



# POWERFUL PRINCIPLES *of* INCREASE

*Released In You*

JOHN AVANZINI

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*This book is lovingly dedicated to Patricia Ann Avanzini, my partner in ministry and in life.*

## Introduction

You are going to have a wonderful experience! You are going to transform your mind from traditional thoughts to God's thoughts about prosperity.

You may question some of the challenging principles this book contains. They may seem so different from your present beliefs that you may ask whether or not they are really biblical. Well, let this special scripture be your guide as you undertake this life-transforming experience.

To the law and to the testimony: *if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

Isaiah 8:20

Please don't reject the principles I am about to teach you just because they may not agree with what you have learned over the years. Freely question the new thoughts I submit to you. *See if they agree with the Word of God.* If they do, accept them and put them into practice. I promise I will not give you any principle without supporting it with the Scripture.

If you are going to have a life-changing experience, you must *participate in the process*. Read, question, and research. Then change.

Always remember that it is common for God's precepts and conclusions to be different from our own. God tells us of this probability.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8,9

Also keep this fact in mind. There is a biblical way to transform your mind.

For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.

Isaiah 28:10

Your mind has certain unscriptural concepts programmed into it. They have been reinforced daily and virtually unchallenged for many years. This false information probably came from well-meaning people. Some of it may have come from your parents, teachers, or pastors. Some may have even come from the music you enjoy.

Those thoughts were put into your mind precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little, there a little. Therefore, you must remove them the same way. That is why God led me to write this book lesson upon lesson. It's the best way to lead you into a breakthrough.

Please realize that everything you experience can plant concepts and ideas in your mind. Some are scriptural and some are not. Once a concept becomes part of your thinking process, it will always bring you to the same, predetermined conclusion. You may have already reached a conclusion that Christians should be poor. If you do not allow the Scripture and the Holy Spirit to renew your mind, you will always come to that same non-scriptural conclusion.

Remember, as you read these lessons, it is not enough just to put new information into your mind. You must also get the old, non-scriptural information out of your mind. By feeding your mind the Word of God, you will be planting scriptural concepts. Begin now to allow God to break through your traditional ideas. Be willing to allow His plan for your divine prosperity to crowd out the devil's plan for your continual insufficiency.

Each morning, read one of the lessons in this book. If you can, read the lesson once or twice again. Meditate on it through the course of your day. Speak each concept out loud as often as you can. Don't go to bed at night without once again reading that same lesson.

If you will dedicate yourself to this task, the Word of God will begin to live in you. Your new prosperity mentality will put into your hands the keys to the treasure house of God. He will begin to prosper you so that you can be an effective force in *reaching the world for Jesus Christ* through your giving. You can learn to finance the end-time harvest God's way! God will make sure you always have more than enough so that you can bless others.

But remember this—if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.

Every one must make up his own mind as to how much he should give. Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to, for cheerful givers are the ones God prizes....

Yes, God will give you much so that you can give away much....

2 Corinthians 9:6,7,11 TLB

If you are now ready to make a commitment to renew your mind in the area of biblical prosperity, pray this prayer out loud:

*Dear God:*

*I make a solemn commitment to you today. I promise you, Lord, that each day I will digest one of these lessons and allow your wonderful truths to become a part of my Ufe.*

*Lord, I know that as I draw near to you in this new mentality, you will draw near to me, just as the Scripture says.*

*O God, I thank you that I can come to you, knowing you are a covenant-making God. I now make this covenant with you, with the angels as a witness.*

*Lord, I will be faithful in this covenant, and I know that you will be faithful in your promises to me. I pray in the powerful name of Jesus, Amen.*

*My prayer is that this book will help you replace all your non-scriptural concepts with a fresh, new, God-given prosperity mentality.*



## **Section I Poverty or Prosperity**

## Lesson 1

### Poverty or Prosperity—the Choice Is Yours

For too long we have believed the devil's lie. Satan says *some people are destined to be poor, and some people are destined to be rich, and there's nothing anyone can do about either circumstance*. This satanic lie has crippled Christians and ministries for far too long! It is time we learn the truth.

There are three main reasons we know this destructive statement is a lie:

1. *It is a lie* because God is not a respecter of persons.

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.

Acts 10:34

God did not predetermine who would be rich and who would be poor. He simply created His spiritual laws, and freely gave them to everyone. Every person then has a choice—to implement the laws of poverty, or to implement God's spiritual laws of prosperity.

2. *It is a lie* because God's desire is that you prosper.

This truth is plainly stated in Scripture:

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 2

Prosperity, not poverty, is God's intention for your life.

3. *It is a lie* because God has given you the power to get wealth.

But thou shalt remember the lord thy God: *for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day*.

Deuteronomy 8:18

God would not give you the power to get wealth if He did not intend for you to *use that power* and become wealthy!

The decision to live in poverty or prosperity is *yours*. God has already cast His vote. *He wants you to be prosperous*. Make your life-changing decision today to reject the destructive laws of poverty and accept your God-given rights under God's law of abundance.

Remember:

- God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).
- God wants you to prosper (3 John 2).
- God gives you the power to get wealth (Deuteronomy 8:18).

## Lesson 2

### The God-Given Laws of Poverty and Prosperity

God has created spiritual laws that determine who has wealth, and who will remain poor. The laws of poverty and the laws of prosperity were created by the same God who created the law of gravity. *All* of His laws work every time.

An apple will always fall to the ground. That's God's law of gravity.

A person will become rich or poor by following God's laws.

One *law of poverty* says if you are lazy, or if you don't understand your task, your fields will not bring forth abundance. They will grow thorns and nettles. (Nettles are a symbol of the unproductive yield that causes insufficiency.)

I went by the field of the *slothful*, and by the vineyard of the man *void of understanding*;

And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.

Proverbs 24:30,31

One *law of prosperity* says if you are not lazy and can work without supervision, you will receive a bountiful supply.

Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise:

Which *having no guide, overseer, or ruler*, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.

Proverbs 6:6-8

You may be saying, "Brother John, I resent the implication that I'm lazy. I'm not, but I am always without the abundance I need."

Please understand that I have touched on only two factors in a poverty mentality today, laziness and the lack of understanding. There are many other laws. Just continue to study, and you will experience a gradual transformation of your thoughts into a prosperity mentality.

Do as the Bereans did in the first century: they received the gospel readily, and searched the Scripture daily to see if it was true (Acts 17:10,11).

## Lesson 3

### God's Law of Reward

Think about the word *reward*. God's spiritual law of reward simply states:  
... for the laborer is worthy of his hire [reward]....

Luke 10:7

Your employer is not doing you any special favor by giving you a paycheck. Whatever your vocation, your wages are yours scripturally, morally, and legally. You have earned them. They are not a gift.

When you work hard, God's law demands that you receive your reward.

He that tilleth [works hard] his land shall have plenty of bread....

Proverbs 28:19

If you are working hard, expect to receive your just reward.

Now the other side of this law of reward is that if you don't work, you get no reward. God's Word is emphatic about it.

But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

1 Timothy 5:8

... if any would not work, neither should he eat.

2 Thessalonians 3:10

Plant this law firmly in your mind. Like all of God's spiritual laws, it is an absolute! Those who till the land will have plenty of bread. If your hard work is not bringing plenty of bread into your life, then some spiritual law of poverty is working to stop God's desire for you.

Day by day, as you examine the different spiritual laws for prosperity, you will begin to understand it is His perfect will that you have more than enough.

Remember:

- The laborer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7).
- If you work hard, you will have plenty of bread (Proverbs 28:19).
- Any person who won't provide for his own family is worse than an infidel [non-believer] (1 Timothy 5:8).
- The Bible says if you won't work, you shouldn't eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10).

## Lesson 4

### God's Law of Release

Poverty is not an accident, and neither is prosperity. Strict spiritual laws govern both.

The spiritual law of release says be willing to *release* for increase.

There is [he] that *scattereth, and yet increaseth*; and there is [he] *that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty*.

The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

Proverbs 11:24,25

God makes it clear. If you scatter your money, it will increase and you will be prosperous. If you hoard too much of it, more than is proper, you will be poor. God's spiritual law will not change, no matter how uncomfortable it makes you feel.

You may be asking, "Brother John, do you mean I have to start giving my money away if I want to be prosperous? That doesn't make any sense."

You're right. In the eyes of the world, it doesn't make sense. God's spiritual laws do not always make worldly sense, but they are His truths and will always work.

God's spiritual laws will not change. Release and increase (prosper); retain and decrease (tend to poverty).

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.

Luke 6:38

Remember:

- Prosperity is not an accident and neither is poverty.
- If you put God's spiritual law of release into action, you can expect God's promised law of increase to operate for you.
- God's law of release is clearly stated in Luke 6:38.

## Lesson 5

### God's Law of Receiving

Acts 3:5 tells us the lame man at the gate called "Beautiful" was *expecting to receive something* from Peter and John before they brought him to his feet. He went away leaping and praising God.

