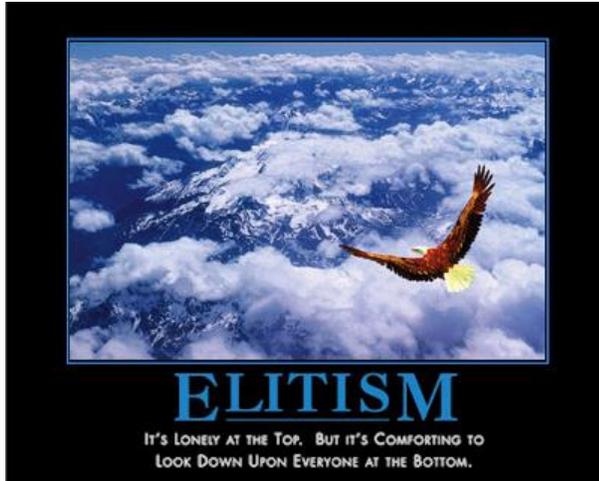
If we are not excited and expectant about God's provision, than we are not in faith. Our biggest challenge (a good thing) concerning giving, is when we hear about needs that we ask the Lord, "do you want us to pay all of it or half of it?" It is not God's will that we be so strapped in debt that we are not in a position to be a blessing, because we are struggling to pay our electric bill. However, before God can turn our situation around, we have to change on the inside in our heart and mind. Miracles start on the inside, before it happens on the outside. We have to get excited about God as our provider so we can become a big giver, sower and blessing. So God is not only my savior, my healer, but He is also my provider; being fully persuaded that God takes good care of me, never lack or want for any good thing.

2 Chronicles 16:9

For the eyes of the Lord range throughout the earth to strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to him.

When God's children are not well provided for, it is a negative reflection upon the Lord. Just as if we are always sick, the world wonders what kind of a God do we serve. If our own natural children went around in ragged clothes, all sickly and malnourished, what kind of a reflection upon us as parents would that cast? Jesus is the Good Shepherd. When the world looks at the condition of the Lord's flock, it is a direct reflection upon Jesus as our Shepherd. Yet if we are sick, poor and oppressed it's not Jesus' fault- it's ours! If we have not mixed our faith into the Grace of His Word through His precious promises, who do we have to blame if we go without?

That is why many unbelievers are not excited about becoming a Christian; it's due to the poor example we are setting of the Master and His Kingdom in our lives! Christians who are broke, sick and depressed, tell their family and friends that God put this on them in order to discipline them or keep them humble. Next they have the audacity to ask them, "Well, don't you want to follow Jesus and get saved and let Jesus be your Lord?" Those unsaved folks would probably say, "No thanks, I don't need a Shepherd like that who steals and kills me." Twisted theology has taught people that the worse we look, the more glory it gives Jesus; sadly, the opposite is true!



However, when everybody else's kids are sick and yours are healthy. When others around you are struggling financially, but you are getting promoted. A wind storm comes through and tears everything up around you but your property is undamaged. After enough of this, people begin to ask questions as to why you are enjoying such an abundant life. As God's ambassadors, our lives should display all the grace of God in our lives, marriage, children, health finances etc. If folks are smart, they will want to have that in their lives too- come to Jesus. Yet well meaning Christians will say, "Well bless God, they are coming to Jesus with selfish motives, just to see what they will get." That kind of spiritual elitism is

what hinders people from coming to Christ; it is rooted in pride and false-humility. I suppose deliverance from sin, from going to hell, and being oppressed by the devil would be selfish reasons too. There is nothing wrong with wanting to receive eternal life and improve your life and the quality of life for your family on earth by knowing Jesus. God knows when we came to Him through Jesus, we were selfish miserable sinners, but that is the whole point, come to Jesus as you are so you can become as He is- be delivered from selfishness and sin.

Romans 5:6-8

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 2:4 NKJV

Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?

When the Bible calls us the light of the world, it is by reflecting the light of Jesus through our lives that makes the Lord attractive to the world through our example of His goodness on display in all areas of life- spiritually, mentally, physically and materially. We want our local churches to have the reputation of taking care of its own. God does love the world, but our major obligation is to our brothers and sisters in Christ, why you may ask- just look at John 13:34-35.

John 13:34-35

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

The greatest advertising to the world for Jesus is found in how we love and take care of one another. This kind of Agape love is like ringing the dinner bell in a love starved world that is looking for the kind of family, provision, and protection that only the Body of Christ can provide. The Early Church was all about feeding and taking care of their own first before reaching out to the world. If we did it right, it would compel people to join the Family of God. Besides souls getting saved and signs and wonders being on display, the true evidence of the Grace of God working is when Christians are taking care of each other- loving one another. Sadly, the Church has left the social programs of feeding and caring for people up to the government. That kind of ministry was and continues to be a tremendous soul winning avenue and displays the true nature of Christianity; this is where we shine in fulfilling the Great Commission. The government is only a band aid because it only deals with the symptoms of human needs, while the Gospel of Jesus Christ deals with the heart of the matter, and changes people from the inside out.

Acts 4:32-37

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

Romans 8:32

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all — how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Jesus if the Good Shepherd, if He would give His life for us, what is stopping Him from giving us a new car, get us out of debt, and pay off our house so we can be a greater blessing. Any doubt that God would bless us with material things in this life is gone in light of God's greatest gift of love in giving His Son, Jesus Christ!

The devil never shows up to just chat with us, no he wants something from us- wanting to steal something from us, kill something in our life or destroy something. All natural stealing, killing and destroying is inspired of the devil. What is our response to the devil's attempts to gain access to us- resist him in Jesus' Name and speak the Word.

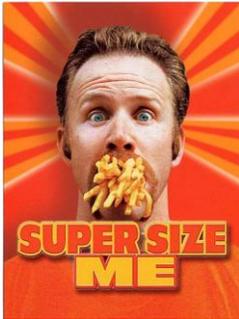
John 10:10 AMP

The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows).

Let's look at the word "Abundantly" in John 10:10 in the Greek. It describes the word not just as abundant, but it literally means, super abundant in quantity and superior in quality. By implication according to Strong's Concordance, it means "Excessive". With that being said, does God do excessive things according to the Bible?

perissos (per-is-sos'); from NT:4012 (in the sense of beyond); superabundant (in quantity) or superior (in quality); by implication, excessive; adverbially (with NT:1537) violently; neuter (as noun) preeminence: KJV - exceeding abundantly above, more abundantly, advantage, exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure, more, superfluous, vehement [-ly].

So if God is into excess, why is it that Christians have developed such a keen aversion to that word. They attribute excess to greed, the love of money and living like there is no tomorrow- like the prodigal son. Well certainly, there is a perversion of running after the lusts of the flesh. But whose idea was it in the first place to be excessive about creating this vast universe and this wonderful world that God has made with all of its innumerable varieties of plant and animal life. So God is the author of excess and extra; so what if the devil has come along and perverted it for selfish ends. Let's not throw out the baby with the bath water, and go to a religious extreme of vows of poverty and living without in the name of piety- that is just Biblical ignorance.



So if the original Greek puts abundance in John 10:10 as “Superabundance” what does that look like I wonder? For starters it is always having more than enough- super sized! Well we know that anything that is abundant and plentiful is a good thing, especially when it refers to the quantity and quality of a harvest. Apparently with God, abundance is not good enough in His economy.

Thayers Dictionary puts “Abundance” as: “Exceeding the measure or rank or need. Over and above, more than what is necessary, super added, superior, extraordinary, surpassing uncommon, superabundance, excess.”

Let's look at Psalms 23 more than just a bedtime story or a reference made at a funeral. There is something very interesting about animal livestock, when they lie down it's because their bellies are full. Do you get the picture here, He causes me to lie down, I have taken all I can, but it is so excessive that I have to lie down and take a nap beside the cool, clean and fresh quiet waters.

Psalms 23:1-3

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul.

The Lord sees ahead as our provider and prepares all we need in advance so the provision is there when we get there. Is that in the Bible according to Psalms 23:5, is that for us today? Yes it is according to 2 Corinthians 1:20! Question, does Psalms chapter twenty three speak of superabundance? If so, than Jesus was just reiterating it in John 10:10, that it still applies under the New Covenant. Jesus is the same, yesterday, today and forever according to Hebrews 13:8. He was a Good Shepherd to God's covenant people under the Old Covenant, and He is still the same Good Shepherd to God's covenant people under the New Covenant, but this time with better promises.

Psalms 23:5

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

2 Corinthians 1:20

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God.

Hebrews 8:6

But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises.

Prosperity is God's Idea

If God is the kind of God some people construe Him to be, there would be only three types of flowers with only three kinds of colors- light gray, medium gray and dark gray. They claim to hold a conservative view of God, but I call that narrow, restrictive and limited. The creation of God reflects the nature of our creator, even this world in a fallen state is excessive in its varieties, textures, smells and sounds. Well, does God stop being this way when He finished creating the material world? That is just who He is and how He does things- extravagantly. Just consider heaven, streets made of gold, walls made of precious jewels and gates made out of pearl. If we made our driveway out of gold and our garage door out of pearl, we would only be imitating our Heavenly Father.



God is the God of the extreme and excess, even in His punishments when you consider the awful indescribable pain and suffering of those in hell and later to be thrown into the Lake of Fire. God is intense from every angle- He is not a God of mediocrity. We sing that song, “Our God is an awesome God” and then leave church wondering how we are going to make our next mortgage payment- do you see the great contradiction here. What we need to do is connect the dots, God is awesome in creation, in heaven and also wants to be awesome, excessive and superabundant in my life as well. If God is who He says He is according to the Bible, we just need to believe it like it’s so, take Him at His Word and act like it’s so in our lives. Which means to talk and act like God is our provider. The Lord is my Shepherd and I shall not want!

Daniel 7:9-10

As I looked, thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

Ezekiel 1:22-28

Spread out above the heads of the living creatures was what looked like an expanse, sparkling like ice, and awesome. Under the expanse their wings were stretched out one toward the other, and each had two wings covering its body. When the creatures moved, I heard the sound of their wings, like the roar of rushing waters, like the voice of the Almighty, like the tumult of an army. When they stood still, they lowered their wings. Then there came a voice from above the expanse over their heads as they stood with lowered wings. Above the expanse over their heads was what looked like a throne of sapphire, and high above on the throne was a figure like that of a man. I saw that from what appeared to be his waist up he looked like glowing metal, as if full of fire, and that from there down he looked like fire; and brilliant light surrounded him. Like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds on a rainy day, so was the radiance around him. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. When I saw it, I fell facedown, and I heard the voice of one speaking.

Fact: Our God is a Superabundant God!

Revelation 4:2-6

At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal.

Hebrews 12:28-29

Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire.”

God has never been into bare necessities, regardless of what some unbelieving theologian has said that God is conservative, withholding and scarce; just enough to meet our basic needs as He wills- that is not Bible.

So when the Father's children start getting rich and wealthy as He is, why do folks throw such a fuss. Actually it is the devil who gets all bent out of shape, because he used to be all decked out- just read the account of Lucifer in Ezekiel below. So it chaffs the devil when he sees God's people being blessed- he is envious of it. The truth of the matter is, instead of rejoicing with others when God blesses them, folks instead get jealous- that is just sinful human nature. We need to realize that money means power and influence- the devil does not want the Church of Jesus Christ to prosper for these reasons. The more we prosper, the more it leads to his demise in this world, as we can fully fund the Gospel and fulfill the Great Commission. The devil wants us broke so we can't do anything for the Kingdom. If you have two dollars, he wants it, don't let him have it, instead sow it in the Kingdom. Every financial harvest that Christians reap means less money for the devil and his crowd, because our financial harvests takes more and more money out of the world system and puts it into God's hands- I like that!

Ezekiel 28:12-15

“You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you.”

Consider Job

Consider the account of Job. Satan came to God to press his rights in order to gain access to Job. The devil hates righteous God fearing people, especially rich righteous people- Job was a powerful man of influence for God. Have you ever noticed that every person in the Old Testament who had a covenant with God was extremely wealthy? Even though Job had a covenant with God, through fear he opened the door to the devil, who being slow on the uptake took notice of this and challenged God. God being a righteous judge allowed access to Job. It was Job that broke down the hedge, not God. The Lord would never go back on His covenant and give the devil access to Job for any reason!

Job 1:10

“Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land.”

Job 3:25

What I **feared** has come upon me; what I dreaded has happened to me.

In Job 1:8, “Then the Lord said to Satan, ‘Have you considered my servant Job?’” The Hebrew literally says, “**Have you set your heart upon my servant Job?**” God was not dagging Job out in front of the devil saying, “come and get him.” Here we see a rare glimpse of the operation of the High Court of Heaven. Satan began to accuse Job and question his commitment and motivation. He began to present a case to God twice- once against his possessions and secondly against himself personally. What we see happening here is Job got judged and turned over to the hand of the enemy.

Let’s not accuse God of evil, He is not the author of it. He only permits it as a last final act of judgment when folks have exhausted all of God’s appeals and opportunities for repentance. To insinuate that tornadoes, cancer and other calamities are an act of God is to fall right into the hands of Satan’s lies. The word “Devil” means slanderer and that is what he does with God’s Name, tries to drag it through the mud by placing doubt in our minds concerning the goodness, mercy and love of God.

People begin questioning the faithfulness of God. Why did He allow this to happen, why do bad things happen to seemingly good people. There is always a reason and we may not always know it, but I do know this according to 1 Corinthians 13: 8, “*Love never fails!*” God will never let us down, He is always faithful and true to His Word, He does not lie nor change His mind. If something went bad, God is not the one behind it.

Let’s just settle it in our minds that it is never God’s fault, He is never to be blamed. People may let us down, we may let ourselves down, but God never does. This was the trap Job found himself in. In Job’s limited knowledge, he thought that God was sovereignly putting him through these trials to test his loyalty, to keep him humble or whatever other religious reason there is. Job had accused God of being the reason for all his troubles, yet what was the Lord’s response in Job 38:2, “*Who is this that darkens my counsel with words without knowledge?*” When life becomes confusing, let’s give God the benefit of the doubt, ask Him for wisdom according to James 1:5, instead of jumping to religious conclusions.

Romans 3:3-4

“What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God’s faithfulness? Not at all! Let God be true, and every man a liar. As it is written: “So that you may be proved right when you speak and prevail when you judge.”

Just because People Fail to receive does not mean that God had Failed!

I have never read in the Bible anything like this, “My children get as broke as you can be, be as sick as you can and be as depressed as possible, for it glorifies me.” Yet that is how many ministers preach it and how many Christians believe it, and the results are nothing less than tragic. The primary weapon of the devil is deception and he peddles doctrines of demons in these areas to plunge God’s people into darkness, lies and confusion. As far as the whole Body of Christ is concerned, we have a long ways to go in getting our minds renewed with the Word. Clearly we all need a greater revelation of who our God is, the God who fills our cup till it overflows.

That is why change in our natural circumstances, first comes by changing our thinking on the inside through the Word. God's superabundance for our lives is not wasteful, it is to bless us to be a blessing. When we get excited about the awesome possibilities and potential in the Word, then it begins to work for us- that is an important ingredient to faith.

5. More where that Came From

It's a lot easier to give things away to people when we have the mentality that it's not ours in the first place, and that there is a lot more where that came from; knowing that God is an excessive God and He will give us five more. The reason people have trouble turning loose of things, whether it is God dealing with them to give or even being defrauded by others is because they don't have faith in an abundant God who will restore back to them even more than what they gave or lost. There is this scarcity mentality, like survival of the fittest, I have got to get what is mine and as much as I can because there may never be another opportunity like this one. Who says so, is not God our source? If He fed millions in the desert with manna, multiplied fish and bread to feed thousands, turned water into wine, multiplied oil and flour for a widow woman during famine, who's to say that He can't continue to provide us with an abundance during bad economic times or when financial crisis strikes. Our God is a net breaking, ship sinking, cup running over, too much, excessive provider that does exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think kind of God!

Ephesians 3:20-21

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.

Luke 6:30

Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.

1 Corinthians 6:7-8

The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you have been completely defeated already. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong, and you do this to your brothers.

Luke 12:13

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

In many cases, walking in love is letting them have it, like an inheritance battle amongst siblings. Instead of fighting over the scraps of a deceased parent, why not go to God, our benevolent Heavenly Father who has already given us a rich, superabundant inheritance in Jesus Christ. The reason we don't give as God asks us to, is not because of a lack of finances due to a bunch of bills, it is a lack of faith; that God is not able to get the money we need back to us in time to pay our bills. The Lord wants us to sow for a future harvest. The easier it is for us to let go of things, the easier it is for God to get more things to us. As the saying goes, "If He can get it through you, He can get it to you!" Our heart needs to be joyful in our giving by faith, only then will we be blessed. If we are giving out of routine, obligation or grudgingly, God will not bless it, even in spite of ourselves. Sadly, many Christians believe that when they give, it is just gone, they will never see a return on it until they get to heaven- that is not all there is to it though. Yes, we are laying up treasure in heaven, but we are also sowing seed here on earth for a financial harvest of increase down the road to expect, receive and enjoy in this life. Not just the amount we sow, but a superabundance- 30, 60 and 100 fold return!

Colossians 1:27; 2:2-3

To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 1:11-12

And joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light.

2 Peter 1:3-4

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

The apostle Paul said something profound by the Holy Spirit in regards to adopting an eternal perspective in relation to our limited time on earth.

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

Paul was talking about financial and material provision when he addressed the Philippians “concern” for him. They were expressing their love for him and God, by sowing into his ministry. Certainly, our giving needs to be done with no strings attached; without expecting even a thank you- wanting absolutely nothing in return, we did it just because we love them.

Philippians 4:10-11

I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

When we are going to live by faith concerning finances, there may not always be a steady consistent stream of finances. Why is that? It’s not God who is the variable, but man, because people do not always give and obey God like they should in the area of finances.

Luke 6:38 KJV

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Paul’s material support was apparently up and down like a roller coaster. Not because God was inconsistent, but rather the obedience of the people of God to respond to God’s direction to give. When folks withhold or delay in their giving, God has to find another channel who will obey Him.

Philippians 4:11-13

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

The Poverty Test: Do we keep our faith during times of lack?

The Prosperity Test: Do we keep our faith in plenty?

The poverty test is harder than the prosperity test. When folks experience lack over a period time they can become offended at God; perceiving that He had abandoned them. People can lose their faith in poverty. Yet there are others who keep their faith in the Lord as their provider during long periods of lack. Remember it is never God's fault, and it is foolish and prideful to blame God for our problems.

The doctrine of God's Sovereignty, when taught in the extreme is rooted in pride. To attribute some people as being sick and dying prematurely, and someone else suffering a terrible accident or having been poor all their lives for four generations as God's sovereignty is just plain error. God will permit these things to happen when we do, but He is certainly does not condone Satan's work in our lives. The false humility component comes in when people lay down and let the devil make a foot mat out of them, and then begin to espouse how faithful they have been in suffering for Jesus. No that is ignorance by becoming a victim to the devil instead of a victor in Jesus. When things go wrong, instead of spiritualizing the situation, why not ask God for wisdom, and be willing to accept that maybe we missed it somewhere. To say that everything that has happened in our life is the perfect will of God is equal to saying that I have never done anything in my life except the perfect will of God.

If we want God's perfect will for our life, we have to do God's perfect will for our life. This is true for all areas of the Christian life- health, prosperity, ministry, the anointing. So often we are living so far below where we should be in receiving God's highest and best for our lives, because we disqualify ourselves through a lack of faith, disobedience or ignorance.

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize ? Run in such a way as to get the prize . Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, **I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.**

We hang onto weights and sins in our lives like stubbornness, fulfilling the sinful passions of the body, procrastination, just not doing the perfect will of God- delayed obedience.

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.

Mark 4:18-20

Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.

However, if we make the consecration to stay in the middle of the perfect will of God, obeying the Logos and Rhema of God's Word in our spirit, soul and body, in our marriage, family and finances- we will reap a harvest.

Galatians 6:9-10

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

That is why the devil fights us so hard to get us lukewarm, marginalized and minimized in our effectiveness for God. He uses all kinds of distractions, cares and anxious circumstances and thoughts to get our eyes off of Jesus and the Word. The devil does not want our testimony to be seen by others shining brightly, as we are doing and receiving the perfect will of God for our lives. Health, prosperity, and a strong family is a witness to others- being a salt and a light.

Hebrews 12:2-3

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Matthew 14:29-30

Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"

**To receive God's perfect will for our lives, we
have to do God's perfect will in our lives!**

Doing God's perfect will for our lives is not as difficult as you may think. God is not unjust, He does not set us up for failure, making it impossible to meet His expectations.

1 John 5:3

This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome...