Jesus must have walked by the man many times as he lay crippled at the gate. He had never received before, because he never expected to receive anything. However, when Peter and John came by, the man was .. **expecting to receive something of them,**" and he was healed. The only difference was his anticipation. Those who are expecting to receive something are the ones who will receive.

Have you ever heard of a farmer who planted his precious seed and didn't expect a return? Of course not. Farmers expect to receive something. They expect a harvest.

Jesus, our role model, was willing to receive. Once when He visited the home of a Pharisee, He allowed a woman to wash His feet with expensive ointment. When His host criticized the woman, Jesus said "... **thou gavest me no water for my feet... but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment**" (Luke 7:44,46).

Jesus was a good receiver. Countless times in Scripture we see Him receive food, lodging, gifts, and even the use of a donkey. Jesus freely gave, but He also freely received.

When you are not willing to be a good receiver, you stop the abundant blessings God wants to flow into your life. Many times pride keeps us from receiving, but the Word gives us a strong warning about pride.

Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

Proverbs 16:18

Do not let your false pride harden your mind and keep you from receiving from God or from others.

When Jesus said it was more blessed to give than to receive, He didn't say we were not supposed to receive. Unless you begin to develop a receiving mentality, God cannot bring prosperity into your life.

Remember:

- Farmers always expect a harvest.
- Jesus was a good receiver.
- Pride and a hardened mind will restrict the flow of God's prosperity into your life.



## Lesson 6

### God's Law of Sowing

When a farmer puts a corn seed into the ground, he doesn't get back just one corn seed. When he puts that seed into the earth, a divinely ordered process begins. The seed produces a stalk of corn, the stalk produces several ears of corn, and each ear produces many new seeds—*all from the one seed the farmer planted*.

Notice an important point. The farmer has to *sow* the seed first before he can have a harvest. The more seed he sows, the larger the harvest will be.

But remember this—if you give little, you will get little. *A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much*. Every one must make up his own mind as to how much he should give....

For God, who gives seed to the farmer to plant, and later on, good crops to harvest and eat, *will give you more and more seed to plant* and will make it grow so that you can give away more and more fruit from your harvest.

2 Corinthians 9:6,7,10 TLB

Every day you make a choice either to sow some of your seed or to eat it. When you exercise faith and sow, you release God's law of prosperity. When you give in to your fear and eat your seed, or hide it, you release God's law of poverty.

Do not let your circumstances rule you. They may indicate that you can't afford to sow anything into the gospel now. But Scripture clearly tells us if we are ruled by our circumstances, we won't ever sow.

He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

Ecclesiastes 11:4

If you do not sow, you cannot reap, but God's Word clearly tells you to sow in all circumstances.

In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening *withhold not thine hand*: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

Ecclesiastes 11:6

Remember:

- Sow seed and you will harvest (2 Corinthians 9:6).
- When you sow, do not look to your circumstances (Ecclesiastes 11:4).
- Sow regularly to every good work (Ecclesiastes 11:6).

## Lesson 7

### God's Law of Reaping

If most of the saints understood the following statement, more of them would be enjoying God's prosperity in their lives. *If you sow, you will reap.*

Repeat that statement out loud several times. Let it sink into your spirit. Say *"If I sow, I will reap."* It is God's law, and it cannot fail. God warns us not to be fooled.

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto [share with] him that teacheth in all good things.

*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

And let us not be weary in well doing; *for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*

Galatians 6:6-9

God's Spiritual Law of Prosperity says:

1. Sow the seed.
2. In due season, reap the harvest.
3. What you sow is what you will reap.

As you sow your seeds into the gospel of Jesus Christ, you will reap His harvest. God will take your seed and *multiply* it back to you.

Also notice the timing of the harvest. You will reap *in due season*. So, don't sow your seed one day, and expect to reap a harvest the next morning. Would a farmer plant his crop on Thursday, and take his combine out into the field expecting a harvest on Friday? No.

Here is the final, vital point. You will reap what you sow. **"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."** If you sow apples, you will reap apples. If you sow corn, you will reap corn. If you sow love, you will reap love. If you sow money, you will reap money.

Don't sow love and expect God to return finances to you. God's spiritual law says if you sow love, you will reap love, not finances. If you desire more wealth and more money to meet your needs, put more money into God's

Kingdom. To reap a harvest of money, you must first sow money. Farmers know this principle.

Remember:

- Farmers know if they sow, they will reap.
- Farmers know they can reap only the kind of harvest they sow.
- Farmers know they cannot reap in the same season they sow.

Do you see how important it is to know God's laws of the harvest?

## **Section II**

### **How You Can Reap in a Recession**

## Lesson 8

### Reaping in Recession

Recession, inflation, and economic hard times have been with mankind almost since the beginning of time. They are not new problems. The biblical answers to these conditions first appear early in the Book of Genesis.

And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham....

Genesis 26:1

God gave Isaac specific instructions to follow in order to prosper during those economic hard times.

1. Stay faithful to God's commands.

Don't let circumstances ruin your good, Christian habits. Many saints become inconsistent in times of economic pressure. Fluctuation from your Christian principles will only weaken you further. The Lord blessed Isaac because of obedience (Isaiah 1:19).

2. Don't follow the world's philosophy.

Because of the famine, everyone was leaving to go to Egypt, but the Lord had a different program for Isaac:

... Go not down into Egypt.... Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee....

Genesis 26:23

Move to a new city or state only upon God's command, not because of a rumor that there is prosperity there. Remember that God can bless you in any location.

Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.

Deuteronomy 28:3

3. Sow generously during the famine.

Isaac went forth under the Lord's instructions, and he **"... sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him"** (Genesis 26:12).

God intended for Isaac to conquer the famine and gave him the prosperity principles to emerge victorious from it. These same biblical principles apply for you today. Begin to use them now in your own life.

Remember:

- Stay faithful to God's commands.
- Don't follow the world's philosophy.
- Sow generously during the famine.

## **Lesson 9**

### **The World's Ways Are Not God's Ways**

If you want to prosper according to biblical principles, you must forget most of the world's ideas about prosperity. When everyone around Isaac was heading for Egypt, God told him to stay put, ignore the world's answer to the famine problem, and sow in the midst of the famine. The world's answer was to flee. The Word's answer was to stay and sow.

Scripture tells us how the world's way is different from God's way when dealing with economic matters.

He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

Ecclesiastes 11:4

The people who were fleeing to Egypt were looking too closely at their unpleasant circumstances. They observed the winds of hard times. They regarded the clouds of gloom and doom. So they uprooted their families, and headed straight for Egypt. After all, everybody was doing it. However, *it was sowing*, not fleeing, that delivered Isaac from his circumstances. The seeds he sowed delivered him. God told Isaac to stay and sow in the midst of a famine. Isaac obeyed, and God produced a harvest.

Don't listen to the world's answers, even when the winds of hard times hit your family. Instead, seek the voice of God. The world says to hoard all you can in the midst of a famine. God says to plant seed and expect to reap a harvest.

Remember:

- Hard times are the wrong times to stop giving to God.

## **Lesson 10**

### **If You Want More Money**

Right now you may find yourself in a situation similar to Isaac's. You may be in the midst of your own economic famine. So what do you do now?

If you desire more money in the midst of an economic famine, you must begin to sow more money seed, so it can produce a greater money harvest. Without the sowing of seed, there can be no harvest. Simply stated, if you want to prosper in hard times, you must start giving more to God so that He can release more finances to you.

... He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

2 Corinthians 9:6

Everyone goes through difficult economic situations from time to time, but don't stop giving to God when things get tight. Remember that Isaac planted good, valuable seed in a time when everyone else was hoarding seed. Isaac's seed grew up, even in the midst of a famine, because he planted in accordance with God's command.

If you want more money in your hands each month, plant more money seed into the gospel each month. When a child of God plants money seed, he has God's Word that a money harvest will come up, even in the midst of the worst economic famine.



## Lesson 11

### Give Away What You Lack

When you find yourself in the midst of an economic famine, remember this important warning. *Do not eat too much of the seed.* Some of the seed is for you to eat, but some of it is for you to plant.

Look how God rewarded the widow at Zarephath for her willingness to obey God and follow His principles of biblical economics (1 Kings 17:8-16). This poor widow had only enough for one final meal. When the prophet Elijah came and asked her for something to eat, she replied:

... I have not a cake, but [only] an handful of meal in a barrel ... and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress [prepare] it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

1 Kings 17:12

She was down to her last meal, but Elijah exhorted her to share her last cake. He promised her that if she obeyed:

... The barrel of meal shall not waste [be used up]....until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

1 Kings 17:14

The turning point was when the woman actually gave the last of her precious food away. The world would have told her it was sensible to hoard her small bit of remaining meal, to use what little she had for herself and her son. However, God works by different principles. This lady was exhorted to share her meal with God's minister, and let God provide the harvest. She planted seed in the darkest part of the famine, because Elijah convinced her that if she planted, she would reap a bountiful harvest.

So the poor widow obeyed and met the need of the man of God. As a result of her willingness to plant seeds, and her refusal to observe the winds and clouds of famine, God miraculously met her need.