Deuteronomy 30:8-16

You will again obey the Lord and follow all his commands I am giving you today. Then the Lord your God will make you most prosperous in all the work of your hands and in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your land. The Lord will again delight in you and make you prosperous, just as he delighted in your fathers, if you obey the Lord your God and keep his commands and decrees that are written in this Book of the Law and turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, "Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" Nor is it beyond the sea, so that you have to ask, "Who will cross the sea to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?" No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it. See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

God just expects us to walk in the light and revelation of God's Word that we have. If there is anything we know we should be doing, but are not doing it, that is sin according to the Bible. If we persist in it, we will fall short and short change ourselves of God's best for our lives. If we would just be quick to forgive, quick to repent and quick to obey, we would be positioned to receive God's perfect will for our lives.

James 4:17- Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.

Acts 26:20

I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

Philippians 3:16- Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

Colossians 4:17

Tell Archippus: "See to it that you complete the work you have received in the Lord."

3 John 4- I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

Luke 16:10 NKJV

He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.

1 Corinthians 4:2- Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

Luke 12:48

But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.

Back to Philippians chapter four. Notice that Paul stated that his contentment and faith in God was not moved by whatever his present financial position was at the time. It was not the basis for His joy and peace in God, he remained true and faithful to the will of God for his life. Consider Job, who had only a little light or understanding of what was happening to him, remained true to God and did not disown Him. Even though he thought it was God doing it to him (actually it was the devil), he persevered. In the end, God gave him twice as much as he had in the beginning.

James 5:11

As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

Thank God for things and for material stuff, but it won't make us happy, just look at how empty and miserable the rich and famous are. The only true satisfaction and joy comes from the ultimate pleasure of knowing and communing with God.

1 Peter 1:18-19

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

Thank God, He gives us good things as a loving Father, but the things in themselves are fleeting fancies. Notice how kids get so quickly bored with a new toy. Our deepest human needs and longings in life can never be filled by relationships with people, power, fame, accomplishment or things. We are spirit beings, and only God can fill and satisfy our hearts- Acts 17:28, *“For in him we live and move and have our being.”*

John 15:5-6

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

We cannot enjoy the material things of this life unless our hearts are right with God. We must have the right Biblical perspective of things and what they mean in the great scheme of things. God is our source, the goal and prize of life, so things are just a means to an end that are meant to be enjoyed along the way. We can use things and they can serve us instead of the other way around which is idolatry.

1 Corinthians 7:30-31

...those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

2 Corinthians 4:18

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary , but what is unseen is eternal.

Notice what the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:14, *“Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles.”* Paul called lack of finances troubles. Other translations uses the word for troubles: Distress, difficulties, affliction- the context is a lack of finances.

Psalms 34:19- A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all...

Psalms 34:19 NKJV- Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But the Lord delivers him out of them all.

So if lack is trouble and an affliction, than Praise God, the Lord will deliver us out of all lack and poverty! Notice that Paul when addressing the Philippian believers brought up the matter of “Giving” and “Receiving”. Note, this is not just a matter of knowing how to give but also how to receive. There is nothing wrong with expecting to receive, we just don’t give with that motive only. We should want to receive so we can give more in return. Sowing and reaping, seed time and harvest, giving and receiving; let’s not separate them, they go hand in hand.

Philippians 4:15-17

Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me **in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account.**

Now the “Account” Paul was referring to was not at our local Credit Union. Apparently it was important for them to know that the financial seed they were sowing was being reflected in their spiritual account in the Kingdom of God.

Unit 5 Review:

How do we build an abundance mentality in our lives?

Does the saying, “you made your bed, so now you have to lay in it” apply to our financial mistakes?

Are we being a responsible “Adult” when we worry about our financial situation?

Is it true that once we become acquainted with prosperity, we don’t have to study it anymore?

When we are struggling financially, sick and oppressed, what kind of a reflection does that have on the Lord?

How does the reality of creation itself, reflect on God’s nature in being excessive?

6. Your Heavenly Account

Question, do you know what the balance is in your checking and savings accounts? What about in your investment accounts or 401K. So what about your heavenly account? If you are a born again Christian, you have an account in the First Bank of Heaven! Paul was concerned in that he wanted the accounts of the Philippian Christians to increase and abound. Isn't it interesting that the money and material gifts that Paul received were referred to in the Scriptures as a "fragrant offering" and an "acceptable sacrifice" that was pleasing to God. It was sweet smelling money my brother and sister, not filthy lucre or evil money, but fruit that was pleasing to God.

Philippians 4:18

I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.

By virtue of creation, God created all the gold, silver and costly stones and He said it was good! Money is based on gold and precious metals. God told man it was good, but it was the devil who has peddled doctrines of demons in deceiving the Church into thinking money is evil, that the financial realm is of Satan. Well certainly, Satan is the god of this world system, but it was God who originated what is of value in the first place.

Genesis 2:10-12

A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.)

The KJV uses the term "Filthy Lucre" which is talking about acquiring wealth through ill gotten means. The NIV translates it the "Love of Money" which addresses the greed aspect of materialism or idolatry. Certainly that is sinful and wrong. But money in and of itself is neutral, it is what we do with it that can be good or bad. It is like the internet, it has the potential for great good in propagating the gospel or for great evil through trafficking sin. There is a right and wrong way to get money- gold is good and greed is bad! God is our source and not man, when we look to God to meet our needs through people that He speaks to, that is a good thing. God also gives us the strength, wisdom and favor to work and keep good jobs and make great incomes.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

Acquiring wealth is a good thing, provided the motives are right. We honor God first by giving as the Spirit and the Word direct us for His Kingdom. We take care of our families and we get to enjoy the rest. It's okay to want to enjoy the blessings of God as long as that is not the number one reason. But ultimately, it is to finance and further the Great Commission in the earth. So why should we want a lot of money, so we can give and be a blessing and experience His joy in helping others and seeing folks get saved.

Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

The Lord wants to expand our vision and increase our insight in these matters. So often we think so small and so we receive in proportion to the revelation we have in this matter. We may be satisfied and get by with a little, but the greater question is this, is God satisfied and pleased with us just getting by in life? If He is not, then there is a problem. We have already established that it is His will for all His children to be rich, to have a full supply, and have no room to receive all His blessings. So are we going to obey the will of God in this matter? God needs channels for His provision to flow through; it's not all for us. God has plans, big plans for His Kingdom and it requires money. Imagine all of the Body of Christ, being in positions to give into the Lord's projects. It takes time to develop in the area of finances, so we need to get on it now.

There is a danger when Christians hear a verse like Philippians 4:19, thinking they know what it all means. Perhaps we do know some things about it, but not all things, just a part. No one has exhausted all the light from Scripture. If it's old to us, than it's not real to us.

Philippians 4:19

And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:10

I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it.

Paul was rejoicing in the Lord over a big offering he had received; so is it okay to rejoice when God blesses us in this way- absolutely? Do you have to be an occupational minister to receive a gift from others? No! Some folks get the idea that this is just for preachers, no this is for all God's children who are operating the principles of giving and receiving.

I have noticed in my own life and in Scripture that the Lord provides windows of opportunities that need to be acted on because they will only remain open for a season. Most of the time it is not going to be convenient, but it's a test of obedience and faith. If we miss that opportunity there is no guarantee that we will get another chance. Likewise with giving into God's Kingdom, we need to take opportunities when they arise, because sometimes windows for giving are seasonal. Sometimes people need our help right now, but later on they won't need it in that way. It's not always going to be convenient when folks need our help. There will be many times when the Lord will prompt us to give and it will not be a good time.

Ephesians 5:15-16

Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

The more we learn how to be led by the Holy Spirit, the more certain we will become to His leadings in all areas of the Christian life. This has great application to the subject of giving. If you perceive a prompting to give, don't feel compelled that very second to give. Check with the Lord first to confirm. Now you don't want to wait too long and miss God, but I have found that if it is God today, it will be God tomorrow. If the confirmation in your heart continues, then give it. That little test of time rules out emotion and impulse. Again don't wait too long and miss the window; in most cases we have a day or two to test things out that God is directing us in a certain direction.

Just remember that when the Lord deals with us to give, it's generally not going to be a convenient time to do it. Did you know that He purposely does that? Why, because it gives us a chance to demonstrate our faith and love, that we are not going to put ourselves first and cling onto this or that. We believe there is a lot more where that came from, and we believe that He is able to get it to us.



I have made it a practice that whenever a church offering is being taken, to always put something in the offering, even if it was only \$1.00. It demonstrates an attitude and willingness to live to give. But we should always look to the Lord whenever an offering is made or a need is presented to see what He would have us do. Now there will be times where He will not direct us to do anything at the time, so we should not feel guilty. There will also be times where He says don't give- we may not know the reasons and that's fine. The key is to be led by the Holy Spirit.

When the Lord directs us to give money that we had already earmarked for some other bill or item, the temptation is to first check if there will be some other means to recoup that money. "Well I have my house payment coming up in a week, so..." That should not be the prerequisite to our giving, how will I make the money up. The issue is not that I can get the money from somewhere else, the issue is whether the Lord is dealing and prompting me to give. What the Lord is looking for is obedience and trust in Him as our source to always make up the difference and a whole lot more. So the question is always is this the Lord prompting me, not where am I going to get the money to pay those other bills. So why don't we give on these occasions? Simple, we are not convinced that God can get the money to us in time- simple lack of faith.

We are led not by the need, but rather by the Holy Spirit. Our giving should not solely be in response to them telling us a sad story, going under or out of business. It is one thing to present a need, it is quite another to use the world's devices of manipulation, guilt and pressure to squeeze money out of others. Remember, if they are trusting in God to begin with, they would never resort to such tactics. They would simply present the need and look to God to meet it- no pressure or strings attached.

Note, in many cases when large bills come up, what people have is not even half enough of what they need anyway. They are going to have to believe God in the first place. So if God is dealing with us to give, let's trust God with the little we have; our two fish and five loaves of bread and watch the Master multiply it. It's a whole lot easier to believe God when we have seed in the ground and have obeyed Him to give- confidence to expect a harvest.

Matthew 14:15-21

As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat." "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

The last thing we want to do, is to give out of fear; feeling that we will come under some sort of curse if we don't give. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law according to Galatians 3:13. Now we can give out of love and joy as the Spirit leads us. We give first and foremost because we love God and recognize that everything comes from Him in the first place. Second we want to see His Kingdom grow and expand in order for the Great Commission to be fulfilled. Third, we give because we want to be blessed so we can give even more to God for His glory- we can't out give God! it is more blessed to give than to receive according to Acts 20:35. We give out of faith and love in obedience to God's Word, with a pure heart- 1 Samuel 16:7.

Another benefit of giving during those windows of opportunity when others are in need is that the folks we give to will remember it. Obviously we don't give with that motive, that they owe us anything. Our giving should always be in love and faith with no conditions for repayment. However, look at 2 Corinthians 9:12-15 and notice what the Scripture says:

2 Corinthians 9:12-15

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

As we are led to give in the local church, missionaries, ministries, other believers and the poor, our account will be credited. If we fail to give as the Lord is prompting us to, we are delaying our prosperity and increase.

Philippians 4:14-17

Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need. Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be **credited to your account.**

So many people have good intentions concerning the matter of giving. They tell themselves that when their ship comes in, when they win the lottery or get their rich uncles inheritance they are finally going to give something into the Kingdom of God. So in this case we are really talking about pride, they won't give until they can give a "Big" offering. And they won't do anything until they get to that place- well they never will until they start by giving something. Remember our faith grows only as we act on God's Word. If we are only in a position to give \$1.00 a month to a ministry, start there! In a few months you can give \$10.00, and then another month after that \$20.00. Before you know it, you will be giving \$1,000 offerings and \$10,000 offerings if we will just start with the \$1.00 a month. That is how the principles of seed time and harvest and sowing and reaping work. The idea is to start with something small and allow God's principles of increase to multiply it over time into a whole bunch! The big issue is not about how much we have, but being good stewards of what we do have right now.

Let's humble ourselves and admit where we are currently at in our faith and in our finances. Let's actively engage in giving as the Spirit of God leads us with the expectation that over time God will prosper us and we can give more and more. Not only will we be able to give more, but the quality of our life will run in parallel with our giving, so it will increase as well. To have a harvest coming in consistently, we need to be sowing consistently- it does not have to be big.

Ecclesiastes 11:1- Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again.

Jesus is not saying we can't have a savings account, money market account or investments, but we do have to watch out that these financial vehicles do not become our source. What Jesus is saying is that there are no safe investments on earth.

Matthew 6:19-21

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

So as we give, and invest into God's Kingdom, our spiritual account will be credited. However, folks will say that we can't touch that until we get to heaven, like a 401K being accessed at retirement. Well certainly there will be wonderful rewards for us to receive when we get to heaven, but we need God's provision while we live here on earth.

We cannot find a better return, than to invest into God's Kingdom; the only catch is that it takes faith. We are not going to get a monthly statement from heaven showing our account activity and balance. From the natural, some Christians think when they give that money, it's just gone. However, if we have faith and we know the truth, it has been credited to our account. It's not depreciating, losing value or in danger of suffering a loss. It is unaffected by the world's trends or global economics.

Just remember, in dealing with our kingdom account, it takes faith to put it in and it takes faith to draw it out, but it is real. According to Jesus who are we laying up treasure for in Matthew 6:20? If it's for ourselves, is that wrong? Well not according to Jesus.

The Gospels tell us about a rich young man who wanted “Eternal Life” and asked Jesus what he should do to inherit it- interesting that Jesus talked about money. Jesus instructed the man to sell everything he had and give it to the poor and follow Him. Now was Jesus telling the man to give all his money so he would never see it again; in essence, throwing it all away? Was Jesus asking the man to take a vow of poverty? Was Jesus saying, “Give everything you have to the poor and you won't have anything else for the rest of your life?” Jesus is not saying that in order to serve Him, you can't have any money- no! Yet people have read these things into this passage of Scripture. Jesus was providing an investment opportunity that was out of this world. To multiply what he had on earth beyond measure in his heavenly account (that he could access while on earth), and then receive the honor of following Jesus.

Unfortunately this young man did not grasp what Jesus was offering him. Jesus was not telling him that he could not have anything to serve Him. He was telling him, “I want you to transfer your wealth to my system. To exchange or convert your worldly goods into Kingdom currency.” For a number of reasons, the young rich man's faith was in his stuff and needed to be in Jesus as his source. Next, Jesus was telling him that his possessions would be safe in his heavenly account so he could have access to it in order to do all the things he will need to do in following Jesus in the ministry.

Mark 10:17-23

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good — except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’” “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.”

Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!”

Realize it or not, but it takes money to do kingdom work in the earth. For all the giving to the poor, sending out missionaries, building churches- that all takes money, lots of it, to do it right! Remember the parable of the Samaritan man who took care of the man who was robbed- it took money to do that. If God leads us to pay for all the medical bills of someone today in a serious accident who had no insurance, that takes a lot of money. So where is all that money going to come from- having invested in our Kingdom account, we will need to make a withdrawal. Every time we put in a offering, we are making deposits, it gets multiplied, and then it is available for future withdrawals.

Notice the problem with the rich man was his “trust” in riches and comforts, and the so-called security it would afford him. He could have gotten ill and spent all his money on doctors and never got any better like the woman with the issue of blood- then where would his money be. So his dependence on money was hindering him from entering into the Kingdom, because his trust would have to switch from money to Jesus as his source. It’s not impossible for rich people to get saved, Jesus just said it was a challenge.

Mark 10:24 KJV

Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

Mark 5:25-26

And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse.

1 Timothy 6:17

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

Now in response to all of this, Peter brought to Jesus’ attention that they had left all to follow Him. Notice Jesus made the amazing statement that they would receive in this life one hundred times as much- not just in heaven. And persecutions for following Jesus- but it’s always worth it to serve God! This account we have in heaven is for this life and the life to come. So giving into God’s Kingdom benefits us today. Unfortunately, many Christian folks have added a verse to this passage that is not there, when Jesus said that we are laying up treasure in heaven, “and thou cannot touch it until thou are dead.” So when we look at the whole context of this passage, Jesus said that we would receive now in this present age! We are blessed there and blessed here, we are blessed everywhere!

Mark 10:28-30

Peter said to him, “We have left everything to follow you!” “I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields — and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.”

Persecutions- not everyone is going to be happy about God prospering you! There will be grace to overcome it, as we become more blessed to be a blessing. It’s a win-win, blessed now and in all eternity.

Let's look again at the having the right motive when it comes to handling money. The context of 1 Timothy 6:3-11 was addressing false teachers who were using godliness as a means to financial gain. It is important that we establish this point, because when Paul talks about the love of money, it's in context with ungodly men, not to be like them. Money does not make us godly or ungodly, it is the manner in which we use it and acquire it.

1 Timothy 6:5

...and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

2 Corinthians 2:17

Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God.

Christians can be covetous and greedy, and the Bible tells us that we are to avoid them, and to not even eat with them.

1 Corinthians 5:11

But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

The Lord wants us to be blessed financially, to have a full supply, and to have nice things. He just does not want us to be covetous, materialistic, greedy and self-centered- like a spoiled child. When we have the Biblical perspective, that we are to use the things of this world to further God's kingdom in the earth and enjoy them along the way, we are in line with God's will for our lives. As long as we do not become preoccupied with things and miss God. Remember the old saying goes, "You will never see a hearse pulling a U-Haul."

1 Timothy 6:6-8

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that.

1 Corinthians 7:31

...those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

What Paul is saying by the Holy Spirit in 1 Timothy 6:9-12, is that our principle goal in life is not to be rich for the sole purpose of consuming it upon ourselves. Our principle goal is to do the will of God, but it's going to take money to do the will of God. The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil in our lives, and we will end up piercing ourselves with many griefs because of it. That is why we are being warned concerning this real and present danger. But on the other hand, God doesn't want us broke and to only barely get by.

1 Timothy 6:9-12

People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

**Proverbs 23:4- Do not wear yourself out to get rich; have the wisdom to show restraint.
Proverbs 28:22- A stingy man is eager to get rich and is unaware that poverty awaits him.**

Eternal life encompasses a quality of life, an abundant life, and receiving the very life and nature of God in our spirit.

1 Timothy 6:12-13

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Paul addresses those who are rich in this world, and instructed them not to put their hope in wealth. Prosperity provides us all the same test, are we going to become engrossed by money and turn from the Lord. Our prosperity is by His grace, so we can establish His covenant, further His Kingdom in the earth. Apart from Him we are nothing and have nothing, but through Christ we can do all things. Notice the great temptation for the rich is to be arrogant and not rely on God. We need to always seek God and put His kingdom first no matter what we have.

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Proverbs 13:7

One man pretends to be rich, yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth.

Proverbs 30:8-9

Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the Lord?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.

We are stewards of God's money, ready to give it out of our pocket as the Lord leads. Not just ready, but willing to share and invest in others. In all this we are investing into our Kingdom account. What a wonderful security we have in knowing that all these things we are doing on the earth, like giving, is laying up treasure in heaven for our future use in order to fulfill God's destiny for our lives.

We have an account in heaven with our name on it, and we are regularly putting money into that account. The Faith element is important when we make deposits. Are we expecting a 30, 60 and 100 fold return? Do we know what is in our account? The resources are there, and our faith makes a demand on it and makes a withdrawal. Local churches have Kingdom accounts just as much individuals do. It is not limited to the people of the local church.

1 Timothy 4:8

For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

From a worldly point of view, this does not make common sense. That's because it requires a revelation of the truth to accept it.

1 Corinthians 2:12-16

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. **The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him**, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment: "For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?" But we have the mind of Christ.

7. Borrowing

Remember, it's not material things that is the problem, but the preoccupation of them- to be more interested in them, than in the Lord. God does not have a problem with His children being rich, but how we acquire this wealth is what we need to look at next.



- 1- We can steal it from someone
- 2- We can wish and wait for it- like an inheritance or gambling like the lottery
- 3- We can work extra jobs and save up for it
- 4- We can borrow and get into debt
- 5- The Best way is to sow and believe it in from the Lord

Romans 13:6-7

This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

The word honor in the Bible, often times is referring to the support we provide to bless people with finances- not just to pay them respect. For instance, like honoring our mom and dad. The context of Romans 13 is about giving people what we owe them. So if we have debt, we are to pay it back. It is not saying don't borrow, just be sure to pay what you owe. We live in a society where debt is not regarded as it use to be. People borrowing without the inclination to pay it back- that is serious. The most serious aspect as far as debt is concerned, is to protect the integrity of our word and the honor of our name- this is reflected in our credit score. If we promise to pay a loan back and have signed our name, we have given our word. So no matter what, we have to honor it, to believe God, and be faithful to keep our word and pay it back. Even when it hurts and we do not think it is fair, because we have given our word, so we must honor it. We live in a society that lacks integrity and commitment. If things are not convenient, folks file for divorce, they file for bankruptcy- those actions hurt our faith!

Psalms 15:4

...but honors those who fear the Lord, who keeps his oath even when it hurts.

In Bible times, people could be sold into slavery or cast into debtors prison until the debt is paid for. It would be kind of hard to pay for a debt while in prison though. Because back then, to not pay a debt was the same as stealing which was a crime.

Psalms 37:21- The wicked borrow and do not repay, but the righteous give generously...

The Jerusalem version says- **“The wicked borrow without meaning to repay”**

Matthew 18:25- Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

Luke 12:58-59

“As you are going with your adversary to the magistrate, try hard to be reconciled to him on the way, or he may drag you off to the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison. I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.”

The problem with our society today is not the devil, but selfishness. If we are in debt, our job is not our source, God is. If we honor our debts, God will honor our integrity and when we cooperate with the laws of giving and receiving we will get out of debt God’s way- through the laws of increase. When people file bankruptcy, someone is always left holding the bag and they lose money. Often times people will rationalize, “well they are just another big greedy corporation, they can just write it off as a business loss and take a tax deduction.” Such convenient rationalization forgets that most of these banks are publicly held companies. That means that average people have invested in these banks for their 401K retirement and as a consequence are receiving less dividends as a result of people going default on their loans. Bottom line is, people lose when others do not keep their word and honor their commitments.

We are so quick to just throw in the towel. The Lord wants us to grow up spiritually, be men and women of integrity and excellence, who keep their word even when it hurts and do right. Sure it will involve sacrifice, prayer and seeking God, but training in godliness is worth it for this life and the life to come. Let’s overcome and crucify selfishness, and become a faithful steward of God’s resources. It may seem that our financial system is beyond hope, but there is a God and a way if we trust Him and commit ourselves to His plan with a right heart and motive- He just needs faith out of us.

Deuteronomy 15:1-2

At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. This is how it is to be done: Every creditor shall cancel the loan he has made to his fellow Israelite. He shall not require payment from his fellow Israelite or brother, because the Lord’s time for canceling debts has been proclaimed.



It was never God’s intention or will for His children to live in a perpetual state of debt all the time. Under the Mosaic law, all debts were to be cancelled after seven years. The Lord did not forbid them from ever borrowing, He just did not want them to live under that burden indefinitely.

Deuteronomy 15:4-6

However, there should be no poor among you, for in the land the Lord your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly bless you, if only you fully obey the Lord your God and are careful to follow all these commands I am giving you today. For the Lord your God will bless you as he has promised, and you will **lend to many nations but **will borrow from none**. You will rule over many nations but none will rule over you.**

Notice in verse four of Deuteronomy chapter 15, it's clearly stated that it's not the Lord's will that there be any poor amongst His covenant children. Sure there are Christians experiencing poverty, but it's not His will just as it's not His will that they be sick or be oppressed by the devil. God's perfect will is for all His children to be rich! The blessing is not to have to borrow or need to borrow, but to be in a financial position to lend or invest. Instead of us paying interest, the world would be paying us interest. It starts with a vision, but many believers don't see themselves beyond where they currently are.

Jesus in His teachings compared the releasing of debt with the forgiveness of sins. So debt is an obligation and justice demands repayment. Sin is a debt, I owed a debt I could not pay, He took a debt He did not owe, I needed someone to wash my sins away- that someone was Jesus. The Father does not want us to be in debt, spiritually or naturally. He is not satisfied that we be in a continual cycle of debt- He wants more for our lives.

Matthew 18:21-35

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?" Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. "Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

"The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. "But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. "His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' "But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened.

"Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. "This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

The lender is the one on top and the borrow is servant to the lender. So does God want us to be slave to the world system? No! The word borrow means to: inquire, to ask and to beg. We must not look to the bank and our job as our source. They are important and we use them, but they are not the first place we run to when we need help financially- Proverbs 22:7, *"The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender."*

Some people pretend to be on a higher level of prosperity than they really are through debt- delusion. That is not prosperity, we have to humble ourselves and admit where we are and start there and know by God's grace we can get to the next level. We say everything in our life belongs to the Lord, but let's see the paper work- it actually belongs to the bank and credit card companies. No wonder we can't give it away even if the Lord asks us to.

Proverbs 13:7

One man pretends to be rich, yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth.

The Hebrew word for “Interest” like credit card interest, means to receive a “Sting” or “Bite” of an adder or snake. When we look at our mortgage statement and see the interest we are paying, we know what it means to be bitten by interest charges. Paying too much interest can actually delay our prosperity, because that money could be sowed and we could be receiving a harvest on it today. If we can just bite the bullet and operate where we are at, and resist the temptation of getting into debt as a means of stimulating our prosperity. In time, the harvest of our giving will overtake us and we will live on a new level of increase, and be where we were trying to get to through debt. God has a higher level for us to operate on, it’s not a sin to use debt, but God wants more for our life.

8. Different Levels of Faith for Prosperity

- 1- **No Faith:** Where God is not our source and provider. Totally depending upon ourselves just like the world does. Sadly, some are too scared to believe God to make a payment on anything, trusting the Lord to provide.
- 2- **Payment Faith:** Have you ever noticed when you go to buy a car or house, the salesperson will ask you, “What payment can you afford?” Even though we will end up paying for that thing twice when it’s all said and done. At this level, we have faith in God to provide us with the money to just make the payments on time until the thing is paid off. There is a higher level of faith than making payments all our life. Sure, we all start at this level, and there is nothing wrong with that. We just want to progress from there- remember this is a legitimate level of faith, better than no faith.
- 3- **Payoff Faith:** Which means to believe God, not just to pay a thing off, but to pay something off early without going the full term of the loan. We always go into a loan having a vision to pay it off early. Suppose it is a five year car loan, and we believe that we will pay it off in two years instead. To believe God for chunks of extra over and above finances to come in. Not just an extra few dollars here and there, but thousands so we can pay it off early.
- 4- **Believe it In:** This is God’s best for His children. It’s not about working harder to earn it, having to borrow any money for it, or just saving and scraping every dime we get. I am talking about simply believing for it all to come in from God through the Biblical method of sowing and reaping finances; but it first starts with having a vision.

We have been redeemed from the curse of the Law- Poverty. We have inherited the blessing of Abraham through Jesus Christ. Notice in Deuteronomy that the blessings of God will come upon us and overtake us.

Deuteronomy 28:1-2 NKJV

“Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God.”

Here is a word of wisdom, as the Lord blesses our storehouse, during times of plenty, we need to save some of that money- that is wisdom and not a lack of faith. We don’t need to spend everything we get in our hot little hands. Often times the Lord will lead us to save for future projects. Remember when Joseph was warned by God to prepare for famine, and to set aside a portion during the years of plenty. This was not a lack of faith on his part concerning the famine, God directed him what to do- save for it.

In life, some events will have an effect on a whole lot of people, like a country's economy. But the Lord will give His children a heads up so they can save and prepare for it. Other events that have a limited affect on our lives, we can change and prevent, but not necessarily when it's a consequence that affects a region, a nation or the world- we just have to get ready for it.

Acts 11:27-30

During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

1 Corinthians 16:2

On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections will have to be made.

Deuteronomy 28:5- Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed.

I have learned that there are some great deals out there during a bad economy, if we just had the liquid assets, we could make off like a bandit. Well the Holy Spirit can show us things to come and get us in a great position to receive a wonderful blessing. Don't feel condemned for those missed opportunities of the past, learn from them and just be ready and look for the leading of the Holy Spirit in the future. There are many more great opportunities, and even greater blessings waiting for us in the future. The Lord wants to bless our storehouse!

Deuteronomy 28:11-14

The Lord will grant you abundant prosperity — in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your ground — in the land he swore to your forefathers to give you. The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of his bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none. The Lord will make you the head, not the tail. If you pay attention to the commands of the Lord your God that I give you this day and carefully follow them, you will always be at the top, never at the bottom. Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today, to the right or to the left, following other gods and serving them.

When Israel was in Egypt, they did not have anything and they owed for everything- they were in slavery. They were absolutely at rock bottom and owned nothing. God brought them out with silver and gold, and they plundered the Egyptians and came out rich. Still, that was not the greatest level of prosperity for them to be at, because they were in the wilderness after they crossed the Red Sea. However, it was sure better than slavery. To be sure, it was never God's will for them to stay in the wilderness an additional forty years. God's original plan was for them to just to pass through the desert on their way to the Promised Land. Egypt is a type of being in sin before we were born again. Our exodus out of the world occurred when we received the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

When Israel was in the wilderness, their life sustaining necessities was a day to day proposition- they had to believe God from one day until the next. Like folks today living from paycheck to paycheck. This is where the majority of the body of Christ is today. Making their payments, paying their bills and in debt- just struggling to get by. This kind of existence, surviving instead of thriving financially, surely there is a higher level? Is there not some kind of Promised Land for us today to enter into and enjoy a lifestyle of milk and honey like the Old Covenant saints did?

Exodus 3:8

So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey...

Hebrews 4:1-2

Therefore, since the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the gospel preached to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard **did not combine it with faith.**

Hebrews 4:6-11

It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. Therefore God again set a certain day, calling it Today, when a long time later he spoke through David, as was said before:

**“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.”**

For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. There remains, then, a Sabbath — rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God’s rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.

Canaan’s Land is not living from day to day in the wilderness, it is not payment faith. First we must keep the Word of God before us, in our hearts and spoken out of our mouths. When we talk about the Promised Land, we are not talking about working for it. It is a “Promise” by God’s grace, given through our faith. Things we did not work for, earn or deserve but received through faith in God’s precious promises. God’s way or Canaan’s way is that we have been delivered from a working for a living mentality. Now in Canaan they still had to take possession of it and fight the giants that were there. We still have to fight the fight of faith because the devil is not going to stand idly by as we plunder his worldly goods. We work so we have seed to sow and live by the laws of seed time and harvest, the law of increase. Enjoying the promises of God and our glorious inheritance in Jesus Christ, today!

Deuteronomy 6:3-12

Hear, O Israel, and be careful to obey so that it may go well with you and that you may increase greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, promised you. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. When the Lord your God brings you into the land he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to give you — a land with large, flourishing cities you did not build, houses filled with all kinds of good things you did not provide, wells you did not dig, and vineyards and olive groves you did not plant — then when you eat and are satisfied, be careful that you do not forget the Lord, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

Proverbs 13:22

A good man leaves an inheritance for his children’s children, but a sinner’s wealth is stored up for the righteous.

God's plan is that we plant financial seed through giving and believe Him for a multiplied harvest. We did not save, borrow or strain for it- this is entering into the rest of God. So when we receive through God's plan for increase, He gave it to us and so it's a blessing. This is the highest level of prosperity, to believe it in. Now remember that we don't start out in this highest form of faith for prosperity. People want to jump a level or two. No we start out with "Payment Faith" and then go onto "Payoff Faith" before we get to "Believe it in Faith!"

It takes time and must become a lifestyle and not something we just try. How wonderful it becomes in our life when we want something, we don't look for extra overtime at our job, or pull out the credit cards; instead we sow financial seed for it and just believe God. This is the rest of God when we can trust him to work it out in our lives in the absence of us having to work for it, earn it and sweat it out. Sounds too good to be true, it would be if it was not so explicitly stated in the Bible.

Proverbs 10:22- The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.

If our prosperity relied solely on us being sharp, shrewd, working and saving, we would get the glory or credit for it as a result of our labor and works. However, if we work and are diligent to give into God's Kingdom as seed sown, and believe God for the increase- who gets the glory? This latter approach is so much more fun to live our life by God's economy, and not the world's system. When God does it for us, and it's paid for and completely ours- praise the Lord!

People will say, "How did you get that, you must be a hard worker and saved all your pennies?" No, God gave it to me, like the children of Israel in the Promised Land; houses I did not build, vineyards I did not plant- just believed it in! A minister once said, "If I can't get it with my faith, I don't want it in my house." We want God to get the glory for the prosperity that we enjoy, this is the highest form of faith for prosperity, and it should be our goal.

If we adopt His way of doing things, concerning material blessings, we will inherently overcome covetousness which says, "Get it now anyhow! I just wanted it so I got it!" But faith says, "If you'll just wait it will be great!" Just wait and trust and believe God. To assume that we always have to get into debt to have something, is just unbelief or a lack of faith in God. We can have it God's way, but it won't be as quick as we want it, but it will be a blessing instead of a burden or just another distraction in our life. When the Lord adds it to us, it's a blessing because the Lord gave it to us His way.

**The Flesh says, "Get it now anyhow." But
Faith says, "If you'll just wait it will be great!"**

Ecclesiastes 2:26

To the man who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge and happiness, but to the sinner he gives the task of gathering and storing up wealth to hand it over to the one who pleases God.

Based on what Ecclesiastes is saying, "Who is suppose to do the work?" Who is suppose to do the toil and scraping and gathering and saving? The sinner, let them do the work, like the Canaanites, let them build the cities, the houses, the vineyards, let them do all the back breaking work. So the people of God can enter in and take possession of it from the Lord. One way we know we are getting a revelation of this is through a sense of anticipation, excitement and joy.

Income gained by those exploiting the poor will end up in the hands of those who pity the poor.

Proverbs 28:8

He who increases his wealth by exorbitant interest amasses it for another, who will be kind to the poor.

Proverbs 13:22

A good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children, but a sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.

Job 27:16-17

Though he heaps up silver like dust and clothes like piles of clay, what he lays up the righteous will wear, and the innocent will divide his silver.

Job 27:16-17 TLB

The evil man may accumulate money like dust, with closets jammed full of clothing- yes, he may order them made by his tailor, but the innocent shall wear that clothing and shall divide his silver among them.

Do you see the pattern here in the Bible, the Lord is allowing the ungodly who amass all these resources by ill-gotten means to be stored up for His children to receive. The Lord will allow them to toil and work just so it all ends up in our hands- praise God! Our giving into God's Kingdom produces a multiplied 30/60/100 fold withdrawal from Satan's kingdom. That is why the devil fights the Biblical prosperity message so much, because it will make him broke. It is a form of spiritual warfare, like strategic bombing that raids the kingdom of darkness economically. We have to get delivered from a working for a living mentality and become converted to a working for a giving mentality and get above "Payment Faith" and "Payoff Early Faith" to the bless God "Believe it In Faith." We have come out of "Egypt" or the world by being born again, as we grow spiritually we do initially pass through the wilderness (learning how to believe God in the day to day stuff), but where are we to continually abide and make our home for the rest of our life- in the Promised Land of our inheritance in Jesus today.

It is never God's will that we continue to wander in the desert of debt, lack and poverty because of fear, unbelief and a lack of faith. Let's embrace the spirit of faith like Joshua and Caleb, that we are well able to take the Land of Promise (Healing, Prosperity and Life), because the Lord has already given it to us.

Numbers 14:6-9

Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had explored the land, tore their clothes and said to the entire Israelite assembly, "The land we passed through and explored is exceedingly good. If the Lord is pleased with us, he will lead us into that land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and will give it to us. Only do not rebel against the Lord. And do not be afraid of the people of the land, because we will swallow them up. Their protection is gone, but the Lord is with us. Do not be afraid of them."

Numbers 14:24

But because my servant Caleb has a **different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit**

Unit 6 Review:

What does it mean to have a heavenly or spiritual account in God's Kingdom?

Why is it important to seize the opportunities that are afforded us to give; will it always be convenient?

When the Lord prompts us to give money that was ear marked for bills, our main concern should be?

Is the key to living a prosperous life, always found in giving big offerings?

How does Psalms 15:4 apply to repaying our debts, and what's God's method for debt elimination?

Which is the best "Level" of faith for prosperity that we should all be aiming for and why?

B. Biblical Laws of Increase

Psalms 115:12-16

The Lord remembers us and will bless us: He will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron, he will bless those who fear the Lord — small and great alike. May the Lord make you increase, both you and your children. May you be blessed by the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth he has given to man.

Revelation 11:18

The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great — and for destroying those who destroy the earth.

Our God is the God of blessing and increase and He has given the earth to us to enjoy, develop and utilize for His glory. He wants us to increase in all areas of our life, spirit, soul and body. This also includes financially and materially. He wants us to have more so we can be a blessing and do more for His Kingdom and to increase our own enjoyment level. We find in the Scriptures that just because it is God's will does not mean that it just automatically happens. There are conditions of obedience and faith associated to working the principles of God's Word.

There are reasons why people do not get saved, filled with the Holy Spirit, healed, receive strength and live a long life, but it's not a failure on God's part or the integrity of the Word. When we fail to receive, we need to ask God for wisdom and open the Word to us. Let's ask the Lord to lead people into our lives in order to teach us and help us to learn more about the Kingdom of God.

The Word of God works for us when we get excited about it; as a result, more revelation will be given to us. When the Word is real to us, it will always excite us, because it's life. God loves a cheerful or hilarious giver. When we get excited about giving, we know faith is present and God is pleased – victory! So many of God's children are hurting and struggling in the financial area. There are two main areas that the devil will harass Christians: healing and finances. If he can keep believers broke and sick, they can't do much for the Kingdom of God; don't feel like doing ministry and unable to afford it.

However when we are healthy and have a full supply, we will travel and fulfill the Great Commission. Jesus went to a lot of trouble to make financial provision available for us. Even though we don't see it immediately, we are going to keep on obeying the Word; day after day, week after week, month after month and year after year. Until the increase is a reality in our lives and we have the resources to minister to others as we should.

Health and prosperity is a strong witness to the world. You can't tell me that people are not interested in a God who will keep them healthy and wealthy. Sure there are those Christians who give us a hard time about us embracing the full message of this new life. They call us the "name it, claim it and frame it bunch" or the "Blab it and grab it folks. Oh you preach the prosperity Gospel, that health and wealth Gospel!" What kind of gospel do they want? The Word "Gospel" means good news- healing and prosperity is good news.

Luke 4:18-19

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Jesus was anointed to preach the gospel or good news to the poor, prisoners and sick. The good news for them is they don't have to be poor, bound or sick anymore- that is the Gospel Jesus preached and it should be the same one that we preach. We have a good God that wants to bring increase into our life.

1. The Law of Honoring God

The key to Exercising faith for finances is to sow seed according to 2 Corinthians 9:6 and Luke 6:38. If a person will just obey the Bible, they will reap many wonderful results. Spiritual laws, like natural laws always work the same for whomever works them, no matter who the person is. Just as gravity works the same for each person so do spiritual laws in the Bible.

Like the concept of cause and effect, when we act on the Word in faith, the results are forth coming. Therefore, we have a part to play in our prosperity- it's not all up to God. It's not what we know alone that sets us free, but what we know and put into practice that makes us free. Likewise when we go to Church it's not about going through the motions, but to get something accomplished, to see God move and have His way- not to just come and hear something nice. We should be challenged to change, put the Word into practice. To do something, increase something, decrease something, stop something, start something. If we do nothing, than we are not doers of the Word; as a result, there will be no improvement in our lives.

I want to encourage you to not let an offering bucket go by without putting something in it- live to give. Obeying the voice of God in giving also translates over into other areas of life and ministry. Obedience to God translates in the Lord using us in all forms of service and ministry.

Proverbs 3:9-10

Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

As New Covenant believers, we are to honor God with all that we have, and keep it on tap to give it away when the Lord asks for it. Put God's Kingdom first, so His things are taken care of, then He will surely take good care of us and our things. We have to put His work before our work. The New Testament equivalent to Proverbs 3:9 is Matthew 6:33.

Matthew 6:33-34

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

So many of us know and quote Matthew 6:33 but we do not truly live it. Other things are on our mind and are a priority. As a result we are violating the first law of increase- God is First! Our greatest challenge in this area will be dealing with our own selfishness. When we put God's things first, He will take care of ours.

Many things under the Old Testament were written down for our admonition as types and shadows. The practice of tithing was instituted as an Old Covenant ordinance. So what kind of type would it be for us living under the New Covenant? Another word used many times in conjunction with the concept of tithing was "Firstfruits."

Firstfruits:

Exodus 23:19- “Bring the best of the firstfruits of your soil to the house of the Lord your God.”

Deuteronomy 14:22- Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year.

Deuteronomy 26:2

Take some of the firstfruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land the Lord your God is giving you and put them in a basket. Then go to the place the Lord your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name.

Leviticus 23:10, 14

“Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you enter the land I am going to give you and you reap its harvest, bring to the priest a sheaf of the first grain you harvest. You must not eat any bread, or roasted or new grain, until the very day you bring this offering to your God. This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come, wherever you live.’”

Leviticus 27:30

“A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord.”

What is the essence of these Scriptures saying? They addressed the need of putting God first and honoring Him with their possessions by giving Him the first things that come in. When we honor God with what we have, it is for His exclusive use. When something is holy unto the Lord, it is for His purpose and not something secular.

In speaking to the Levitical Priesthood:

Numbers 18:12-15

“I give you all the finest olive oil and all the finest new wine and grain they give the Lord as the firstfruits of their harvest. All the land’s firstfruits that they bring to the Lord will be yours. Everyone in your household who is ceremonially clean may eat it. “Everything in Israel that is devoted to the Lord is yours.”