... the barrel of meal wasted not [was not used up] ... according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.

1 Kings 17:16

Remember:

- When you help meet the needs of others, God will meet your needs.

## Lesson 12

### Plant in Good Ground

Simply sowing seed is not enough to produce a harvest; you must be careful where you sow. If you throw your seed onto a concrete slab, you will not reap a harvest.

And other [seed] fell on good ground, and did yield fruit... and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred.

Mark 4:8

*One key principle of biblical economics is that you must always sow your seed in good ground.* The best and most fertile soil is the ground consecrated and dedicated to producing a harvest for the Kingdom of God.

Don't let tradition sway you away from the best ground in which to plant your seed. When times are financially difficult, you can reap your most abundant harvest by planting your precious seed into God's work.

Carefully select the ministries in which you will invest. Choose Christ-honoring, soul-winning, Word-centered ministries that properly manage the money they receive. Plant your precious seed in good ground, and God will return an abundant harvest to you.

## Lesson 13

### The Value of Your Seed

Your economic circumstances determine the value of your seed. It is the most precious when it is scarce.

When the money seed you wish to put into God's work is scarce, let your faith grow by what God says about it:

He that goeth forth and weepeth, *bearing precious seed*, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalm 126:6

That verse should give you comfort and boldness to give to God's work, even in tight financial times. God absolutely guarantees that precious seed will produce a return; His Word says the one who sows it **"... shall doubtless come again with rejoicing."**

The Book of Luke tells of a poor widow who gave out of her want. Her seed was precious to her. It was all she had to live on.

... but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

Luke 21:4

Jesus not only saw what she gave. He also saw what she had left. He knew her measure was greater than that of any rich man in the temple.

When it is precious, your seed has a guarantee of success and harvest. God knows how much you give, and how much of the precious seed you have left after you give. So when your finances get low, don't stop giving.

## Lesson 14

### Nothing Is *Luck* With God

The principles God established in His Word to guide you are absolute. They are not subject to luck. The widow at Zarephath gave from her scarce food supply, and she received her food supply back from God, multiplied.

This return was not luck. It was the result of a direct application of God's law of increase. The widow *gave* her precious meal, and God *returned* to her an abundance of meal. He fulfilled the divine principle found in His Word.

Give, and it shall be given unto you... For with the same measure that ye mete withal [give] it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38

The widow did not run into a streak of good luck. She obeyed God and gave from her precious seed. God *honored His Word* by bestowing His abundant blessings upon her. God, seeing her meager resources, realized that she had given generously. He knew it was her last cake, all that stood between her and starvation. God's Word says that in return she received an unending supply of food.

This widow actually set in motion the principles of God in the midst of her situation. She literally left the realm of chance and committed her future well-being to God's promises, instead of depending on the whims of economic circumstances.

When you give, know that you are not subject to luck. Instead, you are anchoring your future to God's superior principles of biblical economics. The Heavenly Father will honor your faith. Scripture shows that when we measure out our best to God, He measures out His best to us.

## Lesson 15

### How to Start Reaping Now

If you want to start reaping financial blessings in your life right now, you must follow the principles God has given in Scripture.

Isaac sowed his seed in famine, when everyone around him was hoarding their seed and fleeing to Egypt.

The widow at Zarephath fed the man of God from her last bit of meal. She gave him a cake scraped up from the bottom of the barrel.

The widow at the temple gave all the living she had.

In all three cases, the people were desperate. They began to reap when they followed three basic principles:

1. They started right where they were at the point of their need.
2. They planted precious seeds, despite their circumstances. Each refused to observe the winds and clouds of gloom and doom.
3. They planted out of their need. They gave their precious seeds in extremely hard times, and all three received God's abundant blessing in their lives in the midst of hard times.

The same spiritual principles which allowed Isaac and the two widows to start reaping, will work for you too. If you want to begin reaping God's blessings, start sowing your precious seed into the gospel, and it will return to you, multiplied.

They that sow in tears [hard times] shall . reap in joy.

He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed [the last seed from the bottom of the barrel], shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

Psalm 126:5,6

Notice God's promise to you. Sow precious seed into the Kingdom of God, and *you shall doubtless* rejoice when you receive the harvest from your seed-sowing. This is not a matter of luck. It is a matter of obedience.

When you are obedient to God's Word, God will honor His Word and will fulfill His promises. It is a matter of law —God's law.

## **Section III**

### **God's Gift-Giving Example**

## Lesson 16

### The Gift of Salvation

If we are to become proper givers, we must pattern our giving after the best gift-giver, God. Our Heavenly Father freely gave us the greatest of all gifts, salvation.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God*:

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Ephesians 2:8,9

God gives us *salvation*, through faith, as a free gift. No one can *earn* salvation through good works; it is a miraculous gift from God.

When God gave His Son to this earth, Jesus was a free gift. God sent Him to provide us with salvation and eternal life.

For God so loved the world, that *he gave* his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 3:16,17

The only thing anyone can do to receive God's free gift of salvation is to simply tell the Lord, "I accept Jesus into my heart as the Lord and Savior of my life."

Do you see the gift of salvation is totally free? Always remember this truth. There is absolutely nothing anyone can do in his own power to earn eternal life. It is one of God's

## Lesson 17

### The Gift of Faith

In the last lesson we learned God freely saves us.

For by grace are ye saved *through faith*; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Ephesians 2:8

Salvation comes as a gift through faith. However, even the faith to receive salvation is a free gift.

... God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Romans 12:3

Faith is a critical part of our walk with God.

But without faith it is *impossible to please him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Hebrews 11:6

Do you know where you get faith?

Looking unto Jesus the *author and finisher of our faith*; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Hebrews 12:2

God freely gave us eternal salvation. Then, so that we can please Him and defeat the enemy, He freely gave us faith.

Faith is vital if we are to break out of the bonds of insufficiency in which so many Christians languish today. *God-given faith* is a key to financial freedom. It is a major ingredient in attaining the inheritance God has provided for us. The writer of Hebrews exhorts us,

That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who *through faith and patience inherit the promises*.

Hebrews 6:12

The promises of God for abundant supply are greatly dependent upon faith. Guard your faith. Feed your faith (Romans 10:17). Thank God for it, and give it plenty of exercise. As you give into the gospel, believe in faith that you will receive more and more, so you can give away more and more



fruit from your harvest.

For God, who gives seed to the farmer to plant, and later on, good crops to harvest and eat, will give you more and more seed to plant and will make it grow so that you can give away more and more fruit from your harvest.

Yes, God will give you much so that you can give away much....

2 Corinthians 9:10,11 TLB

## Lesson 18

### The Gift of the Holy Spirit

God has promised that when the Holy Spirit enters your life, several marvelous things will happen.

1. God will bestow upon you the fruit of the Spirit.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

Galatians 5:22,23

2. You will receive *power* to be a *witness*.

. . . ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 1:8

3. Through the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the wonderful prayer language He gives you, you will be able to build up the faith God has given you.

But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost.

Jude 20

Faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17), so you must study God's Word. Then use your prayer language to build up your faith.

4. The Holy Spirit will help you pray in accordance with God's will.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Romans 8:26

Now here's the true miracle of the Holy Spirit: God freely gives us His Holy Spirit. *We just have to ask.*

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

Luke 11:13

Are you beginning to grasp what a grand giver God is? He freely gives us

all the things we need to live well in this life, and also in eternity.

If you are a child of God, you should show His personality to the world. God is the greatest of all givers, and you can be like Him, a *great giver*.

## Lesson 19

### The Father Gives Freely and Joyfully

Our great Heavenly Father is continually giving to us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

According as his divine power hath given unto us *all things that pertain unto life and godliness*, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

2 Peter 1:3

Many things pertain unto life. Just think of all the things life encompasses. Gasoline for our cars is something pertaining to life. Even though the price of gasoline may go up, God knows we need fuel, and the Bible guarantees God will supply all things that pertain unto life. Life also includes groceries, clothes, housing, jobs. No matter how high the prices may go, our God promises to supply everything we need.

By now, this simple truth must be sinking into your spirit. God wants to bless us so wonderfully, so completely, so powerfully, because He wants us to become great givers *like He is*. God wants us to receive abundantly so that we can give abundantly.

God wants to position us for the greater blessing, for He said it is more blessed to give than to receive. As you learn to give in your everyday life, you are unleashing the process that will make you more like God. He is the greatest giver, and He wants you to become like Him.

Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because *as he is, so are we in this world*.

1 John 4:17

God sees us as He is. Can you lay hold of that thought and grasp its eternal significance? God sees us as He is in this world. Isn't it wonderful to know that through your giving, your prosperity will grow so that you will be able to bless all men you meet? You are on the threshold of moving beyond receiving the blessing into actually *becoming a blessing*.

## Lesson 20

### Jesus Is a Great Giver

When God's Son, Jesus, took on the whole nature and personality of His Heavenly Father, He became a great giver. Hear what the Word says about Jesus.