The Pharisees tithed to the extreme, even the herbs in their gardens. However, they missed the spirit of the law of honoring God with their whole life, and not just their possessions.

Luke 11:42

“Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone.”

Jesus pointed out that His covenant people (Old and New) belong to God and what we have is His. In addition to that, there is an expectation to support His Kingdom and program in the earth under the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, the Levitical Priesthood was supported by the children of Israel by bringing in tithes and offerings. What about the New Covenant? There is no Levitical priesthood or sovereign nation to support like Israel. However, the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a global enterprise of God and requires our support: time, prayer and finances. That includes the local church, missions and any other ministry that fulfills the Great Commission.

Matthew 22:17-21

“Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, “You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax.” They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, “Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?” “Caesar’s,” they replied. Then he said to them, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.”

The Jews were taught for centuries that the tithe, the best and the first of the crop belonged to God. The tithe in the Bible does not just mean 10% but refers to the first fruits and the best. When the Lord said to honor Him with our substance there is a principle that He will in turn honor us as it’s written in 1 Samuel 2:30, *“Those who honor me I will honor.”* There is a connection between the word “Honor” and financial and material giving. The word does not just mean “Respect or Reverence.” It always carries with it a material giving component.

1 Samuel 2:30

“Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, declares: ‘I promised that your house and your father’s house would minister before me forever.’ But now the Lord declares: ‘Far be it from me! Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained.’”

How we regard, esteem, appreciate and honor the things of God is very important. We need to get our minds renewed in order to understand what God considers important, to know His will and honor it by doing it as a first priority. Did you know when the Bible refers to the term “despise” it doesn’t just mean to detest, hate or loath something. In the Bible there is a much broader meaning; like when we fail to see the importance of a thing. When we hear a Biblical truth and yawn, and just treat it as common, we are in reality despising it. A failure to honor what God says is important to Him is despising a thing.

A perfect example of this is Esau and how he despised his birthright and sold it for a bowl of lentil stew. He did not curse his birthright, rather he just flippantly disregarded it as something not valuable and inconsequential- enough to trade it for a meal. Apparently his appetite for something to eat was more important, and the Bible declares that he despised his birthright. The Bible calls Esau “godless” for what he did in Hebrews 12:16; all because he did not respect or esteem it. It’s very important that we understand this concept so that we don’t become guilty of treating the things of God as common place. To God, despising something is simply a failure to value, respect and esteem what He sees as significant. So we need constant mind renewal in order for us to see what God sees as important and treat His things with honor and dignity.

Genesis 25:29-34

Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. He said to Jacob, “Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I’m famished!” (That is why he was also called Edom.) Jacob replied, “First sell me your birthright.” “Look, I am about to die,” Esau said. “What good is the birthright to me?” But Jacob said, “Swear to me first.” So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau **despised his birthright.**

Hebrews 12:16-17

...or is **godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could bring about no change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears.**

The word honor in the Hebrew means “heavy or weighty,” inferring something of value. Back in Bible times they did not have paper money, rather their currency was precious metals like gold, silver and copper. They used a scale to measure the amount of a precious metal by its weight in order to determine its worth. So when it comes to esteeming and appreciating the things of God, we need to value them greatly and this translates into honoring God. If we give God anything but our best, we are despising Him. Consider the account in Malachi, the Israelites were being cheap with God, by bringing sick, lamed and worthless animals to the Temple of God for sacrifice. In other words, these were animals they did not want anyway. They had might as well have brought road kill to the Lord, that is how grievous and contemptible it was. Then they had the audacity to say, “Lord, please be gracious to us.”

Malachi 1:6-14

“A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?” says the Lord Almighty. “It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. “But you ask, ‘How have we shown contempt for your name?’ “You place **defiled food on my altar. “But you ask, ‘How have we defiled you?’ “By saying that the Lord’s table is contemptible. When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice **crippled** or **diseased** animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?” says the Lord Almighty. “Now implore God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?”-says the Lord Almighty.**

“Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you,” says the Lord Almighty, “and **I will accept no offering from your hands. My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations,” says the Lord Almighty. “But you profane it by saying of the Lord’s table, ‘It is defiled,’ and of its food, ‘It is contemptible.’ And you say, ‘What a burden!’ and you sniff at it contemptuously,” says the Lord Almighty. “When you bring injured, crippled or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices, should I accept them from your hands?” says the Lord. “Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king,” says the Lord Almighty, “and my name is to be feared among the nations.”**

Honoring the Pastoral Office

A modern application of this would be if a Christian was taking an old beat-up piece of furniture to the city dump, but then half way there, decides to dump it on his/her pastor instead- that is a contemptible offering and dishonors God by dishonoring His servant.

Romans 13:7-10; 1 Timothy 5:17-18; Luke 10:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; Galatians 6:6-7; Hebrews 13:7, 17; Acts 23:3-5- Paul honored the office of the High Priest.

A fundamental key to prosperity is taking care of our pastor financially. Churches that muzzle God’s servant never prosper. Spiritual blessings are withheld from them because they’re in violation of God’s Word. The local church sows seed just as individual church members sow seed.

The Lord does not accept all offerings and neither should we if they are not right. Like someone trying to buy, influence or direct the local church like a lobbyist in Washington with money. If God is our source, than we don’t have to resort to anything scrupulous. If someone in a healing line gets instantly healed, and they want to write the minister a check, we shouldn’t accept that- we can’t buy the blessings of God!

Only through the blood of Jesus are we saved, healed and delivered- a free gift by grace through faith. But we can honor God with our substance, but never to buy something from God. We can't buy our healing or forgiveness, there is only one price that can be paid, and it was already done 2,000 years by the blood of Jesus.

1 Peter 1:18-19- For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

In Malachi 1:11 a reference is made to "pure offerings." A pure offering is done from a right heart, in faith and in love. It is giving our best to God in order to honor Him. Not giving Him the junk, but the first of what we have, and it is not the amount, but the heart of faith in love- consider the poor widow who threw in a few copper coins in Mark 12:42. God does not look at the amount, but the percentage- Jesus is still watching what people put in the offering bucket today.

Mark 12:41-44

Jesus sat down opposite the place where the offerings were put and watched the crowd putting their money into the temple treasury. Many rich people threw in large amounts. But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins, worth only a fraction of a penny. Calling his disciples to him, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything — all she had to live on."

2 Corinthians 8:11-12

Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

In Acts 10 we see a Gentile honoring God by taking care of the poor and seeking God. Well if we honor God, He will honor us, and He is no respecter of persons either. The angel called Cornelius's actions a memorial offering before God. Remember, to honor something means to see the value of it, and in so doing we are esteeming it.

Acts 10:1-4

At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly. One day at about three in the afternoon he had a vision. He distinctly saw an angel of God, who came to him and said, "Cornelius!" Cornelius stared at him in fear. "What is it, Lord?" he asked. The angel answered, "Your prayers and gifts to the poor have come up as a memorial offering before God."

Until people see the value of the local church, world missions and humanity in general, and see it through God's eyes, they will not honor it- this is where having a revelation from God is so necessary.

2 Corinthians 5:14-16

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.

If we approach giving to the Lord and His work like paying a bill or meeting some other obligation we will not be blessed in our giving; we are despising His offerings by not esteeming them. In which case, don't even bother giving until a heart check is made to give willingly and with joy in faith. If the expectation in the Old Covenant was to bring in 10% of their increase, how much more should we be giving over and above that amount under the New Covenant. Under a New Covenant of Grace, a greater ability is granted unto us to exceed far above the Old Covenant type of 10%. If one gives less than 10% and claims to be led by the Spirit, they are living far below their New Covenant potential. Are we to pay more to the government than we do to the work of God? The whole idea is to give more under the New Covenant and not less than the Old Covenant 10% tithe.

So if we are to follow the Old Testament type of tithing under the New Covenant, we should be giving the first amount right off the top that we receive and give it to God and for His work before we look at anything else with that money. If our giving is an afterthought, as whatever is left over, the scraps in other words, that is not honoring the Lord with our first and our best. Since increase includes anything we receive, not just money, it also includes any material thing.

So our response should be to give more into God's kingdom as an expression of thanks, and thus keep the flow of sowing engaged. When we give it should be with the right heart, in faith and an expression of gratitude that God is our source and everything good comes from Him. Giving in this joyful and thankful manner will be blessed by the Lord Jesus. But just giving out of ritual and obligation, just operating in the sheer mechanics of it without the Spirit and without faith will not please the Lord. No matter how big that check is. When we put others and the work of God ahead of our own interests and what we want for ourselves, that honors the Lord.

Notice that Abel's offering was accepted because it was the right offering- a blood sacrifice. Cain may have presented a more expensive offering, but it was rejected because it was not done in obedience. It is inferred that God had commanded them both to bring a blood sacrifice. Abel obeyed and Cain did not, Abel was accepted and Cain was not. So ultimately what made the sacrifice pleasing to God was obedience.

It's giving what God has asked us to give for the occasion, and not presumptuously doing our own thing. This principle transcends time and applies to us today. When the Spirit of God prompts us to give, we need to give exactly what He asks and when he asks for it, and without delay. Doing so as an act of worship and love, and never out of ritual or obligation.

Genesis 4:2-5

Now Abel kept flocks, and Cain worked the soil. In the course of time Cain brought some of the fruits of the soil as an offering to the Lord. But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The Lord looked with favor on Abel and his offering, but on Cain and his offering he did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry, and his face was downcast.

Hebrews 11:4

By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.

Isaiah 1:19-20

If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

What God is primarily after is our heart, loyalty, obedience and devotion. Giving is one of the best ways to demonstrate this. It's not the amount, but the response in faith and love to honor God with all that we have, because everything we have comes from Him in the first place. Besides, His people need what we have and vice versa.

John 15:5-6

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Acts 17:28

"For in him we live and move and have our being."

Deuteronomy 30:19-20

This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. **For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.**

God is after our heart, and if we are not giving Him our best, our own heart will condemn us. It will affect every area of our life. It's all about a dedicated and consecrated life unto the Lord.

1 John 3:19-24

This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence Whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him.

And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

Sure there are crooked folks who would extort finances from believers, and prophesy money out of their pocket and into theirs. Misusing legitimate Scriptures for selfish gain, and they give the prosperity message a bad name. Even to the point where they become stumbling blocks to believers and hinder them from legitimate giving and deny them the blessings of God- that is of the devil my friends. But that is true about anything good from God, the devil tries to pervert it.

That is why it is so important to be led by the Spirit, as to whom we sow our finances. Because if someone has false motives and is a crook, the Holy Spirit will warn us. That is why we should not give mechanically and methodically, we need to pray about these things and check those ministries and/or individuals out and not just once. People and ministries can start out right, but then go wrong later on and not produce- they are human. If we would be as conscious and coherent about spiritual things as we are about natural things, we could avoid a lot of pitfalls. We can make bad investments spiritually just as we can naturally, and sow into ground that is not producing or is not right.

Elijah went to a poor widow woman and asked her to first feed him before themselves. Now this woman had to make a choice, because in the natural this was literally her last meal. Yet God through Elijah asked for it, why, so He could multiply it back and bless them.



Then the word of the Lord came to him: “Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a widow in that place to supply you with food.” 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?” As she was going to get it, he called, “And bring me, please, a piece of bread.” “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 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.” Elijah said to her, “Don’t be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. **But first make a small cake of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me,** and then make something for yourself and your son. 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 gives rain on the land.” 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. 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. 1 Kings 17:8-16

Now the Lord led Elijah to this particular widow woman who was not even an Israelite, because He needed someone to demonstrate faith in order for God’s grace to produce a miracle. This woman put God first and that is what the Lord is looking for. The Lord does not need it personally, but His Covenant children need it, and He takes it personally when they go without.

Luke 4:25-26

I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon.

Here is another example of putting God first with what we receive. Remember the first city that Joshua and the children of Israel came across in the Promised Land- it was Jericho. They marched around that city as the Lord instructed them and the walls fell down supernaturally. But do you remember what the Lord instructed them to do concerning that city? As the first city that God had given them in the land of Canaan, He declared that city was devoted to Him- the firstfruits!

All the spoils belonged to the Lord and no one was to touch any of it. Remember Achan, when he saw some gold and clothes, he took it and hid it under his tent. As a result, they were defeated at Ai in battle, and they inquired of the Lord and it was revealed that someone stole some of the devoted things.

Joshua 7:1

But the Israelites acted unfaithfully in regard to the devoted things; Achan son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of them. So the Lord’s anger burned against Israel.

When people are disobedient and deceitful to the Lord concerning material things it is sin. The issue is not that God does not want us to prosper and have things, He wants us to put Him first in everything. All the other cities that the Israelites conquered after that, they were permitted to receive all of it. But Jericho was branded into their minds as a reminder of the principle of firstfruits, being devoted and holy to the Lord- so don't touch it.

Acts 5:1-11

Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that **Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit** and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? **Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal?** What made you think of doing such a thing? **You have not lied to men but to God.**" When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, "Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?" Yes," she said, "that is the price." Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also." At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

The whole theme of the Book of Haggai is equivalent to Matthew 6:33; the priority of putting God first and to honor Him. The people who were referenced in the book of Haggai were quick to make for themselves comfortable dwellings, at the expense of neglecting the reconstruction of the Temple. As a result, they were reaping what they were sowing and experienced lack. So the Lord challenged them to consider their ways. To consider the "Win – Win" scenario of putting God first so they could be blessed. The harder people work to do their own thing, the harder it will be for them to get ahead. We have all been guilty of that mentality, "Well I just don't have anything to spare right now, but one of these days..." But not when we violate the first law of Increase, by putting ourselves first. "As soon as I get my car paid off, as soon as this bill is paid, as soon as I get that, then I will give to the Lord's work." That statement is quite revealing as to who is really first in their life, but it's not the Lord- often times we have it all backwards.

Haggai 1:2-11

This is what the Lord Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come for the Lord's house to be built.'" Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: "**Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?**" Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the Lord. "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the Lord Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house. Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the oil and whatever the ground produces, on men and cattle, and on the labor of your hands."

We need to start where we are at, and put God first and build from there as the laws of increase work on our behalf. What we need to do is look at our spending and always judge it in light of how it will affect our giving. If our giving to the Lord would become diminished, then we need to believe that thing in and keep giving to the Lord. Many of us instead will acquire debt and then create obligations that squeeze out our giving. That is dangerous because it will affect our future harvests. The result will be an ever diminishing return. We have to be more interested in giving than in getting what we want. We work so we can have seed to sow and live on the increase, not just to spend what we earn.

Notice what the Lord told the children of Israel, that from the day they started to honor God and put Him first, the Lord began to bless them. Interesting that the Lord was driving the point home for them to “give careful thought” to the fact when they put themselves first, they suffered lack and poverty, but when they honored the Lord and put Him first, they started to become blessed once again. Praise the Lord, we can count on His Word. So instead of using our faith solely for the strict purpose to acquire things, we must learn to use our faith in order to give more and propel God’s Kingdom in the earth. I am believing God to double my giving in the next 6 months. This will set in motion a wonderful cycle of abundant harvests that we can live on for a long time.

Haggai 2:15-19

“Now give careful thought to this from this day on- consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the Lord’s temple. When anyone came to a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten. When anyone went to a wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were only twenty. I struck all the work of your hands with blight, mildew and hail, yet you did not turn to me,’ declares the Lord. ‘From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the Lord’s temple was laid. Give careful thought: Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit. From this day on I will bless you.”

For the New Covenant believer, I am not fussing about tithing, I believe that it is a good place to start. For every believer, the laws of increase when obeyed can get us to a place over time where we give 90% and live off of 10%, while enjoying a greater standard of living. I believe that is the model for New Covenant grace of giving by the Spirit! We can live pretty good on 10% of 20 million can’t we- we can’t out give God! People who fuss about not having to give 10%, do so because they don’t want to even give that amount. However, these same people cannot escape the laws of sowing and reaping.

2 Corinthians 9:6

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

Regardless, the principle of honoring God, obeying Him with our life and putting Him first with all that we have transcends dispensations- it is an eternal law! When we do that, the Bible declares that He will honor us and bless us beyond measure because that is His intention to begin with. But He cannot bless stingy, greedy, selfish and materialistic children who do their own thing with their life and resources. Let’s get God’s vision for increase; blessed to be a blessing for His Glory!

Acts 20:33-35

“I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

2. How to Honor God

It is important for us to know that we are always on the Lord's mind and that His abiding presence is a meant to be a continual comfort for us to enjoy. With that being said, let's also take note that the Lord is called El-Shadi; the God who is more than enough, not El-Cheapo or the God that lets us barely get by. The Bible talks a lot about money and finances, sad that so many are embarrassed and feel uncomfortable about that subject, because of wrong thinking. We have been talking about the Biblical use honor in regards to blessing others financially. Now we are going to look at the practical application of this principle. It is impossible to say that we honor God, and not be actively giving generously into His works on the earth.

Psalms 115:12-16

The Lord remembers us and will bless us: He will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron, he will bless those who fear the Lord — small and great alike. May the Lord make you increase, both you and your children. May you be blessed by the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth he has given to man.

When we cooperate with the spiritual laws of giving and receiving we will prosper, if we don't than we will suffer lack. Remember that spiritual laws like natural laws work indiscriminately for those who follow or violate them- the results are the same for everybody all of the time. To be quite frank, our prospering is more up to us than to God. Some are just waiting for God, "Well if it's God's will for me to prosper than He will, He knows what I need, it's just up to Him. I guess it's just not His will for me to have much." Well God is waiting on these individuals to mix His Word with faith. If we do not give in faith and with joy, it does not please God nor is it acceptable to Him- we might as well not give if we don't give in faith and joy.

Deuteronomy 26:1-11- When it comes to giving offerings unto the Lord, we bring it to Him with a confession of faith and thanksgiving and declare the covenant promises with rejoicing. Acknowledging that all we have came from Him, so we gladly honor Him with all that we have- let's not forget where He brought us out of. So when we honor God with our increase, to whom do we give it to? We honor God by providing for and blessing His works. Which includes the local church, outreach ministries and missions. First and foremost we need to support the local church where we are fed and ministered to on a regular basis.

Malachi 3:8-12

"Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse — the whole nation of you — because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there **may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the Lord Almighty. "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the Lord Almighty.**

Honor God by Honoring the Local Church

Under the Old Covenant the tithe came in the form of produce or food to feed the Levitical priesthood. The whole purpose of the tithe was for the Israelites to support the priests and Levites in their ministries. So they could devote their time and energy to the Lord's work and the people would house and feed them. The tithe was always in the form of crops or livestock. If someone wanted to pay money, they had to add a fifth to the amount. This instruction of adding a fifth to the amount for monetary gifts, supports the principle of tithing as a means of meeting the basic needs of the Lord's ministers.

Leviticus 27:30-34

“A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the Lord; it is holy to the Lord. **If a man redeems any of his tithe, he must add a fifth of the value to it.** The entire tithe of the herd and flock — every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd’s rod — will be holy to the Lord. He must not pick out the good from the bad or make any substitution. If he does make a substitution, both the animal and its substitute become holy and cannot be redeemed.” These are the commands the Lord gave Moses on Mount Sinai for the Israelites.

Therefore, the principles that we learn from the tithe under the Old Covenant as a type for the New Covenant is for us to give and support those who have dedicated themselves to full-time ministry. To bless them so they are never in want of anything- well-taken care of. We see to it that the church’s needs and bills are paid for, and is well supplied to do the work of the ministry. When we do this, we are honoring God and His work by taking good care of His full-time ministry gifts.

1 Corinthians 9:3-6

This is my defense to those who sit in judgment on me. Don’t we have the right to food and drink? Don’t we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord’s brothers and Cephas? Or is it only I and Barnabas who must work for a living?

The Apostle Paul taught about the rights of those called to full time ministry. When spiritual investments are made, people ought to respond materially. If we work a job and expect to get a pay check, how much more should those who devote themselves to full-time ministry, expect a pay check to meet their needs and the needs of their family- this is how we honor God and support His work.

1 Corinthians 9:7-12

Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk? Do I say this merely from a human point of view? Doesn’t the Law say the same thing? For it is written in the Law of Moses: “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.” Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn’t he? Yes, this was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. **If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn’t we have it all the more?**

As a matter of fact, the Lord through the apostle Paul has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. If we withhold from doing so, that does not honor the Lord. It is actually disobeying a clear command in Scripture.

1 Corinthians 9:12-14

But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ. Don’t you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? In the same way, **the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.**

Yet Paul, in his passion to win the lost, was willing to forfeit his right to receive material support from those he ministered to in order not to hinder the cause of Christ. He was willing to trust God as his source and minister the gospel without receiving support from the Corinthians in order to win as many as possible. However, the Lord was faithful to meet Paul’s needs through other avenues.

1 Corinthians 9:15-20

But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me. I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of this boast. Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge, and so not make use of my rights in preaching it. Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.