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and *gave gifts unto men*.

Ephesians 4:8

Aren't you glad these precious words are recorded in the Word of God? They reveal so clearly why Jesus came personally to this earth. Hear Him as He speaks to those who heard His words many years ago.

... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it [new life] more abundantly.

John 10:10

He said, "... I **am come that they might have....**"

Jesus did not come to earth to make us give up good things and lead a life of sorrow, poverty and depression. If you read the words of the Bible, you will find that His true intention was not to remove us from the world and its goods, but actually to have us take over this world and its goods.

If we are going to function as Jesus did, we must be concerned about more than just our own abundance. We must also be concerned about our brothers and sisters around the world. We must care whether or not they have everything they need. It is not our choice; it is a command.

*Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.*

Matthew 5:42

We must give to everyone who asks of us in the same way that Jesus did. He knew His Heavenly Father would supply everything He needed. He came to give; He literally tapped into the unlimited supply. We are to walk in His footsteps, doing the same things He did.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: *freely ye have received, freely give.*

Matthew 10:8

In giving freely, we open the storehouses of God and unleash an unending supply.

I believe you are beginning to understand that your decision to imitate Jesus in the grace of giving is one of the best you will ever make.

Even if you have never given a large amount of money to the work of the Lord, you can begin to change your lifestyle from that of a consumer to that of a provider. You can literally begin to come forth in **"... the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"** (Ephesians 4:13).

Say these words out loud. "My Lord Jesus came that men might have life more abundantly, and as His servant, I am now here that men might have life more abundantly."

## Lesson 21

### The Holy Spirit Is a Great Giver

We have seen that the Father and Jesus are great givers. It must follow that the Holy Spirit is also a great giver. The Word of God clearly shows that He is.

Every informed Christian knows when you submit yourself to the Holy Spirit, He immediately becomes an abundant source of priceless treasures. With the Holy Spirit inside, the *fruit* of the Spirit becomes available to you.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance....

Galatians 5:22,23

The *gifts* of the Spirit are also available to you: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, the ability to distinguish between spirits, different kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues. All of these gifts are documented in 1 Corinthians 12:1-11.

And there's still more. The very *power to witness* is a free gift of the Holy Spirit.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and *they spake the word of God with boldness*.

Acts 4:31

Are you beginning to see how much God has in store for us in His everlasting, abundant, inexhaustible storehouse? He has so much for us, there is literally no place on earth which can contain all of the physical and spiritual blessings of God.

... Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit....

1 Corinthians 2:9,10

Remember, the Holy Spirit is a great giver.

## Lesson 22

### Godly Giving

Most Christians believe they should not expect anything in return for what they give. Inside they say something like, "Lord, I don't want anything in return. I don't expect anything back. I'm just giving because I love you."

When you give and expect nothing back, you are not giving the biblical way. The following statement is probably one of the most shocking and hard-to-believe biblical principles for the Body of Christ to accept: The godly way is to *give expecting to receive!*

Notice I said this is the godly way. When God gives, He always has definite expectations. For instance, when He gave life to mankind, God *expected to receive* from them worship, reverence, love, service, obedience, and companionship.

When He gave His Son, Jesus, to die for us, God expected to receive sons and daughters in return.

The Word of God is clear. Giving is tied to receiving.

Give, and it shall be given unto you....

Luke 6:38

Moreover, giving is tied to receiving a return of what you give.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

This is not my promise or my idea. Again and again God tells us to give, expecting to receive so that we can give even more the next time. It is godly to give and expect something in return.

Expecting a return does not mean you are selfish. God's ways are higher than ours. If He did not multiply back to us what we give to Him, where would we get the money to take the gospel to the world? God knows what He's doing.

Stop saying you don't expect anything back from God when you give. That simply is not a biblical statement. Give expecting to receive. Then you can be a good steward by giving even more to God's Kingdom the next time. I have found no limit in God's Word to the abundance you can have for the



gospel, and for your family, if you persist in obeying God with your finances.

## Lesson 23

### There's More Than Enough

God is building a Church to be His special dwelling place in these last days. God wants to reach the world, but if we are constantly trying to figure out how much we want to give, we will probably talk ourselves out of 90 percent of what God wants us to give.

Hold this truth in your spirit. Our King of kings and Lord of lords *is not low on funds*. He isn't going bankrupt. He is trying to keep us from getting low on funds or going bankrupt. He has devised a wonderful plan for replenishing our treasury, and He instructs us in the supernatural realm of creating what we need. Miraculous power awaits you if you dare to apply His method of obtaining. You know how God obtains; He does it by giving.

For God so loved the world, *that he gave....*

John 3:16

There is more than enough for your life. Do you honestly believe you could give more to God than He could give back to you? Can you really imagine God watching you give, and saying, "Oops, that did it! You just gave me more than my current supply of blessings. There's no possible way I can ever give that much back to you"? Do you really think you could ever break the bank of heaven?

It will never happen! There is more than enough for you!

God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more, so that there will not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over to give joyfully to others.

2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

## **Section IV**

### **Eight Truths About Money**

## Lesson 24

### Finances Are Important

If something is important to God, don't you think it should be important to you?

I pray that by now it is firmly rooted in your spirit that *God desires good things for you*. Not only does He want you to be strong and prosperous in your spirit, He also desires you to be prosperous in the material areas of your life. He wants you to have food, clothing, housing, finances, and everything that pertains to the *good life*.

Remember, God did not tell Isaac to forget about the famine and be spiritual. Instead, He told him three things: First, where to live. Second, what to plant. Third, what to expect from his sowing. God wanted Isaac to have the material things necessary to live well, even in the midst of famine.

You see, God does care about your material needs.

Today it seems it is just fine for preachers to talk about religious matters, but many people feel the topic of money and practical things is not spiritual, and they should not talk about them. Nonsense! Money is a spiritual issue to the saints of God!

When the poor widow sacrificed her two mites in an offering in the temple, Jesus did not say, "Woman, your financial sacrifice does not matter to me. God is not interested in your money. All that matters to God are your spiritual needs. I'm not concerned about your material needs. Just learn to accept your financial condition."

Instead, Jesus praised her for her precious financial sacrifice. Jesus knew the widow's heart. Since the two mites were a big part of her necessary living expenses, Jesus considered them a significant gift. Her giving was an important action. Her gift represented more than the other gifts given that day, even those given by the very rich people. Jesus even called to the disciples and made open comment about the faith the widow manifested in her money offering.

You see, money is important to God. Money is important to Jesus. So money should be important to you. During the next few lessons, let your mind and spirit grow into a deeper understanding of the value of money to

you, to God, and to the spreading of the gospel.

## Lesson 25

### Money Is Not Evil

One of the biggest mistakes about money comes from a misunderstanding of this verse:

For *the love of money* is the root of all evil....

1 Timothy 6:10

The mistake many Christians make is in what they *think* the verse says. Instead of reading what the verse actually says, they read what they want it to say. Please notice that this verse does not say money is evil. It clearly states that *the love of money* is the root of all evil.

I've heard so many good Christians use this verse to justify their belief that God does not want them to have anything to do with money. They ignorantly believe the Bible teaches that money is evil.

This is a terrible mistake. God *does* want you to have money. God *does* care about your needs, and He knows the lack of money can cause serious problems in your life, as well as throughout society. It doesn't take a genius to notice that people commit robbery because they do not have enough money. All over the world, people starve to death because they do not have money to buy food. People freeze because they do not have enough money to buy fuel to heat their homes. The Bible even says "... **money answereth all things**" (Ecclesiastes 10:19).

Money itself is neither good nor evil. It has the ability to do only what its owner wants it to do. The owner is in charge. Money serves its owner *without question*; it is ready to do good or evil at its owner's discretion.

My money is good money. When I spend my money, I spend it for good things. I spend it on spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ, on my family and their needs, and on helping others less fortunate than I. My money is not evil.

The only way for money to be evil is for it to come under the control of an evil person. Money simply manifests what is in its owner's heart. Luke 12:34 says, "**For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.**"

If your heart is in line with God, then your treasure (money) will literally be godly money. When your heart is right, you will put more of your money into the gospel and less money into frivolous diversions.

Mark this truth: *money is not evil*. It is a magnificent tool in the hands of godly men and women to help bring the saving message of Jesus Christ to lost souls around the world. Stretch your faith to see that God wants you to have as much money as you will properly use.

... God will give you much so that you can give away much....

2 Corinthians 9:11 TLB

## Lesson 26

# Improper Attitudes Toward Money Can Harm You

When talking about money or any other topic in Scripture, it is important to maintain a balance. In the last lesson we determined that money is not evil. In this lesson, I would like to show you the proper balance on this controversial topic.

Money *does* have the potential to harm you if you don't control it according to God's specific instructions. It can harm you if you use it for dark and sinful purposes. It can harm you if you use it to buy destructive substances (drugs or narcotics). It can hurt you and others if you use it to fulfill the lusts of the flesh instead of the will of the Spirit.