So our attitude should be if the pastor needs something, he's got it and if the minister or missionary needs something, they got it! People don't realize how much they are hurting themselves by being so stingy and selfish. If they would just bless God's work and people it would come back to them multiplied over!

When people get stingy and say, "Lord keep our pastor humble and we'll keep him poor," it's just wrong on so many levels. They have no problem in blessing their own children with nice and expensive things, but when the pastor does the same for his kids, folks get all bent out of shape and say, "Look how he is using the Lord's money, shouldn't he be a better steward with God's money than that." Certainly, ministers should be mindful of what they receive and how they use it, nor should they be motivated by greed and extort or exploit people. But if someone buys them an expensive car- great. If someone is led to pay for the pastor's kids to go to college, praise the Lord- we should be rejoicing with them! When we honor God's ministers, we are honoring the Lord. If we give freely because we love God and take care of His people, we are doing it unto Him.

Matthew 25:40

"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"

Hebrews 6:10

God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.

Hebrews 13:16

And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.

Galatians 6:10

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

I have heard people who were trying to be humble, not allow others to minister and bless them with something. Most of these folks are sincere, but that is actually pride and selfishness; by cutting off an opportunity for others to sow and be blessed themselves. If we will allow others to bless us, the Lord will bless them. The people who are hurting the most financially are the ones who need to sow the most. So if someone is in financial difficulties and they give you a crumpled up \$5 dollar bill, don't give it back to them. Let the Lord bless them by you gratefully receiving that \$5 dollar bill, and by allowing them to sow seed for their future harvest.



Ministry in third world nation, particularly need to learn about the prosperity message in addition to our charitable gifts. They need to learn how to sow and reap. It's just ignorance that people don't understand this. We can give them a fish and feed them for a day, but it is better to teach them how to fish and so feed themselves and their families for a life time. The Word works no matter where people are in the world. It's up to us, not to God- the Lord is waiting on us.

Honor God by Honoring our Parents

Another way that we honor God is by providing for and honoring our elders. That would be our natural parents and our spiritual ones to. Here is a big reason why we should want to prosper, so we can do something for our folks and for those who have made significant deposits in our lives naturally and spiritually speaking- let's not forget them. It's not just a good thing to do, it's a requirement if we are going to live long and prosper. When we honor people, we value their input in our lives. This is a big key to our prosperity if we do this or not.

Deuteronomy 5:16 TLB

“Honor your father and mother (remember, this is a commandment of the Lord your God); if you do so, you shall have a long, prosperous life in the land he is giving you.”

Ephesians 6:1-3

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother”-which is the first commandment with a promise— “that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

1 Corinthians 4:15-16

Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me.

We need to realize that many times when the Bible talks about honor, it is talking about giving. So when the Lord says to honor our parents, it's not just with respect, but also financially. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees because they had made a rule that undermined the Word of God and let people off the hook from honoring their parents- providing for them financially. Back in Bible times, they did not have social security, and folks depended upon their children and grandchildren to take care of them when they became old.

When people take care of us for all those years, it is only right to take care of them when they are in their latter years. Here is another reason or motive to prosper, so we can have something to bless mom and dad. We can give our way to a place of increase- not working more, borrowing or begging for it.

Mark 7:10-13

“For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban’ (that is, a gift devoted to God), then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”

1 Timothy 5:8

If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Honor God by Honoring our Instructors

I want to encourage you not to forget those people who have helped you in life, both naturally and spiritually. As the Lord blesses you as a result of their input in your life, be sure to return the favor and bless them- that honors God. Notice in 1 Timothy 5:17, the word “Honor” here in this context is talking about finances. Those who work hard in the ministry should be well paid. When people are benefited by other ministers, and they muzzle them from receiving anything, that’s not right.

1 Timothy 5:17-18

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, “Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,” and “The worker deserves his wages.”

1 Timothy 5:17 TLB

Pastors who do their work well should be paid well and should be highly appreciated, especially those who work hard at both preaching and teaching.

An important point I need to make here; whatever spiritual or material position the minister is in, the people under him will also be at that same level. If the leaders are wicked so are the people, but if they are blessed so are the people. So it behooves the folks to take good care of their leaders, that God has set over them, because it will come back on them. The condition of the people will be a reflection of the condition of their leaders over them. It’s no wonder that the devil has created such a fuss about ministers having anything, because he knows that is the key to crippling the finances of the whole church. For people to say, “Lord you keep our pastor humble and we will keep him poor” are shooting themselves in the foot so to speak.

Hosea 4:9

And it will be: Like people, like priests. I will punish both of them for their ways and repay them for their deeds.

Luke 6:40

A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.

When we honor something that is important to us like our wedding ring for instance, we treat it a certain way, we handle it with care and protect it from harm. That is how we need to be toward our pastors and spiritual leaders- don’t take them for granted. For we reveal how we honor a certain thing by how we treat it.

Galatians 6:6

Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor.

There is a Bible principle that we are to minister natural things to those who minister to us spiritual things.

Romans 15:27

They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have shared in the Jews’ spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.

Notice that the Lord honored the Shunammite woman for what she did for His prophet Elisha. One day the Lord spoke to Elisha to bless her in some way. The blessing of God may not come every Friday night, but it does come when we continue to do good and minister to the Lord's people.

2 Kings 4:8-17

One day Elisha went to Shunem. And a well-to-do woman was there, who urged him to stay for a meal. So whenever he came by, he stopped there to eat. She said to her husband, "I know that this man who often comes our way is a holy man of God. Let's make a small room on the roof and put in it a bed and a table, a chair and a lamp for him. Then he can stay there whenever he comes to us." One day when Elisha came, he went up to his room and lay down there. He said to his servant Gehazi, "Call the Shunammite." So he called her, and she stood before him. Elisha said to him, "Tell her, 'You have gone to all this trouble for us. Now what can be done for you? Can we speak on your behalf to the king or the commander of the army?'" She replied, "I have a home among my own people." "What can be done for her?" Elisha asked. Gehazi said, "Well, she has no son and her husband is old." Then Elisha said, "Call her." So he called her, and she stood in the doorway. "About this time next year," Elisha said, "you will hold a son in your arms." "No, my lord," she objected. "Don't mislead your servant, O man of God!" But the woman became pregnant, and the next year about that same time she gave birth to a son, just as Elisha had told her.

It's a spiritual principle that those who have made an impact in our life, and have sowed into our lives wonderful spiritual things, we should seek to bless them materially. We cannot put a price on spiritual revelation and the things we have received through the Word. Others have had to toil and labor in the Word, pray and seek God in order to deliver the fresh bread of revelation truth that sets people free. Some may say, "well yea they will get their reward when they get to heaven." True, but the Lord also said to honor and bless them while they are on earth.

Honor God by Blessing the Poor

We honor the Lord and give to him when we give to the poor. By ministering to a person who is experiencing lack or contributing to a ministry that is ministering to the poor, we are honoring the Lord. There are also those among us in our own local church that are hurting and don't have money for groceries. We need to be sensitive to that and minister to the poor. According to the Bible, God takes it personally when we minister to the poor, as though we were giving to Him.

Proverbs 14:31

He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.

Proverbs 28:27

He who gives to the poor will lack nothing, but he who closes his eyes to them receives many curses.

Proverbs 19:17

He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done.

James 1:27

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

When it comes to giving to the needy, we need to be covert and do it privately. It's important that we do it discreetly as unto the Lord. When Jesus told us to give to the poor, clearly the intent was to do so in a manner that would not be embarrassing; drawing attention to their need so that everyone knows about it and shame them. Obviously that would not be honoring them. These dear souls are not all out on the streets, but are also sitting around us in church on Sunday morning.

We need to be sensitive, and when God speaks, move quickly and quietly. These folks will not always look like they are broke, because a lot of times those who are walking by faith are not going to be singing sad songs, but look as good as they can. Let's not judge by the outward appearance. It's such a wonderful thing to be used by God, to be a blessing to someone in need. If we are open to be used by the Lord, He will supernaturally lead us to them- that blesses everyone to see God working as our provider!

Matthew 6:3-4

But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

1 Corinthians 11:20-22

When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and **humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not!**

Proverbs 13:7

One man pretends to be rich, yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor, yet has great wealth.

When the Lord blesses us, we have to use wisdom and not intimidate people and make them feel bad accidentally. For instance, when we get together, avoid dressing to the hilt, and make others feel inadequate. That is not walking in love. We need to learn to relate to others, and get on their level as we reach out to them.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23

Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

Please don't forget the connection between fulfilling the Great Commission and money. Here is a confession that we can make in relation to honoring the Lord with our possessions:

“I will honor the Lord with my substance with my increase, and with all my stuff. I will honor Him and put His things first and take care of the local church, ministries and missions. I will honor my mother, father and spiritual elders, both naturally and spiritually. I will take care of the spiritual gifts around me and remember the poor. As I honor the Lord, He will honor me.”

3. The Law of Sowing and Reaping

Psalms 115:14- May the Lord make you increase, both you and your children.

3 John 2 NKJV

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.



The Lord wants all areas of our life, spirit, soul and body to prosper and increase and be blessed. God has established laws that govern these areas of increase. It is more up to us how blessed and prosperous we are than it is the Lord. We need to cooperate with Biblical principles in order for us to receive His highest and best for our lives. The Lord is not impressed with large offerings. What He

looks at first are the motives of the heart, faith and joy in our giving. Next, He looks at the gift in proportion to what we have, not what we don't have. If all we have is \$15.00 to our name and we give \$5.00, that is a third of what we have. However, if a person with \$50,000 in the bank, and only gives \$5.00, that is a very small percentage- 0.01% to be precise. This is great news for those who are just starting off in this area of giving and receiving. When folks don't have much to give at first, that's okay. Just like the widow woman, the Lord knows that they are giving out of their poverty, and the Lord will bless them. The widow woman gave more percentage wise than all the rich folks offerings put together. If Jesus watched the offerings back then, you can be sure that He has not changed, and watches them today. Our giving is an important part of the church service, and is really a form of worship unto God as we release our faith in His future provision.

Luke 21:1-4- As he looked up, Jesus saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. "I tell you the truth," he said, "this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on."

I would like you to notice how the Macedonian churches gave a rich offering on behalf of their struggling brothers and sisters in Jerusalem. It was not out of their abundance, but out of their own need. In other words, in the natural they could not afford to give anything in the first place. But what was the secret to their giving? In verse five it says, "*but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will.*" When our giving is an act of obedience accented with overflowing joy unto the Lord- that is the will of God in demonstration concerning giving!

2 Corinthians 8:1-5

And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will.

Again, it's not the size of the gift that matters; because what makes the gift acceptable is the "Willingness" to give it. Not according to what one doesn't have, but in proportion to what they do have. The Lord does not need our money personally per say; technically speaking, He does not need anything. However, He uses our giving to finance His work on the earth. He also uses it as seed sown in order to multiply it back to us for future giving. What a wonderful cycle of sowing and reaping that takes place for God's glory.

2 Corinthians 8:11-12

Now finish the work, so that your eager willingness to do it may be matched by your completion of it, according to your means. For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to what one has, not according to what he does not have.

2 Corinthians 9:7

Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for **God loves a cheerful giver.**

If we sow, we will reap, if we give, it will be given to us. That is a spiritual law, it does not just sometimes work, it works all the time the same way for everybody! If we really believed in this spiritual law, we would be living our lives so much differently today. Even in the natural, the world knows about making good investments in order to gain wealth- real estate, stocks, commodities. The reality is, we will never get a better return than investing in the work of God than anything else on this planet. But most believers don't see giving as an investment. But everything we give into God's Kingdom and God's people, should be seen as seed sown for an expectant return.

We are not throwing that money away, "Well I gave this to the poor, but I will never see that again in this lifetime." If that is our level of faith when we give, than that's how it will be, but God wants us to mix our faith with everything we give. Certainly, our main motive is not to receive something in return, but to be a blessing. However, God wants us to expect a return so we can be a greater blessing tomorrow. The gift that keeps on giving is found in sowing and reaping. So everything we give we should see it as an investment.

2 Corinthians 9:6

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

Jesus is talking about sowing and reaping in Luke chapter six. If we sow mercy and judgment that is what we will reap. If we sow wheat, we will reap wheat and not watermelons. This natural law established in Genesis chapter one is a reflection of an eternal spiritual law.

Luke 6:36-38

Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

The spiritual laws of seed time and harvest, and sowing and reaping are the pivotal spiritual laws of them all- the keystone or cornerstone. Remember in the parable of the sower in Mark chapter four, when Jesus talked about sowing the Word in order to produce a harvest -30, 60 or 100 fold. The condition of the heart determines the type of soil that the seed is planted in, which translates in the amount of the harvest that is yielded. God's Word is incorruptible seed, so it's perfect. Therefore, if the yield of a harvest is not very good, it's not the seed's fault, but the quality of the soil- so that reflects on us. Jesus made an outstanding comment when He addressed the significance of this spiritual and natural law.

Mark 4:13

Then Jesus said to them, "Don't you understand this parable? How then will you understand any parable?"

If we are experiencing lack in any area of our life, the first thing we should check is our sowing in that particular area of our life. Have I been sowing adequately in that area, and I'm not just talking about money or material things. If someone complains about not having any friends, well the obvious question is, "Who are we a friend to?" If no one wants to help us, have we been helping others. If people seem to always be talking about us behind our back, are we talking about people behind their back? Life will provide opportunities for us to sow mercy and forgiveness or just the opposite- the choice is ours.

A lot of people who claim to be offering their opinion are just being judgmental- think about that. "Well I don't think they should be doing that... what were they thinking when they said that." We don't know all the circumstances or where their heart was at in that incident. Instead, let's believe the best and keep our mouths shut and pray for them in order for God to help and bless them. Let's sow mercy, because in the future we will want others to be merciful to us.

James 2:12-13

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom, because judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment!

1 Corinthians 4:1-5

So then, men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.

Now if we've been guilty of that, let's repent and ask for forgiveness according to 1 John 1:9. If we are to judge anyone, let's judge ourselves according to 1 Corinthians 11:29-32 so we won't be judged. We may need to confess our sins to those we have wronged and/or forgive those who have wronged us- Mark 11:25; James 5:16. A lot of people have been reaping some things, and they want to blame the devil or others for the seed they have sown in the past. Now they are reaping an unpleasant harvest since they did not judge themselves and repent.

Galatians 6:6-10

Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

The first area of sowing is found in the confession of God's Word. It always begins there. This is the primary source for God's grace in our lives, it's found in His Word. Are we meditating and speaking God's Word out of our mouth continually. For in so doing, we will produce a harvest of healing, peace and grace according to the seed we have been sowing; in proportion to how much of God's Word has been coming out of our mouths! For the lost to receive the New Birth, they just have to confess Jesus as Lord and believe in their heart that God had raised Him from the dead- nothing else is required!

1 Peter 1:23

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

Now we believe in confession, but when it comes to some areas like finances, there is more to be done than just the confession of the Word of God concerning prosperity. When we look at the promises of God, take note if there are some corresponding actions that must accompany those promises. In the area of finances, there are corresponding actions required- it's called giving. So let's take another look at Luke 6:38.

Luke 6:38

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

In Matthew 7:12, Jesus told us to do for others what we would have them do unto us. There are some who are going around confessing that someone out there will give them \$1,000 dollars. Well if we would like for someone to give us \$1,000, what should we first be doing? That's right, we should be giving someone a \$1,000 dollars. The problem with many Christians is they are trying to reap in areas they have not sowed into, and it does not work that way. I remember years ago, the Lord led me to give a car away, and in a few months time, someone else gave me a better car. Suppose I had not given that car away- that's right, nothing would have happened. If we sow clothes, we reap clothes, if we sow jewelry, we will reap jewelry, if sow friendship we will reap friends, if we sow favor, we will reap favor. If we want people to respond promptly when the Lord deals with them to bless us, what should we do? Respond promptly when the Lord deals with us to give to others!

Proverbs 3:27-28

Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act. Do not say to your neighbor, “Come back later; I’ll give it tomorrow” — when you now have it with you.

Matthew 7:12- So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

If we want to reap specifically in an area, than we need to sow specifically in that area. If we want someone to bless us to become debt free, than help someone else to become debt free first. We need to sow in the manner or way in which we would like to reap- big harvests require large amounts of sowing. When we sow a bean, do we just reap another bean; no, we reap many beans, multiplication.

Here is a word of advice, don't ever become attached to things, be able to give away anything; avoid becoming emotionally attached to stuff. The Lord asked for Abraham's best, Isaac, and he did not hesitate to obey God. Let's be quick to give, because if it's our best, then God has a big blessing waiting for us. It's an investment, the Lord is not a thief, He will bless us back exceedingly above and beyond what we can ask or think.

If we can get free from the attachment to things, and allow them to flow through us, God can get it to us. The Word will not work for those who just hear it, but only for those who apply it. Giving is one of the chief expressions of love, to bless others- not just the saints, but also sinners. We can't be led by needs, looks, appearances, or sad stories. We must learn to be led by the Spirit of God. Let's always be willing and have a heart to give, looking for opportunities to be a blessing; not just money, but love, encouragement, wisdom, prayer, food, clothes etc. Don't let a day go by without giving something- live to give. Since we are continually sowing seeds, we will also be reaping continually.

Luke 6:38

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

If we give in \$5s, it comes back in \$5s, if we give in \$10, \$20, \$50, \$100, \$1,000, \$10,000, \$100,000 & in \$1,000,000 dollar increments, that is the manner in which it will be returned. I am not saying that if we give \$5.00, we will only receive another \$5.00 dollar bill. No the law of increase dictates 30, 60 & 100 fold multiplication. Now that amount of return may not hit us all at once, but can be spread out over time as we make withdrawals on our heavenly account. We need to have a vision to bump up our giving to the next increment so we will likewise receive accordingly. God is an equal opportunity God, He has set it up in such a way that it's up to us. So how blessed do you want to be? He will say, “How much faith do you have and how much are you willing to invest.” It's not all up to God, for Him to make all the decisions, it's more up to us than to God in this area of prosperity. So instead of getting a bigger car payment, we would bump up our giving and believe for a new car to come in.

Now Luke 6:38 in the KJV says, **“shall men give into your bosom.”** In other words, “Men” represents people, through whom the Lord will bring our material prosperity to fruition. So how are things going to come to us, will they just drop out of the sky? No, it is through people that God prospers us, God is our source, but people are His channel. So do you believe as you are giving, that God is dealing with people to give to you in return. Again, we never pressure people or drop hints, but we believe God to move on whomever (we don't tell Him who to deal with and how much, where, and when) He wills to be a blessing to us- God will work out the details. When God moves on us to give, we obey and sow; since we do that, we should expect according to Luke 6:38, that people will likewise give into our lives. Oh yea, don't forget that the ministering spirits (Angels), are working on our behalf, causing the money to come in.

4. The Law of Stewardship

If we are going to prosper, we have to follow this law of stewardship. If we are faithful in a little, He will add more to us. This principle applies to all aspects of our life: money, anointing, revelation etc. We could be sowing big and still not be prosperous and get in debt. Having more come in does not necessarily denote prosperity, this is where stewardship comes in and having the wisdom of God in dealing with finances. I realize I addressed this subject of stewardship earlier on in this teaching series, but it's worth repeating the main points.

God wants us to have the best and plenty of it, but He is big on stewardship! We must learn to have wisdom with things, to know when, who, where and how much to give. Unless we are led by the Spirit, we are not going to be prosperous. Our priorities need to be right, in our heart and in our faith. That is the problem with most Americans, trying to act financially at a place where they are not at yet. And they are trying to do it through debt and that interest is eating up their prosperity, it's actually delaying it. The Hebrew word for “Interest” is to bite. It literally does take a bite out of our finances, that is money that goes to the lender and not to us.

The Lord wants us to have the best of the best, but He wants us to first learn stewardship. We may want something, and the Lord will say “son/daughter, instead you need to tighten your belt on spending, you are not giving enough.” The Lord wants us sowing so we can reap a harvest and live on the increase of our giving. We need to learn patience and pay off debts. We need to repent for being foolish when we get into debt, but the Lord will help us get out from under it. There will be seasons in our life where we need to tighten our belt, cut back on eating out and such, and use that money as seed for a future harvest.

I know it's so much easier to just say "charge it," and make a good confession hoping the money will come in. However, we should not expect to receive anything from God if we have not first been planting material seed! We have to put God first, be good stewards and make giving a priority in our lives. As a result, we rearrange our budget in such a way so that we can invest more and more in God's Kingdom.

First of all we have to know exactly what we owe and how much our income is so that we can start giving within our means and know where we need to apply our faith for increase. We need to know how much debt we have, what our payments are and our income. We need to know when the big bills are coming in. Good stewardship is not flying by the seat of our pants. There are so many folks who are loose, lacks and undisciplined, and they justify it in the name of living by faith. It is not faith to just launch out without any idea, plan, vision and foundation. If we do not know what is going on around us, how do we know what to believe for. We need to get things in order, on paper and planned out- that is being a good steward.

Proverbs 27:23-24

Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds; for riches do not endure forever, and a crown is not secure for all generations.

Once we are in a position of knowing what is going on, where the money is going, than we can begin to cut out the waste. Even though God is a supernatural God, a God of abundance and increase, the God who is more than enough; He expects us to be a good steward of the small things in our life. He wants us to be generous, but not wasteful, because what we do not waste, we have to give. Remember, when Jesus fed the 5,000, He told the disciples to pick up the fragments, "but Lord can't you just multiply more food the next day for us? Why bother picking up a few pieces, God can rain manna out of the sky!" Jesus was teaching them stewardship and being faithful- watch the little things, watch the dollars. That does not mean we are stingy and tight, it means we are being a good steward, and when it comes time to give, be liberal and generous- but don't blow it and waste it!

Matthew 14:20

They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

Now a huge part of stewardship is being led by the Holy Spirit. How do we know when to buy and when not to buy, "Don't get this here, there is something else better coming. We need to cut back on this, and do more in this area." The secret is being led by the Spirit. If we will just follow Him, He will lead us into God's highest and best- the perfect will of God for all areas of our life. Sometimes we just move to fast, if we would just wait on Him, we would come across a deal. God knows where all the good deals are, but often times we have to wait on it. But our flesh or impulsive desires wants it right now, but we have to overcome our flesh. All we have to do is check our heart when making decisions, because most of us miss it by moving too fast. Just get in the discipline to always wait on God before moving ahead, until you know it's right.

John 16:13

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Romans 8:14

"...because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God."

Isaiah 48:17 NKJV

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go."

It's not enough to make the right confessions and even to sow lots of material seed. We have to allow Him to lead us so we will prosper; that should be a regular confession of ours, that God is leading me. The Lord in a vision, told Brother Hagin years ago concerning being led by the Spirit, "If you will learn how to be led by my Spirit, I will make you rich." The Lord noticed a funny look on his face, and the Lord went on to say, "I am not opposed to my children being rich, I am opposed to them being covetous." We can be in good shape financially and make a bad investment and lose it all, because we were not led by the Spirit. Just because we invest generously into God's Kingdom, does not automatically mean, we are going to prosper, we have to be led. There will be times where we will give here and give there, and other times we are led to tighten our belts and save, the bottom line, we need to follow the leading of the Spirit. The Lord knows when the next recession is going to hit our country, so the Spirit will warn us so we can make the proper preparations to weather it without any problems.

Acts 11:27-30

During this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul.

Remember how the Lord revealed to Joseph the seven years of plenty followed by the seven years of famine. Since, nothing takes God by surprise, why should we be put in a bind by not knowing. Sometimes, the Lord will deal with us to "Go all In" and other times, to put some back. Note, it is not a lack of faith to save! The issue is doing what the Lord tells us to do, when He tells us to do it.

Genesis 41:33-36

"And now let Pharaoh look for a discerning and wise man and put him in charge of the land of Egypt. Let Pharaoh appoint commissioners over the land to take a fifth of the harvest of Egypt during the seven years of abundance. They should collect all the food of these good years that are coming and store up the grain under the authority of Pharaoh, to be kept in the cities for food. This food should be held in reserve for the country, to be used during the seven years of famine that will come upon Egypt, so that the country may not be ruined by the famine."

Genesis 18:16-17

When the men got up to leave, they looked down toward Sodom, and Abraham walked along with them to see them on their way. Then the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?"

John 15:15

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

So be sensitive when the Lord deals with you, to give, freely and promptly. Christians should be some of the best tippers in the world, we have to overcome that stinginess and push past it.

Proverbs 11:25-26

A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed. People curse the man who hoards grain, but blessing crowns him who is willing to sell.

Remember, if people are not giving us things, money, favor, deals and material things, than we are missing it somewhere in the area of giving and sowing. We are violating any one of the laws of increase. But if we are cooperating with the laws of giving and receiving, the Lord will begin dealing with people to give into our life.

5. The Laws of Diligence, Obedience and Faith

There are two extremes to hard work and diligence with people. There are those who we would call “workaholics” and think it’s all up to them if they prosper or not, and they work night and day- burning the candle at both ends. They do not know how to rest and let God move on their behalf. They need to come into the middle of the road and do less and believe more. Then there are those who all they want to do is lay around on the sofa and make confessions and not do anything.

Proverbs 10:4-5

Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth. He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.

Proverbs 13:4- The sluggard craves and gets nothing, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied.

Proverbs 14:23- All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.

Proverbs 22:29

Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings; he will not serve before obscure men.

2 Thessalonians 3:10-13

For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.

The Bible states that whatever we put our hands to will prosper. If we will first wait on the Lord, and get His plan, purpose and pursuit, than with that vision in hand, go out and do it with all diligence. But don’t go until you know! In Ecclesiastes 10:10 there is some good advice, sharpen your tools before you go to work. It’s not about how much activity we exert, it’s productivity that we want- working in the right jungle. In other words, pursuing the right dream in the most effective way is wisdom. Preparation time is never wasted time.

Ecclesiastes 10:10

If the ax is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success.

Psalms 127:1- Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

Proverbs 19:2- It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way.

There are those who just run out ahead and start doing what seems to be a good thing, expending energy and effort without the mind of Christ- that would be activity. However, productivity is having wisdom, take the time to pray and prepare (not indefinitely mind you), and get the direction we need. So get direction first before applying effort. A good story to read is found in 2 Samuel 18:19-33, about two men who ran, but only one of them had a message. Some are sent by God while others just went- we want to be the former. We can get more things done by moving slower, and by moving surely.

1 Corinthians 9:26-27

Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air.

Obedience to God's plan is what brings us blessing. God is not obligated to bless just anything we do, no matter how noble or great the need is. We need to pray and get His plan and He will bless what He has told us to do- period.

Isaiah 1:19-20

"If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

1 Samuel 15:22-23

"Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry."



In God's program, He gives us the ability to produce wealth, it does not just drop on us out of the sky. When God fed the Israelites manna, they still had to go out and pick it up and make bread from it. If the children of Israel were like some Charismatic's today, they would have just starved, staying in their tents making confessions. Work is God's idea, so everyone should be working and doing something. And whatever, we do, let's do it by God's grace, as working for the Lord and not man.

Deuteronomy 8:18

But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

There is a balance between the confession of God's Word, and corresponding actions that are directed by our faith. Let's now look at the law of faith. We need to be confessing, believing and receiving. Regardless of what the economy is doing, God is our source; so we should be speaking the Word over every situation of life. When we release faith in the Word of God, His grace is released on our behalf- by grace through faith we will prosper.

Mark 11:22-24

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered. "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

It is so sad, how some folks can have such a poverty mentality that when they see the Lord blessing His people with good things to enjoy, they scoff and say, “Well if they would sell that \$50,000 boat and give it to the poor, imagine all the good it would do.” Yet I think in most cases, such a statement is rooted in envy. They themselves, secretly wish they had that boat, in which case they would not be selling it anyway- judgmental hypocrites. Look at the woman who anointed Jesus’ head with an expensive perfume, which in those days, was a priceless amount. Did Jesus rebuke her for such a wasteful thing?



Matthew 26:6-13

While Jesus was in Bethany in the home of a man known as Simon the Leper, a woman came to him with an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on his head as he was reclining at the table. When the disciples saw this, they were indignant. “Why this waste?” they asked. “This perfume could have been sold at a high price and the money given to the poor.” Aware of this,

Jesus said to them, “Why are you bothering this woman? She has done a beautiful thing to me. The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me. When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial. I tell you the truth, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her.”

When we have been sowing and giving, it’s being laid up in a spiritual bank account in God’s Kingdom. All we need to do to take care of a future need is to claim the amount needed and make a withdrawal with our faith. There is no sense crying, “But Lord, you know I have a need for this money!” Begging, crying and bawling does not move God, it’s faith that gets the job done. Realize the money we need in this world is already waiting for us in our spiritual account to make a withdrawal. It’s just as much at our disposal as the money we put on deposit at our local bank here on earth.

Luke 17:20-21

Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is within you.”

So if the kingdom of God is within our spirit by the Holy Spirit, than the money I need is not very far away. When we place a demand on our spiritual account and make a withdrawal, the Lord will get the money to us by using His angels to cause the money to come through human channels. Therefore, instead of asking God for money, I claim it by saying something like this, “I claim (the \$\$\$ I need) out of this world system, go ministering spirits- money come in Jesus’ Name.” So claim it and believe for it to come in. When it comes to giving and receiving, we may sow a big gift, but we may not need the multiplied return from it in the near future. However, it will continue to sit in our spiritual account, safe and secure until that day our faith makes a withdrawal on it. Lay hold of it by faith, claim it and believe it in, and keep on expecting to see it until it materializes.

Unit 7 Review:

What does the principle of “Firstfruits” in the Old Covenant teach us about giving under the New?

What are the biblical definitions to “honor” and “despise” something?

What is the first question we should ask ourselves when we consider making a large purchase?

What does the Bible have to say concerning honoring our parents and spiritual leaders?

If we are experiencing lack in any area of our life, what should be the first thing we check?

How do we make withdrawals from our spiritual account for a financial return on earth?

C. Rules of Reaping

Here is a provocative question, “can Christians sleep through their harvest?”

Proverbs 10:5

He who gathers crops in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during harvest is a disgraceful son.

We have to sow before we can reap and our lack of giving often finds its roots in a lack of faith. If we were to give as the Lord has asked us to, there would be no problem in reaping a harvest today. However, for most of us, when prompted by the Lord to give, we have doubts that He is able to get it back to us in time in order to meet our other obligations that are coming up. “Well Lord, if I give that \$500 to so-in-so, that I have set aside for this bill that is due in 15 days, can You really get it back to me in time?” Consider the Lord’s response to another person who was asking the Lord for help:

Mark 9:21-24

Jesus asked the boy’s father, “How long has he been like this?” “From childhood,” he answered. “It has often thrown him into fire or water to kill him. But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us.” “‘If you can?’**” said Jesus. **“Everything is possible for him who believes.”** Immediately the boy’s father exclaimed, “I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!”**

It seems to me according to the above passage of Scripture, the Lord does not look kindly on doubt, unbelief and a lack of faith.

Ecclesiastes 11:1-4

Cast your bread upon the waters, for after many days you will find it again. Give portions to seven, yes to eight, for you do not know what disaster may come upon the land. If clouds are full of water, they pour rain upon the earth. Whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place where it falls, there will it lie. Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap.

When reference is made to “Give portions to seven, yes to eight” it is talking about giving extra. Sow extra seed because you do not know what the future holds. If we wait for perfect conditions, we will never get anything done. If we hesitate and miss opportunities to give because it is not convenient (got lots of bills at the moment), we can’t expect to reap a harvest.

The key is to give immediately when the Lord prompts us to give- that is faith. When people need us, they need us now, not later on when it’s more convenient for us. The same goes for the Lord, there are times when He needs us to pray, or give of our time and resources, and generally speaking it’s usually not at a good time. However, that would be a great test of obedience and faith. The Lord is not going to go up to us and ask, “Is this a good time for you,” when it comes to obedience. Let’s just go ahead and obey God when He deals with us.

Luke 11:5-8

Then he said to them, “Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.’ Then the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man’s boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.”

So looking at Proverbs and Ecclesiastes we can see situations where people are failing to reap. So is it possible for us to sleep through our harvest- yes! Evidently, the Bible is warning us that we could be distracted or be at the wrong place, or be at the right place, but at the wrong time and fail receive our harvest for what we have sowed for in the past.

So let's talk about rules of reaping and Biblical principles of getting into the harvest. There are two important areas associated with reaping; one being reasons why people don't have a particular harvest they were expecting, and secondly why people only have a small harvest or no harvest at all. Our Heavenly Father wants us to reap big, abundant and bumper crop harvests, but we need to learn how.

1. Why Some People Don't Have Harvests

Reason #1: They Have not Sowed

The obvious reason why some people are not receiving a harvest is because they are not cooperating with the spiritual law of sowing and reaping. The Bible is very clear that what we sow is what we will reap in all areas of life, particularly in the areas of finances; it's not called, "Reaping and Sowing" but "Sowing and Reaping." The first rule of reaping is that we have to have sown something. I know this seems very elementary, but not everyone connects the dots in this area, or they know what to do, but are not doing it.

Genesis 8:22

"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."

Luke 6:38

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

There are many in charismatic circles today who think that all there is to prosperity is making confessions and turning in prayer requests and calling hotlines. But that is not enough, we have to sow, give and plant financial seed to reap a financial harvest. We will see in the teachings of Jesus and the apostle Paul, they both compared natural sowing and reaping with spiritual sowing and reaping.

It's a mistake for us to separate spiritual things from natural things- thinking that they have nothing in common. In reality, God patterned the natural world after the spiritual realm by design, so we would make the connection. Jesus used many natural, every day examples as parables to illustrate abstract spiritual concepts in order to describe the Kingdom of God. Interesting how the natural world is so similar to the spiritual world. I'm thankful for it, since we can relate and understand the real and unseen world through God's Word as something that is not so strange to us.

It's as though we live in a parallel universe, for the similarities between the natural and spiritual world are very great according to Scripture. Therefore, the truths about planting a natural seed, letting it grow and harvesting the results, are also true concerning spiritual sowing and reaping. So we need to take a second look at how things work in the natural, because they have their origin and were patterned after spiritual laws. So the first point that must be made is if we want to reap, we have to have first sown.



2 Corinthians 9:10-11

Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

Notice the profound statement in the above passage of Scripture, “*Now he who supplies seed to the sower.*” Here is some good news, the Lord will even help us with this. If we have absolutely nothing to give, He will give us seed to sow- we have not because we ask not according to James 4:2. So how does this process get started in our lives, He will start it. If we have nothing to start with, we can ask Him for seed to sow. The key is to not eat all the seed that He gives us to start with. The idea is to sow it in order to receive a multiplied harvest. Sure we can eat some of it, but the intent is to sow more the next time, and so on and so on it goes- this is referred to as the Law Increase!

Some folks are not reaping a harvest specifically in an area, because they have not given into that specific area. We have to sow in every area that we want to reap. Because every seed produces after its own kind. For instance, we understand this simple concept, that orange seed produces orange trees and not apple trees. If we want apple trees, than what do we plant in the ground- apple seed of course. So if we are experiencing lack in a particular area (no harvest), we need to examine our giving practices and ask ourselves, “Have I sown in that area?” There are different areas to give into, so the return comes from those areas we have sown.

Genesis 1:11-12 NKJV

Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth;” and it was so. And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

For example, if I was in need of new clothes, what do I sow- I give some of my clothes away to others. If I need my car paid off, what do I sow, I help someone else pay off their car first. If I need finances to go on a mission trip, I help support someone else to go on their mission trip. If I want people to just walk up to me and give me money, then what do I need to be already doing- giving money to people as the Spirit of God leads me.

So if we sow money in an area, we reap money in that area, if we sow clothes, we reap clothes, if we sow cars we reap cars, if we help someone to pay off something, than someone will help us pay off something. Therefore, sow specifically in the area that you want to reap in. This area of sowing and reaping is not limited to just material things. If we want friends, we must show ourselves friendly, if we want people faithful to us, we must sow faithfulness. If we want to receive favor, mercy and forgiveness from others, what do we have to do in return? Show favor, mercy and forgiveness towards others first.

Luke 6:27-31

“But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. Do to others as you would have them do to you.”



Folks misunderstand Luke 6:27 as a mandate from the Lord to be a door mat for others to walk all over. Actually Jesus was instructing us in this passage concerning the spiritual law of sowing and reaping. If we want others to treat us in a certain way, we must first treat people that way to begin with. In this way we are sowing good seed for a good harvest. Well the opposite is true, if we are mistreating people, and being selfish and putting ourselves first, than we are sowing bad seeds

with those actions as well. I would call that sowing weeds in our life for future disappointments. One significant consequence to the Fall of Man in Genesis chapter three is the introduction of weeds into the world. Prior to the fall, nothing unproductive grew, only what was useful as a blessing to man. Likewise, nothing evil came out of the mouths of Adam and Eve, nor was there any selfish sinful behavior in man, at least not until they sinned and took on the nature of Satan which caused them to die spiritually. Having received the knowledge or the capacity to produce good and evil, mankind was perverted and twisted into the corrupt image of Satan through sin.

Genesis 3:17-18

“Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.”

Even though we are born again, and God through Jesus reversed spiritual death in our spirit through the gift of eternal life; as a result, we have become new creations in Christ with the life and nature of God. True, we still live in a physical body that has the old sinful nature in it. We also have to renew our minds of the old patterns of selfish behavior. This current state of affairs was addressed by Paul to Christians caught in this lifelong struggle to walk in the Spirit and not by the selfish desires of the body of sin.

Galatians 5:17-18

For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

James 3:9-12

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

What are idle words, they are fruitless words or weeds that produce something that is a curse or non-productive. Weeds provide no benefit to people, they waste the soil they are planted in. Weeds are a type of evil, foolish, idle and worthless talk and acts of selfishness.

Ephesians 4:29 AMP

Let no foul or polluting language, nor evil word nor unwholesome or worthless talk [ever] come out of your mouth, but only such [speech] as is good and beneficial to the spiritual progress of others, as is fitting to the need and the occasion, that it may be a blessing and give grace (God's favor) to those who hear it.

Matthew 12:33-37

“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.

The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Therefore, we find ourselves in a position where we are capable of sowing both good and bad seed in our lives- by our words and actions. The key to successful Christian living is to be only sowing good seed and keep our body under subjection through the renewing of our minds in order to eliminate the occasion to sow bad seeds. This must be a daily, deliberate discipline to keep our words and actions in agreement with God's Word, and to walk in love by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Reason #2: They Got Tired, Waiting for the Harvest and Gave Up

Don't ever put a time limit on when the harvest is ready. Stay in a state of eager expectation and don't quit until it comes to pass in your life. What if it took 5 years for something to come to pass? Abraham had to wait 25 years for Isaac to be born- Genesis 12:4; 21:5. You will reap a harvest if you do not quit; it's through faith and patience that we receive the manifestation of the promises of God. If there are things you believed for and you gave up, go back and pick it back up and keep believing, keep expecting. If we quit and wrote the thing off, it did not happen because we said it did not happen, but it's not too late. Get stirred back up, pick it up, but this time don't quit and let go of it.

Galatians 6:7-10

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, **for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.**

Folks have certain expectations on when they should reap a harvest, so when it does not materialize in a certain amount of time, they just throw in the towel and lose hope. There is something to be said for perseverance, patience and being steadfast in our faith as essential ingredients to reaping the harvest of God in our lives.



In our western thinking, we want it “Now” which I call our microwave mentality. If I can’t have it quick, then I’ll get it my own way- charge it on a credit card. Our constitution allows for the “Pursuit of Happiness,” but that has fallen victim to relative moralism and subjective reinterpretation. Since our founding fathers were Christians, I believe their definition of a “Pursuit of Happiness” was in the context of religious freedoms to worship God and find our greatest happiness, joy and fulfillment in Him.

Hebrews 6:11-12- We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

2 Kings 19:3

They told him, “This is what Hezekiah says: This day is a day of distress and rebuke and disgrace, as when children come to the point of birth and there is no strength to deliver them.”

It’s sad when people have sowed for a long period of time, and worked for God, so when harvest time finally comes to reap the fruit of their labors, they have given up already. Satan seems to have a sense of when harvest time is near, so he will strive to deny people of their harvest by manufacturing difficulties and circumstances in order to deceive them into casting away their confidence in the Lord.

Proverbs 13:12- Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.

That is why we are encouraged to stand fast until the harvest comes in according to Hebrews 10:23 NKJV, *“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”* Just mark it down, harvest time will generally always be later than what we want. Just look at it naturally, when we sow a seed in the ground, harvest does not come the next day, week or month. In some cases it takes a few years for fruit trees to bear any fruit. It does us no good to try and rush the ground or scream at our seed to speed up and grow faster. So what do we do, give up half way and cut the tree down- no we wait for it patiently. If we truly need it tomorrow, than what we need is a miracle from God, and He will do that as He wills. But sowing and reaping works all the time when we want it, the only caveat is time- are we willing to wait for it? Understanding the principle of due season!

Hebrews 10:35-39- So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded. **You need to persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what he has promised. For in just a very little while, “He who is coming will come and will not delay. But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him.” But we are not of those who shrink back and are destroyed, but of those who believe and are saved.**

Hebrews 6:13-19- When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, saying, “I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.” And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of his purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, he confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.