In Matthew 19 Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell all he had and follow Him. When the young ruler could not give up his wealth, he proved he was not in control of his riches. Instead, his riches controlled him. Don't think for a moment that his money did not hurt him. It literally cost him his soul!

Money has the potential to harm you if you cannot control it in accordance with God's will for your life. You are in danger when it begins to rule you, instead of *your ruling it*.

The love of money caused Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus. For just thirty pieces of silver, he handed Jesus over to be crucified, and lost his own soul.

Begin to view money as any other tool you have available for your use. How you use that tool will determine whether or not it does harm or good. Gasoline, electricity, guns, cars, explosives, nuclear power, airplanes, money — all of these tools can improve the quality of man's life. However, all of them can cause severe harm when misused or out of control. Their blessing or harm to your life is determined by whether or not they are operated under your control.

Money can do many good things, but when it is not controlled by the Spirit of God in us, it can literally destroy us. So don't be so naive as to think money won't hurt you. It is capable of doing eternal damage if you let it control you.



## Lesson 27

### Money Doesn't Guarantee Happiness

Money itself *never* guarantees happiness. If money guaranteed happiness, all the rich folks would be marvelously happy, and all the poor folks would be miserably sad. We know this is not the case. Rich people commit suicide. Rich people visit psychologists to treat their depression. Rich people deal with unhappy issues such as divorce, alcoholism, drug addiction, and even financial problems. Many rich people spend the early part of their lives in misery, trying to accumulate their fortunes. Then they spend the latter part of their lives in misery trying to hold on to the fortunes they have accumulated.

Money simply does not guarantee happiness. True happiness and lasting peace come through a proper relationship with Jesus.

For the kingdom of God *is not meat and drink*; but righteousness, and peace, and joy *in the Holy Ghost*.

For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Romans 14:17-19

When your relationship with God is right, your money will not cause you problems and unhappiness.

Instead it will be a blessing and a source of happiness for you and others around you.

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and *he addeth no sorrow with it*  
Proverbs 10:22

God will not harm you by multiplying money back to you. When you have the right heart and spirit in giving your money to Him, God will grant you riches. Although your God-given wealth will not guarantee your happiness, God does promise the riches He gives you will not bring you sorrow. You see, righteousness, peace, and joy are found in God, not money.

## Lesson 28

### It Takes Money to Spread the Gospel

If you are interested in winning the world to Christ, it is important for you to understand these facts.

- Operating churches costs money.
- Printing Bibles costs money.
- Preaching the Word in foreign lands costs money.
- Beaming Christian television programs around the world costs money.

There is no doubt that it takes money to spread the gospel. The Word of God agrees with this statement.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

And how shall they preach, *except they be sent*?

Romans 10:14,15

It costs money to send the Word of God to others. When you begin to understand *and* apply God's laws of abundance in your life, you will receive the money you desire to help finance the end-time harvest.

You can begin right now to have not only enough to meet your own needs, but plenty left over to give into the work of the Lord (2 Corinthians 9:8). Just begin to apply the principles in this book, and see their benefits materialize in your life. Your faithfulness in giving to God's work will help spread the gospel. It will also guarantee that a day of abundant prosperity will eventually overtake you.

That's not my promise; it's God's promise!

## Lesson 29

### God Wants You to Have Money

Many Christians honestly believe poverty is godly. They think if a Christian is poor, he must be in the center of God's will. Some misguided groups of people even believe that by taking *vows of poverty*, they will somehow be more godly or more believable to those who hear them witness the gospel. Many preachers have actually taught if we have holes in our britches and no soles on our shoes, we are suffering for Jesus and making our testimony easier to believe.

It's time for us to start believing God's Word instead of our traditional ideas. *God's Word does not teach poverty!*

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 2

I am going to share a scripture that is so non-traditional,

I recommend you read it several times and allow its truth to penetrate your spirit. Without a doubt, it is one of the greatest blows to the erroneous teaching that poverty enhances the testimony of the gospel.

Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless *the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.*

Ecclesiastes 9:16

Don't let your traditional thinking close your mind and prevent you from seeing the real truth here: *God wants you to prosper.*

If you do not prosper, *the world will not listen to your wisdom* when you share the gospel. A few may hear your testimony, even if you are poor. However, many, many more will listen to your testimony if you are prosperous.

God wants to work a miracle beyond the miracle of salvation, beyond the miracle of the Holy Ghost, and even beyond the miracle of divine health. God wants to work a miracle of financial prosperity in your life. He wants to set you up as one of His earthly stewards.

When an opportunity arises for you to give, then give. Once you get a hold of the truth of God's will for your prosperity, you will experience such

abundance that you will need to look for extra opportunities to give. Begin now to plant seed into God's work so that He can begin to unleash His miracle of financial prosperity in your life. As God blesses you, your testimony will be a powerful witness for Him. As people see there is positive financial activity around you, they will seek your opinions and give you the opportunity to freely and effectively witness to them about your God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

## Lesson 30

### God Cares How Much You Give

If God didn't care how much or how often you give, he would not have included so many instructions in Scripture concerning the methods, the time, and the proper attitudes for giving. He repeatedly gives instructions about giving, including the specific day for giving.

Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him....

1 Corinthians 16:2

God *does* care when you give, and *He cares how much* you give.

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and *he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.*

2 Corinthians 9:6

When Jesus walked on the earth, he watched the people giving their offerings in the temple.

And Jesus sat over against [opposite] the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury....

Mark 12:41

Jesus sat and watched the people put their money into the offering. He was deeply moved by the attitude and the intentions of the giver. Jesus said the poor widow who sacrificed her two mites was the most generous giver of all, because her gift was large in proportion to her available money supply. Jesus was moved by her giving.

If we only *tip* God, we probably hope He doesn't notice, but when we get serious and give a substantial portion of our income to the Lord, it is comforting to know that He sees proper giving.

Never forget, you are literally positioning your heart before God when you participate in an offering to Him. **"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"** (Luke 12:34).

Are you beginning to understand that God *does* care about your finances? He knows the measure from which you give, when you give, and the attitude you have as you give. That is not just my opinion. The Word of God says it. So plant this firmly in your spirit. Giving is important to God. He cares how

much you give.

## Lesson 31

### Money Is a Spiritual Subject

Over 20 percent of the Holy Scripture concerns money, wealth, finances, property, lands, possessions, tithes and giving. If money is not a spiritual subject, why does God say so much about it in the Bible?

Scripture shows clearly that God wants you to have money and be happy with your wealth.

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Proverbs 10:22

... yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.

Psalms 35:27

Scripture gives clear instructions on how to increase your funds.

Give, and it shall be given unto you....

Luke 6:38

Scripture shows clearly that when you give your money, you are performing an *act of sacred worship* to your God.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat [food] in mine house, and prove [test] me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open [for] you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:10

If you will read Deuteronomy 26:1-12, you will see that God says tithing and giving offerings are specific worship services before Him. *Money is a spiritual matter.*

Money is one of the acceptable scriptural offerings for the worship of the Lord. It is also an effective tool to help bring the message of salvation to lost souls throughout the world. When you put it to use according to biblical principles, money becomes a sacred thing.

Your money is your life. Each week when you are paid, the paycheck you receive is your employer's way of reimbursing you for the part of your life you spent in service to him. If you are sanctified through the blood of Jesus, and you give part of your holy life to your employer, the money he gives you

in exchange for your life is *holy money*. It represents a portion of your holy life.



## **Section V**

### **Six Mistakes About Money**

## Lesson 32

### Mistake 1—The Fear of Money

The world operates according to its own "Golden Rule":

*Whoever owns the gold makes the rules.*

Did you know the Bible teaches almost the same principle? If you doubt it, read this verse.

A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: *but money answereth all things.*

Ecclesiastes 10:19

If you don't think that statement is true, just ask a mother who needs to buy school clothes for three or four children. Money will answer her problem. Just ask anyone who is hungry. Money will answer the problem.

For too long the saints of God have accepted Satan's lies and have acted as though money is something to be feared. If you are one of those saints, take these three key scriptures, and put them up in a prominent place where you can see them. Repeat them out loud every day:

*Key Scripture 1:*

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant\_\_\_\_\_

Deuteronomy 8:18

*Key Scripture 2:*

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 2

*Key Scripture 3:*

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Proverbs 10:22

If you are faithful with your finances, you don't need to fear money. Prosperity is God's desire for you. As long as you function in accordance with His commandments, you will experience His financial blessings in your life.

## Lesson 33

### Mistake 2—Poverty Is Godly

If God's Word commanded us to be poor, we would obey. But God's Word does not advocate poverty!

Most Christians are operating in a poverty mentality, while the devil's crowd lives the best life possible.

In Ephesians, Paul talks about **... the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints**" (Eph. 1:18). The Greek word translated **riches** in this verse is *ploutos*. It is a form of a base word meaning to "fill." Its literal meaning is "money, possessions." Figuratively it refers to "abundance, riches, valuable bestowment."

Our inheritance as sons and daughters of the King of kings is a life free from want and poverty.