Many countries use gold or silver to backup the value of their currency. When it comes to the promises of God, we have His oath, and the guarantee that it's impossible for God to lie. Some think that spiritually things are different from the natural, that it should not take so long to receive. But the Bible teaches parallels. They look at Mark 11:23, and assume if they just speak to the mountain that it will move, but they are missing a very important part of this principle of mountain moving faith. They have to believe it in their heart! It's one thing to just throw words at the circumstances of life, it's an entirely different matter to take the time to meditate on the Word day and night until we believe it in our heart and become fully persuaded- that my friend takes time, possibly even years. It took Abraham 25 years to receive Isaac. The cost of time is something that many folks are not willing to pay, and so fail to reap a harvest because they simply give up.

Suppose it took 6 months of diligent Bible confession to believe a promise from God's Word in our heart. So at last we believe God's promise in our heart, and so we proceed to speak to the problem by the spirit of faith according to 2 Corinthians 4:13, *"It is written: 'I believed; therefore I have spoken.' With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak."*

Even at this point, suppose nothing appears to have immediately changed by what we can see with our natural eyes. But this time we are fully persuaded, we have a supernatural confidence that in the spiritual world, the Word of God is working, and will not return void without accomplishing what it was sent forth to do. So the next day, when we still see the problem, we say, "thank you Lord, this problem is moving out of my life according to your Word." We just keep giving Him thanks through the eye of faith, no more asking, no worrying; we have already called it done, we believe we already received it before we even have it. Like God, we call those things that be not as though they were in Romans 4:17.

Mark 11:22-25

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered. "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

Isaiah 55:10-11

"As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."

In the context of what Jesus was addressing here in Mark chapter 11, concerning mountain moving faith, He had just cursed the fig tree and it had withered the following day. Yet when Jesus first cursed it, nothing in the natural seemed to have changed, but the words Jesus spoke set in motion the law of faith that gave substance to what He called for- it came to pass the next day. We walk by faith and not by sight according to 2 Corinthians 5:7.

Mark 11:12-14

The next day as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry. Seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to find out if it had any fruit. When he reached it, he found nothing but leaves, because it was not the season for figs. Then he said to the tree, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again." And his disciples heard him say it.

Mark 11:20-21- In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!"

So a lot of God's people fail to reap because they get tired of waiting and so give up. Also connected with this, people forget that they have sown in that area. People also have the mentality that the harvest will just automatically come in all on its own. However, according to our text, we can sleep right through our harvest and miss it. So no, harvest requires us being there gathering it in. I think people forget what and where they have sown, because they don't take their sowing seriously enough.

Jeremiah 5:24

“They do not say to themselves, ‘Let us fear the Lord our God, who gives autumn and spring rains in season, who assures us of the regular weeks of harvest.’”

Certainly our sole motive in giving is not to get, rather to further God's Kingdom and be a blessing to others. Even if we did not receive anything in return, our primary motive is to honor God with the resources that He has entrusted to us. But the Bible does promise us a harvest so we can give again in greater measure. With that being said, would it be an act of humility to just leave the harvest out in the field and not reap it- No! If we reap a big crop, then we have a lot more to sow again. If we planted a tomato plant along the side of the house, it could have great big ripe tomatoes on it ready for the eating. However, if we forgot about it, what ends up happening to those delicious tomatoes? They fall off and rot and go to waste, and are not harvested and enjoyed as a blessing from God. Often times, when people give they look at it as gone, “Well I won't ever see that money again, but at least it went to a good cause.” With that kind of an attitude they are not looking for a harvest and will miss God's increase for their life to make them even more of a giver. When we sow, we need to keep track of it on paper, and look for the harvest and have expectant faith that it is coming in. Therefore, we are checking on it, thanking God for it, we don't forget that we sowed in that area, and we are expecting to reap in that area.

Reason #3: Many think that Reaping is Automatic

The parable of the growing seed is talking about the spiritual counterpart to the natural process of seed growing in the soil. So in this parable, who sowed the seed? The man did. Who caused the seed to grow and develop? The soil or God does. Who reaped the harvest, God or man? The man did. Many are of the opinion that they have nothing to do with the reaping aspect of the harvest, that it just automatically happens whether they know the harvest has come or not. Reaping the harvest is no more automatic than sowing the seed is. Once we get the seed in the ground, then the growth is automatic, but when the harvest is ready, does the crop just jump from the field into the barn automatically? No! We are responsible for the sowing and the reaping. That is why many have not been receiving God's provision for their lives, because they don't realize that they are the ones responsible for going out there into the field of opportunity and provision in order to gather it up and reap it all into their life.

Mark 4:26-29

He also said, “This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

Proverbs 6:6-8

Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest.

We have to take responsibility for reaping the harvest! Putting in the sickle is work! Reaping is not automatic and it requires faith on our part to bring the harvest in and benefit from it. Sadly, many are waiting on God when God is waiting on us.

Let's claim what we need out of this world system and tell the devil to keep his grubby hands off our money; don't forget to release the ministering angelic spirits to bring the money- that's taking hold of and reaping the harvest. God will deal with people in such a way that they will see our face in a dream and we will come to their mind with the leading to bless us. Keep standing and believing, and don't grow weary and become faint. If we make a withdrawal through faith in the spiritual realm, it has to materialize in the natural realm.

1 Corinthians 3:5-9

What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe — as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.



If we have been sowing and following Biblical principles, God's Word cannot fail, it will come to pass, we will reap a harvest, but it's not automatic- without our cooperation and involvement. Some people think that receiving from God is just automatic, that after they have sown their seed, there is nothing else to be done that will affect the outcome of the harvest- not so! We can prematurely dig up our seed by wrong confessions and wrong actions, when we fail to repent of it. Like the farmer in the natural, our involvement is crucial in the whole process from sowing to reaping- from A - Z. That is what the word "Cultivate" means. For example,

- We prepare the ground of our heart
- And sow the seed of God's Word by confessing it
- Next, we irrigate it through praise and thanksgiving and living right
- Don't forget to pull out the weeds of doubt, worry and fear
- We must protect it from the devil who would like to kill, steal and destroy it
- Finally when the harvest has come, we do the reaping, believing, and receiving of it
- We have to take possession of the harvest; walk through those doors of opportunity He provides

Certainly, God makes it grow, but it is not completely God's responsibility, we have a crucial part to play in this. The sooner we know our part and do it, the sooner we will start seeing results.

Even when God provided supernaturally for the nation of Israel in the wilderness, He rained manna for them right out of the sky. But they still had to go out and gather it up, in other words they had to harvest it. They could not just sit in the tent and make confessions. There was still some work involved for them to pick it up and grind into a flour and make bread out of it.

When Jesus said for us to come to Him and rest, He did not imply that we would never have to lift a finger again for anything, just sit back in our spiritual lazy-boy, and all the blessings of God would just fall on us like ripe cherries from a cherry tree. What Jesus meant by the yoke being easy and the burden light, was describing the life of faith in contrast to the law of works. There is still study, effort, believing and receiving involved on our part. But in comparison to the toil of the world, sweating and straining in their own strength, we have it easy in comparison.

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

God will from time to time perform financial miracles, because we get ourselves in such a mess. However, He does not want us to live from one crisis to another. He is not interested in enabling ignorance, laziness and poor planning. He wants us to learn and become skilled and proficient by operating in the principles of His Kingdom. He wants us to learn how to fish instead of being dependent on receiving a fish all the time. God’s best for our lives is that we learn how to live on the increase of our sowing and reaping, which will sustain us throughout our lifetime.

2 Corinthians 9:6-9

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so **that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.**

Sometimes we have to become tired with our situation and circumstances of life and mean business, before we become serious with God and receive a break through. As long as we put up with lack and struggling financially, we are going to keep on having it. We have to become fed up with lack. Not only that, we must be willing and obedient to obey God and His Word, and walk in the light that we have.

Isaiah 1:19-20

“If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword.” For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

2. How to Reap

So the next obvious question is this, “having sown material seed, how do we reap a material harvest?” We can be walking by faith in one area of our life, and not walking by faith in another. We can be living in divine health, but be struggling financially. Faith in one area of the promises of God does not automatically make all the promises of God manifest in our lives. We know when it comes to receiving healing that we simply have to claim it by faith based on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ and receive.

We need to stop praying for money and about money the way we have been up until now. The money we need is in this world, God does not have it in heaven. If we are a giver in line with the Scriptures, we are sowing material seed, then according to the Bible the provision is already there and available. Therefore, what we need to do in order to reap our financial harvest is to claim what we need out of this world system. Be specific and name the dollar amount that is needed to meet those needs. Believe that you receive it and claim it in Jesus’ Name. Then say, “Go ministering spirits (Angels of God), cause the money to come in.” This action of claiming what we need, translates into getting into the field and specifically reaping the harvest that we need for the moment. We are taking the sickle of faith and reaping the specific amount we have claimed for our needs to be met. So we sow by faith, God makes it grow, and then we reap by faith, and according to our faith.

Hebrews 1:14- Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?

In first Timothy chapter six and verse twelve, notice that we are to fight the good fight of faith, in other words enforce our rights by laying claim to the promises and provision of God for our lives. We are the ones who are to “Take Hold” of our glorious inheritance in Christ. And how do we do that, by making the good confession of God’s Word. When a harvest of corn in the natural is ready, what do we do? We go out into the field and lay hold of as many ears of corn that is needed to take care of dinner that night. If we needed seven ears of corn, but we only gathered three, whose fault is that- ours! Let’s be specific about the dollar amount we claim, and don’t be timid to bump the number up a bit!

1 Timothy 6:12

Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

So the real question presented to us here is, are we as good at laying hold of the promises of God as we are at sowing? Are we as good in the reaping arena as we are in the sowing area. It takes faith to sow and it takes faith to reap. Many Christians however don’t want any more responsibility than just to sow, but the Bible teaches us to lay hold of and reap the harvest. The sooner we accept the fact that faith lays hold of the provision of God, the sooner we will be in a position to receive the reality of God’s blessings for our lives. We learned when it comes to receiving healing, we can’t just wait around and say, “Well if it’s the Lord’s will, I’ll be healed.” No we have to be aggressive and engage the problem with the Word and the Name of Jesus. We have to enforce Satan’s defeat in our lives by faith. Healing is part of our redemption and so is material prosperity- it is already a forever settled fact. We have been redeemed from the curse of poverty! So what are we waiting for?

2 Corinthians 8:9

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

If we are not enjoying prosperity, than it’s generally because we are not rising up to take hold of it- we have to take it. We are not trying to rend something out of the hand of God that He does not want us to have. No, we are talking about going into the field of financial provision and taking hold of the harvest that is already ours. We can’t be a timid soul and be successful in the Kingdom of God. Now if we say, “Now Lord I am just waiting on you to bring the money in.” What we are basically saying by that statement is, “Lord I am going to sit here in my living room, would you mind going on out there and bring the money in for me and drop it in my lap.” No, we are the ones who put out the sickle and reap the harvest, not the Lord. I am not just a sower, but a reaper also!

2 Timothy 1:7

For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

Matthew 11:12 AMP

And from the days of John the Baptist until the present time, the kingdom of heaven has endured violent assault, and violent men seize it by force [as a precious prize — a share in the heavenly kingdom is sought with most ardent zeal and intense exertion].

1 Timothy 6:17-19

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

All the stories about the children of Israel and the Promised Land required faith and taking hold of their inheritance through force. The first generation wandered in the desert because they did not have enough faith to take it. Thankfully the next generation took it, they were tired of wandering in the desert. Sadly there is a prevailing mentality in the Body of Christ that God is so sovereign that it's all up to the Lord to do something about our needs, and when He sees fit to it, He will give us something. This unbiblical thinking, reducing God's children to beggars looking, for scrapes, "dear Lord, can you spare me a dime" kind of mentality.



When all along the Lord has prepared a table before us and is beckoning us to come and dine. We are children of God, sons and daughters of the most high, warriors clothed with an armor of light as more than conquerors in Christ. The Lord does not spoon feed us, He gives us the dignity, honor and glory to act like men and women of God, and allows us to have a part in obtaining it. We take hold of it through the hand of faith, though the devil will try to keep it from us, we take hold of it by fighting the good fight of faith. But mark this down, we will not experience anymore than what we ourselves take hold of. The Lord says it's ours, but are we laying hold of the good things in this life on earth by faith. So let's get up and go claim it in Jesus' Name.

Judges 18:9-10

They answered, "Come on, let's attack them! We have seen that the land is very good. Aren't you going to do something? Don't hesitate to go there and take it over. When you get there, you will find an unsuspecting people and a spacious land that God has put into your hands, a land that lacks nothing whatever."

The less finances we have, the more tempted we are to eat all our seed- in other words, spend it all on ourselves. Don't do it, be wise and always re-sow seed back in the ground, in order to live on the increase of our giving. Ministers and churches are not exempt from this. They need to sow seed in areas where they want to reap as well. Many ministers are great about getting other people to give, but are they givers themselves. If they are looking for partners to help them in their ministry, are they being a partner in other ministries themselves. And the quality of partnership that we sow in the area of time, finances and prayers will come back to them in the caliber of people who will partner with their ministry.

3. Why Some Have A Small Harvest

Here is an important point to consider, the people of God are reaping a harvest, but they are much smaller than they need to be. They are reaping a small harvest, when they should be reaping a large harvest instead. Let's look at some reasons why people reap only a small harvest.

Reason #1: They Sowed Sparingly

When folks get a revelation of this, they will start liquidating their assets so they can get a lot of seed in the ground, because they realize that is the secret to big harvests is big giving. It's more up to us than it is up to the Lord. Unless the Lord leads us with a specific amount, we will make the decision of how much we are going to sow. In making that determination, we are determining the size of our harvest. God is not the one who determines the size of our harvest, we do, based on our past giving; that is what determines the kind of harvest we are reaping today.

2 Corinthians 9:6- Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

It's really quite simple, little measure, little harvest, big measure, big harvest, gigantic measure, gigantic harvest. So instead of bumping up our standard of living with the harvest we just received, let's sow that seed in the ground and reap an even bigger harvest next year. If we just keep doing that for a few years, we will have so much increase, we won't be able to contain it. It's those first few years when we are starting out in this, our decisions in this area of giving will either delay or speed up our harvest. Our level of prosperity tomorrow is determined on how disciplined we are today- whether we eat all our seed or not. Our seed is precious, and if we are wise we will sow as much of it back in the ground as possible.

Our Level of Prosperity Tomorrow is determined on how disciplined we are Today!

Luke 6:38

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

Have a vision to increase your sowing, budget all your finances around it. Ask God for wisdom as to what and where to sow.

The Dynamic Kernels

Next, I would like to share an incredible illustration that I found from “Believe It Or Not” by Ripley. It will illustrate the law of increase for us. This principle has been so powerful for mankind when worked in the natural. Just imagine how powerful it is going to be for us when we use the Word of God as our incorruptible seed. The harvest will just blow us away. Instead of just reaping wheat, rice and cotton, we will start reaping new births, healings, prosperity, peace, love, and joy!

It all began with Perry Hayden of Tecumseh Michigan, inspired by a Biblical quotation found in **John 12:24**. He began an experiment of sowing and reaping in connection with tithing. His plan was to begin by sowing 1 cubic inches of wheat, and after tithing from the harvest, to sow the entire 90% back into the ground. This was to continue for 6 years.

John planted a cubic inch of wheat in 1940 and by 1946 the harvest was 75,000 bushels of wheat valued at \$150,000.00. That was in 1946, can you imagine how much that would be worth today?

1st Year- Sowed 1 cubic inch [360 Kernels] on a 4” x 8’ plot of ground.
[1 bushel = 2,150 cu. In.] @ \$4 per bushel, 1 cubic in inch = \$0.0018

Harvest was 50 cu. In. or 0.023 bushel = 9 cents- 50 fold. Tithe was 5 cu. In. = \$0.009
{Extra effort was made to save every kernel.}

2nd Year- Sowed 45 cu. in. of seed in a 24” x 60” plot

Harvest was 70 lb. / 1.16 bu. = \$4.64 Tithe = 7lbs. Tithe = 7 lbs. = \$0.46
[Already 1 cu. in. Has turned into 2,494 cu. in. 360 kernels have turned into 881, 499 kernels]

3rd Year- Sowed 63 lb. in 0.77 acres

Harvested 1,010 lb. = 16 bushel / 34,400 cu. In. \$64.00 / Tithe = 101 Lbs. = \$6.40

This was a bad harvest. The local average was 24 bu. per acre. Too much rain coupled with birds, and a horse eating some of the crop caused the loss. It is estimated that every bushel that was lost from this crop resulted in a loss of 4,375 bushels 4 years later.

4th Year- Sowed 861 lb. / 14.3 bu [after cleaning] on 14 acres
[27.1 bu. Per acre- 8 bu. per acre better than average]

Harvested 22,765 lbs / 380 bu.= \$1,520 [817,000 cu. in.] Tithe- 37 bu.[after cleaning]
\$148.00

5th Year- Sowed 321 bu. on 230 acres
Harvested 5,555 bu. \$22,220.00. Tithe was 555 bu. [\$2,220.00]

6th Year- Sowed 5,000 bu. On 2,666 acres
Harvested 72,150 bu. = \$288,600.00. Tithe \$28,860 [360 Kernels became 55 Billion]

At the end of this experiment it was calculated that if the average farmer in the area had done the same experiment, continually re-sowing 100% rather than 90% (after tithing) and at a high yield of 30 bushels per acre, the sixth harvest would have been 5,297 bushels. But with tithing Mr. Hayden's harvest was 72,150 bushels which is 13.5 times greater.

State averages would have been: [In cubic inches] 100% sown

1 / 15 / 225 / 3,375 / 50,625 / 759,375 / 11,390,625 = [5,297 bu.]

\$0.00 Given = \$21,188.00 Gained

The dynamic kernels harvests were: 10% Tithes : 90% sown

1 / 50 / 2,494 / 34,400 / 817,000 / 11,943,250 / 155,122,500
[72,150 bu.]

\$31,235 Given = \$288,600 Gained

John 12:23-24

The Hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

You Can't Out Give God!

Job 1:1-3

In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. He had seven sons and three daughters, and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen and five hundred donkeys, and had a large number of servants. He was the greatest man among all the people of the East.

This generation of Job and Abraham did not know anything other than God blessing them financially. You can't sell that old lie of the devil that God brings poverty on all of us to keep us humble to the Jewish folks, their Bible does not say that, neither does ours. The source of that kind of teaching apparently came from Zen Buddhism, through the study of Eastern religion by European people at the turn of the 19th century. That philosophy worked its way from there and started a trend of poverty vows and poverty oaths which are not in the Bible nor a part of the New Covenant, but is actually in violation of the Covenant. Then it came over into North America.

Reason #2: They did not sow in good ground

The seed sowed into the hard, stony and thorny soil did not produce a harvest at all and so was wasted.

Mark Chapter 4 – Four kinds of Soil:

Mark 4:15- seed along the path

Mark 4:16- seed sown on rocky places

Mark 4:18- seed sown among thorns

Mark 4:20- seed sown on good soil

We can have good seed and sow a lot of it, but if the ground is not good, we are not going to get a very good harvest. However, if we put the very same seed into very good ground, we would have a much larger yield or harvest from that seed, because the ground is going to produce of itself accordingly.

Mark 4:28-29

“All by itself the soil produces grain — first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”

All ground is not automatically good ground, some is average, poor, good or great ground. Therefore, we will get a harvest based on the quality of ground we have sowed into. Not all ministers and ministries are of the same caliber of quality; the main thing is to be led by the Spirit and not waste good seed.

How do we determine what constitutes good ground? Even in the natural you can look at a field and observe the kind of results that it produces as an indication of the type of soil it is. Just as in the natural it is possible to waste seed, so it is in sowing money into people and ministries. That is why it is so important that we be led as to where we give. So keep your spiritual and natural ears open and look for opportunities to give, because it is more blessed to give than to receive.

- **Jesus said that we would know people by their fruit**
- **The Holy Spirit is not going to lead you to sow into bad soil and waste your seed**
- **Don't assume that the ground that is good today will remain that way tomorrow- keep checking**

So it's not wise for us to go around and randomly throw our financial seed all over the place, giving by impulse or based on need alone. Rather as I keep on reiterating, let's be led by the Spirit.

Reason #3: They forfeit the Blessing of God

In the natural, when a developing crop does not have the proper balance between rain or sunshine, those factors will affect the outcome of the harvest; these are conditions that are outside of our control. This is God's part, when He blesses our seed by providing the right elements to cause it to grow. We are dependent on God in the natural and spiritual realms as the author of life, to make provision for life sustaining elements.

Mark 4:26-27

He also said, "This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how."

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

Matthew 5:43-46

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."

Acts 14:15-17

"We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them. In the past, he let all nations go their own way. Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy."



In the Bible, rain is a type of spiritual blessing. No matter how hard we work, if God does not bless it, it's not going to flourish. So what is the key to receiving the blessing of God on our giving, (Rain and Sunshine), obeying God's commandments, walking by the truth of His Word which is to walk in love.

Psalms 127:1

Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain.

1 Peter 3:7

Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers.