Read carefully what the Scripture says. Our inheritance is **"...the riches of the glory of his [God's] inheritance."**

Yet, most Christians are settling for the shells while the world eats the peanuts.

"The earth is the Lord's..." (Psalm 24:1). God owns the cattle on a thousand hills, but He doesn't eat hamburgers! Have you ever wondered what all those cows are for? They are for us, His children!

Poverty is not godly, and it certainly isn't biblical. God wants us to open our eyes to see the invisible world—to see the blessings He has in store for all those who love Him.

According as his divine power hath given unto us *all things that pertain unto life and godliness*, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.

2 Peter 1:3

Does gasoline pertain to life? Do shoes pertain to life? Does food pertain to life? Yes! Your Heavenly Father knows you have need of many material things.

It is no surprise to God that your car needs tires. It is no surprise to God that you need a coat when the temperature is below freezing. God intends for you to have all your needs supplied according to *His riches* in glory. In

Christian circles, poverty may be popular, but it is not a Bible-founded principle. Poverty goes against everything the Bible teaches and finds its roots, causes, and effects in its author, Satan.

## **Lesson 34**

### **Mistake 3—The Best Things in Life Are Free**

Many times the devil invents a very spiritual-sounding phrase to try to keep the Church weak and floundering. Perhaps one of his most effective lies is: "The best things in life are free."

That simply is not true. The best things in life are not free. Our salvation was not free. God paid the ultimate price for it, the death of His Son, Jesus Christ!

Even Bibles come with a price. They cost money to print. Over the last 2,000 years, millions of dollars have been spent so men and women could have the Scripture in their hands.

Spreading the gospel costs money. Today, television and satellites are major vehicles to send the Word of God to other lands. It costs as much as \$200,000 to rent just one channel on a satellite for one month. The message of the gospel is the best thing the world could possibly have, but it isn't free. Someone has to pay to get it to us.

The wonderful sermon at your local church on Sunday was not free! Your pastor probably receives a salary, and your church building needs light, heat, literature, pews, microphones and many other types of equipment. Somebody must pay for these things.

Sending people to the mission field costs money. The Apostle Paul discussed the need for Christians to come together with the necessary funds to send missionaries to other lands:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

And how shall they preach, except they be sent?...

Romans 10:14,15

## **Lesson 35**

### **Mistake 4—Poverty Will Bring Happiness**

Prosperity alone will never make you happy, but neither will poverty. Rich people commit suicide, take drugs, get drunk, and get divorces, but so do poor people.

There is nothing sacred, holy, or happy about being poor. Happiness has absolutely nothing to do with the presence or absence of material things, but unhappiness can come from a lack of certain material necessities, such as food, clothing and housing.

Happiness has to do primarily with the inner man. If you aren't happy on the inside, neither wealth nor poverty will make you happy. You see, neither money nor the lack of it will change your inner man. Being poor will never make you holy or happy.

If you are prosperous and have a Christ-controlled inner man, the Spirit of Christ within you will influence the way you spend your wealth. You will meet your own basic needs and wants, and you will support world mission projects, strategic television outreaches, special projects in your local church, and other gospel outreaches. You will be happy, because you will be accomplishing God's purpose with your money.

Poverty or wealth will not bring happiness. Happiness comes only from Jesus Christ. When you have Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life, you will be able to bring much joy to the Body of Christ with the money you supply for the spreading of the gospel.

As you give to God, He will return your money to you so that you can give again to His purposes.

## Lesson 36

### Mistake 5—God Does Not Care About Finances

God cares about finances, but not the way the world cares. Remember, God's ways are not the world's ways (Isaiah 55:8).

The world's way of looking at a donation or gift is totally different from God's way. In the world, people who give the most money to a charitable project are honored with banquets, special plaques, ceremonial pins, and by naming buildings and hospital wings after them. They receive many outward recognitions that set them apart and reward them in accordance with how much they have given.

God takes special notice of the finances we donate, but in a totally different way. Remember the poor widow who gave her two mites. Many others tossed much larger amounts into the treasury, but God honored the widow because she gave a *greater percentage*, or a *greater portion*, of her total finances to Him.

Jesus took very special notice of that widow. He even called the disciples to come and see.

... Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.

Mark 12:43,44

Notice the difference: the world recognizes how much you *give*. God recognizes *how much you have left after you have given*.

Isn't that comforting? God does care about your finances. God sees *how much* you give and *how much you have left*. He also knows how much money you need to meet your needs each day.

As you give to Him and His work, He will take care of you. He will give back to you more than enough to meet your own needs, with plenty left over so that you can give to His work again.

God cares so much about your finances that if you will become obedient to His instructions in giving and receiving, He will immediately start to change your financial situation to get you out of debt and into abundance.

The best way to get out of debt and financial troubles is by giving to God. It doesn't matter how tight your finances are, or how unscriptural your giving may have been in the past. If you obey God now and give as He tells you, your financial *problems* will become financial *blessings*! God always gives back to you what you give to Him, and more.

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 [measure] it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38

Remember, when you give generously to God, He is blessed by what you give and concerned about what you have left. As you give, God will provide you with more than enough to meet all of your needs and desires.



## Lesson 37

### Mistake 6—We Live in Shortage

There is no true shortage on planet earth. However, there is a *controlled* shortage.

The diamond mine owners in South Africa meticulously control the number of diamonds they make available each year. They know diamonds would not be valuable if all the diamonds in the world appeared in the marketplace at the same time. These owners even buy back large quantities just to keep the price up.

The purpose of the oil cartel is to regulate and control the flow of oil into each country. They want to avoid a "glut" (excess supply) so the price won't go too low, reducing profits. The world's oil supply is in a constant state of controlled shortage to assure its high price.

Even our food production is in a controlled shortage. In North America, farmers are told which crops and in what quantity to grow them, as well as what to do with the surplus (the amount the government wants to keep out of circulation to keep prices at a "fair market" price). As a result, millions of bushels of grain are stored instead of sold. Many times, the surplus spoils while some people do not have enough to eat.

You see, to the world, the accumulation of money and the maintenance of good, high prices are the main goals.

In your own personal finances, you are also living in a controlled shortage. Right now, the mints are printing money so fast that the presses have to be oiled continually to keep them from catching on fire. That is how fast they are producing money. However, most people are limited to the little bit of cash in their pockets and checking accounts, the meager amount someone else decides is enough. As long as you keep a controlled-shortage mentality, you will not see beyond what is in your pocket or bank account.

You can unleash God's power and abundance into your financial affairs, and destroy the controlled shortage in your life.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly *above all that we ask or think*, according to the power that worketh in us.

Ephesians 3:20

Now, all of us know how to ask for some pretty nice things. God tells us to ask, and He says He can even supply beyond what we can think. Most of God's children are experiencing a shortage, but they are causing it by their own limited thinking! When will we open the eyes of our understanding?

God's storage houses are full to the brim and overflowing with His abundance. He says, "Just ask."

If we are going to properly finance the outreach of the Kingdom of God, we had better start seeing beyond our own limited supply. We must lift our eyes and look on God's abundant supply.

For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: *no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*

Psalms 84:11

Is money a good thing? Yes, when it is in the control of an informed child of God!

God wants to bless you with the grace of His salvation.

God wants to bless you with good health. God wants to bless you with the power, comfort, and gifts of the Holy Ghost. *He also wants to bless you with abundant finances!*

God is not playing games. Now is the time to bring in the end-time harvest, but we cannot do that without huge amounts of money to pay for the things necessary to reap that harvest: television cameras, satellite receivers, salaries for the workers, church buildings, missionary outreaches. All that money must come from only one place, and that is from the saints of God who have taken hold of the financial blessings God intends for them to have.

Pornographic magazine publishers will not finance the end-time harvest. Big business is not going to pay for it.

It will take huge amounts of money—held in the control of God's children—to reap the great end-time harvest which I believe is coming very soon.

It is time for us to end the *"controlled shortage mentality."* There is no shortage on planet earth.

## **Section VI**

### **The Good Life**

## Lesson 38

### Should Christians Have Luxuries?

Before we answer this highly controversial question, let's decide what luxuries are. My dictionary defines the word *luxuries* as "the comforts and beautiful things of life *beyond what are really necessary*." The next definition reads in part, "costly foods, ... clothing, houses, or furniture; the things a person enjoys, usually very costly and very choice."

For decades Christians have felt they should have just enough food to eat, and wear the simplest of clothes. They considered it holy to just barely make it. Somehow poverty was thought to be a sign of spirituality or great love for God.

Jesus didn't seem to function in that frame of mind. In fact, the first miracle He ever performed was one of luxury and of a material nature. It took place at the marriage feast in Cana, as told in the second chapter of the Book of John.

When the hosts of the marriage feast ran out of wine, Jesus didn't say, "Well, the guests have had enough; it's time for everyone to go home." No, He made wine for everyone in attendance, and the Apostle John reports that it was the *best* wine. It was a luxury.

I think it is important to note that Jesus performed this miracle of luxury for people who had already had plenty of wine to drink.

God does not mind if you have luxuries. Even Jesus owned nice things. The Bible describes His cloak as being so lovely, the soldiers who crucified Him cast lots to see who would be fortunate enough to own it.

As you continue your study, you will discover many similar examples of God's luxurious giving. If God Himself set the pattern, who are we to change it?

## Lesson 39

### Is Jesus Against Your Having Luxuries?

Shortly before His crucifixion, Jesus was having dinner in the home of a Pharisee when a woman brought an alabaster box of precious ointment and anointed Him with it. His disciples saw the action and complained.

... To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

Matthew 26:8,9

Instead of arguing with the apostles, Jesus replied,

...Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

Matthew 6:10

Once again we see Jesus does not mind nice things. He did not even answer the disciples' comments about the waste of ointment. Instead, He commended the woman's actions and called them a "good work." He even prophesied about her.

... Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a *memorial of her*.

Matthew 26:13

Jesus recognized there was enough wealth in the world for everyone, and it was fine for the luxurious alabaster box to be broken, and its precious oil poured over Him. Jesus appreciated the woman's heart so much that He said her actions would be remembered right along with the gospel as a magnificent *memorial* to her.

Notice that Jesus never memorialized the actions of those who exemplified poverty, lack and insufficiency. But here He memorializes this good deed done to Him with the costly ointment.

Is Jesus against luxuries? The Word of God certainly gives us no indication that He opposed them during His earthly ministry. His own actions seem to indicate He was not against them, so why are so many Christians today against luxuries?

Remember, the greatest luxury of all is the precious blood of Jesus which was poured out without limit for all the world.

By now you should be convinced that if you give generously into the preaching of the gospel, God will not withhold any good thing from you. Luxuries should never take the place of the precious gospel, but they are available to the children of God.

## Lesson 40

### You Can Have the Good Things in Life

My life began to change dramatically when I started to believe God's promises. You see, it doesn't really matter how expensive clothing gets, or how high the price of groceries soars, because God says He will take care of us if we are taking care of those ministries that are preaching the gospel around the world.

It is simple. If you believe and trust God, you will give to His work just as the Scripture teaches. Here is the good news of what is promised in return for your giving.

But my God shall supply all your need *according to his riches* in glory by Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19

Notice this verse does not say God will supply these good things *out of* His riches in glory, but rather He will supply them *in accordance with* His riches in glory. That means God plans to supply you, according to the good things He enjoys in heaven.

Of course, we know *heaven is not poverty-ridden*. God's throne is not made out of wood and plaster and thread-bare upholstery. The Apostle John surely isn't describing a slum or a second-hand store when he gives us the description of God's riches in glory.

And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

Revelation 21:18-21

God enjoys good things, and He said He will supply our needs in that

same fashion, **”... according to His riches in glory”** (Philippians 4:19). God wants you to have good things.

Think with me. Suppose you were doing well and prospering, and your son or daughter became a partner with you. Suppose he or she pleased you by being a great worker in the family business. Would you live in a mansion in the best part of town and allow your child to live in a cheap apartment in the slums? Would you enjoy riches, but expect your child to barely get by? Certainly not!

Scripture tells us if we, as human beings, know how to give good gifts to our children, we can be certain that God will give even better things to us, His children.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give....

Luke 11:13



## Lesson 41

### God Wants You Always Abounding

God does not talk about giving us small portions. The psalmist David wrote of the abundance the Lord provides.

Thou preparest a table [banquet] before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; *my cup runneth over*.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalm 23:5,6

Are you beginning to grasp the desire of God? He wants you to sit at a banquet table. He wants you anointed with costly oil. He wants your cup to overflow with good things. He wants goodness and mercy in your life.

There is no talk in the Bible about running out, or running short, or doing without, or not having enough. God talks about abundance. He talks about always abounding in the magnificent things He has created for us.

How many times have you stood in a store and weighed the difference between a bad suit or a good suit, a cheap dress or a well-made one? How many times have you bought a poor pair of jeans instead of a pair that would last? How many times have you thought you just couldn't have the best because you are a Christian?

I've got a shocking statement for you. *God wants you to have the best!*

Look at the clothes Jesus wore. When He was crucified, the soldiers tore up the garments of the other two men, but when it came to Jesus, they wanted to keep His garment in one piece.

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments ... and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend [tear] it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be....

John 19:23,24

The coat of Jesus was very fine indeed, so fine the soldiers did not want to destroy it. Jesus wore quality things, and He wants you to pattern yourself after Him.

## Lesson 42

### A Half-Truth Will Not Set You Free

Only the whole truth will set you free. Most Christians know only half the truth. They know Jesus commanded us to give up all we have and follow Him, and that's good teaching. I teach that. But there's a second part to that truth, and only when you understand the second part will you really be set free.

Jesus *did* say to give up all and follow Him, but He also said He would give back a hundredfold here and now, in this lifetime.

... Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

But *he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time*, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

Mark 10:29,30

There it is in black and white. You will receive a hundredfold return *now, in this time*, not after you die and go to heaven. Jesus wants you to give all you have for Him, but only so He can give it back to you.

God does not want you poor or homeless or without family. He wants you to give up those things only so He can multiply them back to you.

Giving everything up doesn't necessarily call for deeding all your property to the Church. It does mean giving God control of all your possessions. Very seldom have I ever heard of God asking anyone to sell everything and give to His work, but sometimes He does. One time He asked my wife and me to give up our house, and we did. He then put us into a new house that we liked even more, and we began to experience more abundance than we had ever thought possible. However, *be careful when you make these types of decisions. They can bring ruin into your life if you make them without God's specific instructions.*

## Lesson 43

### Release It All, and You'll Get It All Back

When you release everything to the Lord, He promises to return it all to you abundantly. That is the promise from Mark 10:29,30.

God *made the promise*. Now He is waiting for His people to grasp His mentality in relation to abundance, and to stop being cheated out of what is potentially theirs.

When you release control of your possessions to the Lord, you do not give up anything. Read Mark 10:29,30 again. It deals with things we understand: houses, lands and families. Don't turn a deaf ear to what God wants you to hear in this passage. Do not let Satan lie to you even one more day by telling you it is holy to be poor.

In the deepest sense, *to be poor* means "to be powerless." If the devil can keep the saints trembling in shoes full of holes, living in run-down houses, barely able to pay the bills and buy groceries, he can stop the spreading of the gospel to the world. Every soul-winning ministry, evangelist, Christian writer or teacher needs money to carry on an effective gospel outreach. So you can see why Satan wants to keep the saints poor.

God does not talk about a poverty gospel in Mark 10:29,30. Nor does He talk only about religious things. He talks about houses and lands. God wants you to release everything into His control, not so that you will be poor, but so that He can make you far richer than you were before. That is God's way of preparing you for your dynamic part in the financing of His great end-time harvest.

## Lesson 44

### How to Get the Good Life Going

Before you can really live "the good life," you must focus on the spiritual. The Scripture tells us,

... Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

Luke 12:22,23

God wants you to eat and have fine clothes. He doesn't want you to be anxious for them. Don't follow after them. Don't make them the lord of your life. You must keep your priorities straight.

But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and *all these things* shall be added unto you.

Luke 12:31

Your life is more than food, drink, a nice house and vacations. Your good life *starts* when you seek first God's Kingdom and God's way. When you literally put God's Kingdom first and begin to live totally in Christ, understanding you are God's temple, you can have nice clothes, a good car, and a beautiful home. All of these things will be added to you. It's a matter of priority.

God says the good life is your portion.

Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor ... for it is his portion.

Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God.

Ecclesiastes 5:18,19

God does not want to deprive you of the things you need to live, and to live abundantly. He just wants you to seek Him first; then all the other things will be added unto you.

When you begin to experience the good life, don't stop seeking the Lord. As surely as you do, those things that God so richly added to you will begin to fall away.

## **Lesson 45**

### **Abounding to Finance the End-Time Harvest**

We are living in the end times. We are down to the final harvest. Yet look around you. The Church of Jesus Christ does not have enough tools to bring in the harvest, or enough storage bins to house it if we did. There are more than two and one-half billion souls out there who are still waiting to hear about our Jesus. We don't have the proper funds to send preachers to them so that they can hear the precious gospel.

Are millions of people going to hell because God does not provide us with the resources to reach them? Nonsense! They are going to hell because the saints of God have not learned to lay hold of the resources God has already provided.

Yes, God wants you to abound. Yes, He wants you to be prosperous. Yes, God wants you to have control over great wealth. Who else can He trust? Who else will give to bring in the Kingdom? It won't be the multi-millionaire rock stars who sing satanic songs. It won't be the pornographers who make billions of dollars by shooting indecent pictures of little children. It won't be the drug dealers who are daily destroying the lives of so many of our precious teenagers and young adults. Surely it will not be the liquor manufacturers.

God wants you in abundance because only the saints of God will take the prosperity He gives them and use it as good stewards. Only His children will use the money for the salvation of millions of dying souls.