If our motives are not right, we are friends with this world, and are living lukewarm Christian lives, we are not going to have the blessing of God.

James 4:1-5

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely?

If we are not obedient to the Lord's plan, purpose and pursuit for our lives, that grieves Him and we lose the blessing of God on our lives and consequently the kind of harvest we are expecting to receive.

Isaiah 1:19-20

"If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Reason #4: Allowing the thief to come in to kill, steal and destroy

Yielding to our flesh and treating people wrong, opens the door to the devil to devour our harvest. It matters how we live and how we treat other people; walking in love will always keep us on the side of God's blessings for our lives.

John 10:10 AMP- The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows).

Ephesians 4:25-28

Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

If we are not vigilant in watching our crop, the enemy will come in and totally devour our harvest. Satan has no desire in seeing God's covenant children prosper, and further God's Kingdom on the earth. We could have the right ground, seed, fertilizer and conditions, but if we don't exterminate the pests that seek to eat our harvest, it will all be for naught.

We have to use the Name of Jesus to rebuke the enemy and order him to keep his hands off our material harvest that is coming in. The Holy Spirit will lead us, and we can see economic trends that would hinder our channels and take authority over them in Jesus' Name. Also, the enemy will manufacture circumstances of life in order to rattle our confidence in God and His Word- stay the course! When trials, tests and temptations come, it's just the enemy trying to gain access to our lives and our harvest- just say no in Jesus' Name!

Reason #5: They do not discern their harvest or only part of it

People do not even realize that they need to discern the harvest in order to reap it. I am talking about discerning the timing of the harvest. People may think that the harvest is at a different time than it really is. It is like baking something in the oven, if you pull your apple pie out too early, it's gooey and sticky, because the dough has not cooked completely through. But if you wait too long, than it's burnt and over-cooked. For many things in life, timing is everything! This principle also applies to discerning the right time to reap our material harvest.

John 4:35-38

“Do you not say, ‘Four months more and then the harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying ‘One sows and another reaps’ is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labor.”

Luke 12:56 NKJV

“Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?”

If our crop is ready right now, but like the disciples we think it’s going to be four more months, what happens? There are several elements that we have to discern about the harvest:

- **Where is the harvest at- location, location, location?**
- **When is the harvest ready?**
- **Discern how much of the harvest there is- in order to know how much to claim!**

How can we discern that the harvest is ready? We have already said, if we plant something today, we are not going to reap it tomorrow. The Bible uses the phrase, “Due Season” in reference to the timing of a harvest- naturally and spiritually. So clearly there is some time that needs to elapse between planting and harvesting. When it comes to sowing material things and finances, if we don’t know which channels God is going to use to bring it back, and we don’t know the exact timing, how can we possibly be at the right place, at the right time? However, we can by the witness of the Spirit, know when we are getting close to our harvest. If we learn to pay attention to the leading of the Spirit of God inside of us, Romans 8:14, *“because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”*

John 16:13 NKJV

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

1 John 2:20 NKJV- But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.

So what are we to do when the Holy Spirit gives us a witness that we are close to a harvest, begin to thank God for it and pray in tongues for the details to be worked out. Another indicator is a supernatural anticipation of joy that comes from God. Our heart will be overflowing with joy and our mind will be wondering what’s going on- “What are we so excited about?”

Romans 8:26-27

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.

There is a season for sowing, waiting and harvesting. The Spirit of God leads us through all three seasons. The key to all three is faith, hope and love- extenuated by righteousness, joy and peace! Faith is always preceded and followed by the joy of the Lord, because joy is the note of victory. It says, I have trusted in God to make His Word good, so I am full of joy and I’ve got the victory. When we believe the report from God’s Word on a matter, it is always witnessed by a testimony of joy.

When we give in joy knowing that we are making an investment that has a multiplied return, that is faith, and it pleases the Lord. We wait in joy, and through faith and patience, look for a future harvest. In the course of time, when harvest time comes, we praise God for the increase in our lives.



Romans 14:17

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 53:1 NKJV

Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

Isaiah 9:3

You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder.

Psalms 126:5-6

Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy. He who goes out weeping, carrying seed to sow, will return with songs of joy, carrying sheaves with him.



Jesus had a keen sense of timing during His life and ministry on earth. If a person were to say, “How will I know when the hour has come?” If we do not know that it’s time, it’s not. When it’s time, we will have that knowing, a witness in our spirit by the Holy Spirit, that now is the time, so get ready - so are we listening? Praying in tongues is very helpful at this point!

On that note, we should study and put into practice the principles of being led by the Spirit and how to do those things that will keep us sensitive to discerning His leadings and promptings- stay full of the Word and the Spirit- Acts 6:5, *“They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit.”*

We can sense in our spirit when the harvest has come!

John 2:4- “Dear woman, why do you involve me?” Jesus replied. “My time has not yet come.”

John 12:23

Jesus replied, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”

Luke 22:53

“Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on me. But this is your hour — when darkness reigns.”

Where are we reaping our harvest is significant. It is true that we don’t know exactly how God is going to multiply our seed back to us; the exact channels He is going to use, and the exact time it is going to be. It’s on a need to know basis, when we need to know, He reveals it to us, until then we walk by faith.



So we can sense the period and season when we are getting close, but we still don't know the exact hour or moment when it comes, it's all part of walking by faith. However, there is a connection to reaping our harvest as it pertains to discerning where our harvest is at. The Lord will show us where our harvest is at, whether it is a business or ministry opportunity, a new job or creative way to make money. Then we have to take a step of faith to get it- do it and pursue it by the grace of God. If we don't have to faith to step into those new open doors the Lord provides, than we will never enjoy the fruit of it.

Deuteronomy 8:17-18

You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

When Peter made his boats available to Jesus, he was sowing something into Jesus' ministry. Peter was a fisherman at the time and for him to rent Jesus his boat was an investment. Peter had just fished all night and was probably very tired, and was anxious to get home and go to bed. After Jesus had preached to the crowd, it was harvest time for Peter. Jesus did not say, “Thank you Peter you will get your reward when you get to heaven.” Jesus is not a bum or a moocher, He does not take advantage of people. The smartest thing to do is to let Jesus use what we have. When the little boy gave his lunch to feed that multitude, who do you think the leftovers belonged to- the little boy! So it was time for Peter to be blessed, so the Lord tells him to go back out onto the lake and let his nets down for another catch.

Luke 5:1-10

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. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners.

Now Peter and his companions had just cleaned their nets and put them away, and here is Jesus telling them to go back out on the lake. What if Peter went by how he felt and dismissed the Master's offer- they would have missed out on a big blessing from the Lord. It took faith for Peter to reap in his harvest; thankfully, he took Jesus at His Word and received a big catch of fish!

We need to realize that we have more to do with our prosperity than we realize. God never fails in doing His part, so when we fail to receive, who is left to blame: the devil, our spouse or pastor? No, we are responsible for sowing in faith, waiting by faith and reaping by faith. There are countless times when God's people have given their time and treasure and waited on God for their harvest; and when it finally came in the Lord said, “here it is, walk through this door of opportunity, take this step of expansion, get involved here, start this business there, here is the harvest you have been believing for.” But what if they do not have enough faith to seize the opportunity and trust God to act on it? It means we did not discern where our harvest was and so we do not reap it. We have to take the steps of obedience to eat the good of the land. Faith is not just claiming and expecting a harvest, but faith is also taking the steps of obedience to receive and reap the harvest.

Faith is a noun and to believe is a verb- an analysis of these two words may help us in trusting the Lord. Believing, being a verb, is an action word, it really means “taking hold of;” to believe in a Biblical sense means “to take,” or “to grasp.” To believe in Jesus means to take Jesus for what the Scriptures declares Him to be. To believe on Christ as a Savior, means to take Christ as my Savior- personalized. To believe in Christ as a healer, means to take Him as my healer, and recognize Him as our great Physician. Corresponding action would be to declare Him from our lips and by our actions that He is our healer! Believing is an act of the will, when I believe, I have acted, having acted, I have laid hold of what the Bibles calls faith. Bible faith has corresponding action, there is always something I do in response to what the Bible says I am or directed to obey. Confession of God’s Word turns into believing God’s Word which results in doing God’s Word in order to receive the blessings of God.

James 2:14-26

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, “Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend. You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction? As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

The rest of God is to stand on His Word and claim it as our own, speak it out of our mouth and apply the Truth to every fact of life that we encounter. It may be a fact that we are struggling financially, but the truth that supersedes facts, is that, *“my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus”* according to Philippians 4:19.

Coming into the greater harvest is not for the timid or scared. It means more work, sacrifice, commitment and going out on a limb by faith in response to God’s direction and leading- but it is sure worth it! The harvest will come in the form of new contracts, job promotions and new opportunities. The question is, will we get up, go out and pursue it. The harvest will not just fall in our laps like ripe cherries from a tree. Harvest infers work, effort and labor to bring it in from the fields of provision that God has provided.

1 Thessalonians 1:3

We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith , your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We need to act on those creative ideas and witty inventions that come from the Lord for new products, services and businesses. When the Lord leads us to receive more education and training, it’s in preparation for new opportunities, to increase our earning potential to be a greater blessing. But it takes faith to do those things, and if we fail to act, we are failing to discern the Lord’s harvest.

Proverbs 8:12 KJV- I wisdom dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

Deuteronomy 28:8 NKJV

The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

Here is another example, consider Isaac who at the time was in the Land of Canaan and there was a great drought. Folks were going down to Egypt to escape the famine and Isaac was about to go down to Egypt himself, but the Lord told him to stay and God would bless him.

Genesis 26:1-3- Now there was a famine in the land — besides the earlier famine of Abraham’s time — and Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines in Gerar. The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; live in the land where I tell you to live. Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham.

Well it took faith for him to stay put, and it seemed foolish for him to plant seed, seeing that there was a drought going on, but what did the Lord do for him- a 100 fold crop during famine. I am sure his neighbors were laughing at him as he was sowing the seed. What if Isaac did not obey God by faith? He would have missed out on this 100 fold harvest. So in order for these prosperity principles to work, we have to take the necessary steps in order to reap the harvest- God has His part and so do we.

Genesis 26:12-14

Isaac planted crops in that land and the same year reaped a hundredfold, because the Lord blessed him. The man became rich, and his wealth continued to grow until he became very wealthy. He had so many flocks and herds and servants that the Philistines envied him.

How many times throughout life have we overlooked those little nagging ideas that would not go away for a long time. When we give up on them and say, “Nah, I can’t do that, how would that work anyway.” Unfortunately, in the course of time, when we fail to act, that wonderful widow of opportunity from God just fades away and is forgotten.

Ephesians 5:15-17- Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity , because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.

God has plans for our lives, but He requires our faith to act on and obey His directions, in order for them to become a reality. So be sensitive and don’t be scared, when the Lord tells you to act, you will not lose everything you have and become destitute. But some will say, “How will I know it’s the Lord, and not just me?” That is where learning how to be led by the Spirit is so important. First, the idea can’t violate Scripture- the Lord will not lead us to become a drug dealer. Next, do we have peace in our spirit about it, as we think on it and talk about it, does the Spirit bear witness to it with peace in our heart about it.

Isaiah 30:21

Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, “This is the way; walk in it.”

Third, I like to use the test of time, if it’s God today, it will be God tomorrow or next week. Just don’t wait too long to act. So if you are still not sure, just pray about it and wait on God until you know. The timing may very well be later on in the future, but that only means that the Lord is giving you a heads up about it so you can start preparing right now for it. God always gives us something to do in the mean time; time is precious and should never be wasted.



Jeremiah 29:11

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Isaiah 40:29-31 NKJV

He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the Lord Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

But when you know it is time, and you are settled in your heart about it, be strong in the Lord and step out in faith- walk on water with Jesus.



Joshua 1:6-9

“Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

So we have been saying, if we discern when the harvest is ready, through a supernatural revelation of joy as we get close to it, it will also be revealed to us which steps the Lord will lead us to take- new job opportunity or creative business/ministry idea or someone just blessing us with a gift.

Reason #6: We need to discern how much of the harvest we are going to receive

Here is an important question that needs to be answered, do we know how much our giving has been in the past year? Are we keeping track of what and where our seed has been sown. We need to journal that information. Also, did we first check to see if that ground we sowed in, was good ground? Next, ask yourself what a thirty, sixty or one hundred fold return on that investment into God’s Kingdom would be. There has been a lot of discussion on how much of a return we should expect to have. Again we go back to the natural examples God has provided for us. When it comes to planting a bushel of wheat to an acre of land, it is not uncommon to reap 40 to 60 times as much in a good year- that’s how it works in the natural. Folks who think we should not expect to receiving anything from our giving are misguided and misinformed to plain Scripture. As Jesus often said, “According to your faith, be it unto you.”

Well look at your giving and multiply that by 50 times, that could be a really big number. Now the next question is, are we really expecting all that to come in? Most of us are really not expecting that to happen. Well that is a problem then, because Jesus made many references to the fact that people receive from God in proportion to their faith. What would you think of a farmer who had bumper crop of 100 acres and only reaped 20 percent of it, quit and went home? Yet that is what so many of us have done, with our little faith that only reaps a little amount of a much bigger harvest that is at our disposal. Therefore, we do not reap according to what we have sown, we reap according to our faith to receive.

We do not Reap According to what we have Sown, we Reap According to our Faith to Receive!

Matthew 9:29-30

Then he touched their eyes and said, “According to your faith will it be done to you”; and their sight was restored.

Mark 5:34

He said to her, “Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering.”

Matthew 17:19-20

Then the disciples came to Jesus in private and asked, “Why couldn’t we drive it out?” He replied, “Because you have so little faith. I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

In the natural, if a harvest is not reaped, it will not stay out there forever, it will rot and deteriorate. However, that does not apply to spiritual harvests, they are incorruptible. So those harvests we have not reaped are still out in the field waiting to be gathered in; so let’s go back out and reap them. I am not talking about figuring out the harvest to the penny, and be overly legalistic about it, but we need to have a general idea. Our expectations are generally way lower than the reality of God’s provision that is available to be reaped- so often times we fall way too short. So keep track of your giving and what you should be expecting to come in- in a ball-park manner of speaking. How else will we know if we have received all there is to the harvest; perhaps we are leaving half of it still out in the field. A lot of people wonder why others reap a bigger return than some, a lot of times it has to do with their faith- reap it all!

Matthew 6:19-21

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

1 Timothy 6:18-19

Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

Yet some will say, “Yea well brother, if I just have my needs met and my bills paid, I’ll be content with that.” Well aren’t you just a selfish rascal! If that is the way you feel and think, what about other people, the church, the poor, missions, the Kingdom of God and your family. If you just want to get by on a little handful, then that’s your business, but use your faith to be a greater blessing to others. Consider the parable of the Talents, the principle to be had from this is to invest God’s resources in order to receive a multiplied return. That means everything God puts in our hands including money!

Matthew 25:14-30

“Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money. “

After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’ ‘His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’ ‘The man with the two talents also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more.’ ‘His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

“Then the man who had received the one talent came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’ ‘His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant!** So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. “‘Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’“**

The people of Joseph came to Joshua and said we need more land, we are a large people and the allotment you gave us is not big enough. So they were putting pressure on him to do something about their situation. But Joshua straitened them out and pointed out a mountain and valley area next to their territory, to go and take possession of it for themselves. However, they responded that the Canaanites and the giant decedents of the Rephaites were there. But I thought they were a great and numerous people? That is just like so many “Faith” people today who make all these claims, but when they face a little opposition, they come back whining- “I don’t have enough, I need more money and a bigger house!” And they want you to do something for them, but I thought they understood faith and how to receive God’s provision for their lives. So the people of Joseph just needed encouragement from Joshua to trust God and act on His Word and possess the land they wanted.

Joshua 17:14-18

The people of Joseph said to Joshua, “Why have you given us only one allotment and one portion for an inheritance? We are a numerous people and the Lord has blessed us abundantly.” “If you are so numerous,” Joshua answered, “and if the hill country of Ephraim is too small for you, go up into the forest and clear land for yourselves there in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaites.” The people of Joseph replied, “The hill country is not enough for us, and all the Canaanites who live in the plain have iron chariots, both those in Beth Shan and its settlements and those in the Valley of Jezreel.” But Joshua said to the house of Joseph — to Ephraim and Manasseh — “You are numerous and very powerful. You will have not only one allotment but the forested hill country as well. Clear it, and its farthest limits will be yours; though the Canaanites have iron chariots and though they are strong, you can drive them out.”

Look at what is said in Joshua chapter eighteen concerning some of the other tribes of Israel. I believe that there is a spiritual application for us today that God is asking of His people- “How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the promises of God in My Word?” Out of the twelve tribes of Israel, only five had made any substantial claims on the inheritance that God had given them- what were the others waiting for? Over half still had not taken possession of what God had given them! I believe that this is representative of the Body of Christ today. That over half have not entered into their glorious inheritance in Jesus Christ! And it is not because God had not given it to them, long ago God had told them it was theirs, and they were to go up and possess it. Unfortunately they have not had enough faith to go up and take it.

Joshua 18:1-3

The whole assembly of the Israelites gathered at Shiloh and set up the Tent of Meeting there. The country was brought under their control, but there were still seven Israelite tribes who had not yet received their inheritance. So Joshua said to the Israelites: “How long will you wait before you begin to take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, has given you?”

So some tribes took full possession of the land they needed, but others like the tribe of Joseph took only a little bit, whining for more to be given to them. Still, there were others that had not even taken a foot of ground yet. So Joshua told the tribe of Joseph, just go take as much as you want, trust God to win your battles for you as you take possession of it.

It appears that Judah took on more than what they needed. Isn't it interesting that this tribe, the lineage through whom Jesus came, the chosen ones, the praising ones, the faith bunch took more. When they got to taking the land, they got carried away and took more than they really needed. So the tribe of Simeon was able to cash in on their conquests. Did the Lord rebuke the tribe of Judah from taking too much? No! We need to get delivered from this religious junk that keeps people timid about pressing into their inheritance in Christ; from being fearful of taking too much and offending the Lord- “Well, if the Lord wants to give me something He can, I just want to be polite.” Then people get upset because they are not able to enjoy much in God.

Joshua 19:9

The inheritance of the Simeonites was taken from the share of Judah, because Judah's portion was more than they needed. So the Simeonites received their inheritance within the territory of Judah.

When the young son in the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32), boldly asked for his inheritance early, the Bible does not paint that in a bad way. It's what he did with it that was bad- wasted it on prostitutes and wild living. His father did not rebuke him for asking for his share of the inheritance, and what does the father in this story represent? The Father God of course. The father in the story divided his estate between both of them. You know the story, the younger son went out and blew it all, was in poverty and then came to his senses. He returned to his father's house, and was restored back as a son and they killed the fatted calf in his honor. Now the older son heard about it and was so mad that he accused his father of being unfair and never giving him anything. Again this is representative of many in the Body of Christ who serve God, but are not partaking of what already belongs to them through faith, and they blame God for not having anything- “I work hard for you Lord, why am I still driving an old car?”

But what was the father's response, “look son all that I have is already yours, so why have you not just helped yourself to what was already yours!” The father made no apology to his older son. Because when the young son received his inheritance so did not older son.



The problem with the older son, and so many in the Body of Christ, is that he did not discern his own harvest- who he was and what he already had. That is not the father's fault, if the older son did not have the faith or the boldness to appropriate it. The father basically was saying, "Son, don't wait for me to come with a silver spoon and stick it in your mouth! If you wanted a ring, you know where the jewelry box is, help yourself, it is already yours!" The problem is, the older son thought he was being humble by not

asking, and so doing without, James 4:2, "*You do not have, because you do not ask God.*" Can you see the two extremes here? One son who was too selfish and the other son was too religious- let's get in the middle of the road.

Luke 11:9-10

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

Luke 12:32

"Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom."

Luke 17:20-21

Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, "The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, 'Here it is,' or 'There it is,' because the kingdom of God is within you."

Luke 22:29

"And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me."

Remember the parable of the friend who came at midnight. What was the central point of that parable? To receive we have to be bold in our asking. The reason a lot of people don't ever ask, is either because of fear or pride that holds them back- ignorance and wrong thinking at the root. If God's children are without, it's not because it's not available, they have not taken hold of it through faith, which boldly receives what is already ours. We have to think, claim and expect big and stay with it until we get it all. Then our brother and sisters who have not figured out how to get it yet (like Judah sharing with the tribe of Simeon), we can share with them. Blessed to be a blessing in order to give lots to the Gospel and other people.

Luke 11:8

I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

Unit 8 Review:

Can Christians sleep through their harvest, explain?

What are some reasons as to why some people are not receiving a harvest?

What is the good news found in 2 Corinthians 9:10-11, for those who have no seed to sow?

So generally speaking, how do we reap a financial harvest?

What are some reasons why some folks have small harvests?

What impressed you the most about the “Dynamic Kernels” story?