Remember that God has given you the ability to prosper. You can reach a dying world with the good news if you use that prosperity correctly. We need to circle the globe with the good news that Jesus died on the cross to save us.

If we keep living according to our old concepts, our old ideas about money and prosperity, there is no way we will ever reach the lost. It will take a *breakthrough* in our lives, and in the lives of thousands of other saints, before we will fully experience God's abundance and begin to reach the world.

## **Section**

### **VII First Things First**

## Lesson 46

### Put God First

To understand and apply God's principles of biblical economics, you must first establish God's proper spiritual order in your life.

Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment.

Matthew 22:37,38

There is no doubt about it. God should be first. Not a single soul in all of Christianity would disagree with that statement. I do not know of one doctrine, one church, one preacher, one teacher or one Christian philosopher who would argue this principle.

To make a *major breakthrough* in the spiritual area of finances, your spiritual priorities must be absolutely straight. God *must be first in every aspect of your life*, not just in your passive agreement, but in your daily *actions*.

God must come before money. If you spend three minutes a day praying and ten hours a day going after more money, then who (or what) is your god?

God must come before your own pleasure. If all of your leisure time is spent pursuing pleasure, reading magazines and watching television, while the Bible gathers dust on the dining room table, then who (or what) is your god?

Yes, God must come even before your precious spouse or children. Family activities assume their proper priority only when God is the head of your household.

*God is first!*

I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

Exodus 20:23

If you want your giving to be effective, you must make sure your priorities are clear and in scriptural order. If there is any area of your life that ranks above God, repent and change.

Remember, Jesus Himself put proper order into focus.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Matthew 6:33

The careful ordering of your priorities is necessary to bring forth the things you need and want.



## Lesson 47

### The Second Priority

Like many people, you may be surprised when you find out who should come after God in your list of priorities. It's you!

That's right. The Bible declares *that you* are second.

And the second [commandment] is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor *as thyself*.

On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Matthew 22:39,40

Most of us are pretty good about taking care of ourselves. Each month we manage to make the house payments, the car payments, and meet most of our needs, including clothing, education and even entertainment. We know fairly well how to love ourselves second, but the hard part is that we are supposed to love our neighbor in the same way!

The Scripture says clearly that you are second. However, your neighbor is also second. Your *neighbor* is every man, woman, boy and girl in the world, regardless of whether he or she is saved or lost. We must be conscious of our neighbor's specific needs, whether they are spiritual, physical or financial.

To be in the center of God's will (and to avoid blocking any of the good things God has for you), you must have as much concern for other people as you have for yourself. God wants *you* to prosper so that you can help *others* around you to prosper spiritually, physically and financially!

If you get these first two priorities straight, it won't be long before you will be in the center of God's will. Then you will begin to optimize the flow of God's abundance in your life. If all the saints caught this vision, it would be only a very short time until we would see multitudes of people come to Jesus.

The Apostle John prayed for our prosperity and health, but notice that both these benefits are linked to our soul's prosperity:

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 2

There is no prosperity for the soul that neglects the two greatest

commandments. We must put God first, and ourselves and our neighbor second.

## Lesson 48

### Tithe First

To operate the principles of biblical economics in your life, not only must your priorities concerning God be proper, but your priorities in your giving must be clear.

A major question many Christians ask as they begin to put their financial house in order is:

"Do I tithe before or after I pay my bills?"

Many people will pay all of their bills, and then, after all of their financial obligations are met, they will tithe to God out of the remaining money. That may be common practice, but it is not what the Bible teaches.

... thou shalt take of *the first of all the fruit* of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there.

And thou shalt speak and say before the Lord thy God....

And now, behold, I have brought the *firstfruits* of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God....

When thou hast made an end of tithing....

Deuteronomy 26:2,5,10,12

The process of bringing the *firstfruits* to God (before paying the bills) is called "tithing." God's Word says you should tithe first, before you do anything else with your fruit (income)!

You may say, "But, Brother John, if I tithe first, I won't have enough to pay my bills."

Think how full of unbelief that statement is. If you believe that, you are not believing the tithe will open the windows of heaven to you.

You see, tithing establishes a new relationship between you and God. It brings you before the open windows of heaven. Literally, this means the treasure house of God is now open to you. If you put God first, as He says to do, surely He will bless you.

Please be wise enough to see that if you tithe and make offerings *after* all

the bills are paid, you are leaving yourself at the mercy of your bills. With this action, your tithe and offerings are subject to and under the control of your bills.

If you tithe first, and give a generous offering, then your bills come under the control of your tithes and offerings.

Malachi 3:10,11 speaks of open windows for tithing and uninterrupted harvests for your offerings. As long as you have bills, *always* keep them in their proper place behind the tithe. Put God's business first and foremost, and He will put your business first.

## Lesson 49

### Giving Before Receiving

You have been learning in the last few days that God sets priorities. In this lesson, I want to emphasize one of the most elementary priorities of all. *Giving always goes before receiving!*

The world would have you believe that you receive first, then you give. So many times I have heard good, honest, sincere Christians say:

"Oh, Brother John, when I receive a million dollars, I'm going to give a great amount to the work of the Lord! You just watch. I know I will."

The Bible contradicts that bit of human reasoning. It says a person must be faithful in a little, or he will never have the opportunity to be faithful in a lot.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Luke 16:10

Now read this sentence carefully: Waiting for abundance before starting to give will not insure the giving of large gifts; it will actually insure just the opposite—you will not give at all.

First things come first. If you want to receive from God, you must first begin to give. The Bible clearly teaches this principle over and over again, throughout the entire book. Luke 6:38 says to give first, then it will be given to you. Malachi 3:10 says to tithe first, then God will open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing upon you.

Even unsaved farmers know this primary principle: You must sow before you can reap. You will never hear a farmer say, "I'm not going to do any planting just yet. God must first give me a harvest of wheat, then I'll plant my seed in the field."

Every farmer knows that such a thing simply will not happen. He knows that he must first plant seeds, no matter how few he has, and then he will get back a harvest.

Does the Lord give you salvation first, and then you give your heart to Him? Of course not. First *you* give your heart to Him, and then *He* gives you eternal life.

God's principle of first planting, then reaping, is firmly entrenched in every aspect of life, from Genesis to Revelation, from farming to the propagation of every species.

Breakthroughs in sowing (giving) always go before breakthroughs in harvesting (receiving).

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap [receive], if we faint not.

Galatians 6:9

There is no hope of increase without planting seed! Remember what Solomon said:

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die; *a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.*

Ecclesiastes 3:1,2

Giving always goes before receiving.

## Lesson 50

### Blessings Follow Proper Priorities

Only one time in the Bible do we read where someone inquired of Jesus how to be saved. The one who posed this question was a rich young ruler who asked, "... **Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life**" (Luke 18:18)?

As amazing as it may seem, Jesus preached a money sermon to that young boy. He told him to go sell all he had, give it to the poor, and follow Him! Why did Jesus say such a thing? Do you think it was because He wanted that young fellow to be poor?

No, of course not!

It was because Jesus wanted him to get his priorities straight! If the young ruler had agreed to give up his riches for the sake of the gospel, Jesus would have given the riches back to him greatly increased (Mark 10:29,30). Scripture teaches that it is impossible to go broke giving to the poor.

He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.

Proverbs 19:17

Now remember, God must be your first priority. When His priority is established over your money, the Lord can begin to do some mighty things in your life and in your finances. Remember, God gives you power to get wealth.

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, *that he may establish his covenant...*

Deuteronomy 8:18

God wants to establish His covenant to make you a blessing to others.

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and *thou shalt be a blessing*.

Genesis 12:2

Yes, God wants to bless you, so you can go forth and fulfill His second priority: to love and bless your neighbor as you are loved and blessed yourself. God has given us the power to get wealth so that we (the whole Body of Christ) can go forth and preach the gospel throughout the entire

world without apologizing to anyone, without fussing and fighting over past-due bills, and without large extensions of credit.

God has given you the power to get wealth so you can share the gospel with the world, without going into debt.

Surely, now is the time for the Church to violently break out of the poverty cycle. It is time to stop the trickle of financial blessings in our lives, and make some violent breakthroughs that will properly fund our end-time vision of reaching the world with the Word of God.

Remember, along with a knowledge of God's plan for abundance, it takes decisive action.

The farmer must first plant seeds. Sometimes he sows in very hard ground, from early morning to late at night, in the hot sun, often without lunch. If he wants a great harvest, he must fight to get seed into the ground.

The same is true in your financial walk. Sometimes seed planting is very hard. Circumstances may say, "You cannot afford to give fifty dollars." *But do it anyway.*

Circumstances may say, "You cannot afford to tithe before you pay your bills." *But do it anyway.*

Breakthroughs in sowing (giving) always go before breakthroughs in harvesting (receiving).

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap [receive], if we faint not.

Galatians 6:9



## **Section VIII**

### **The Benefits of Giving**

## Lesson 51

### Giving Always Results in Receiving

Memorize the title of today's study. It is a vital principle of biblical economics. *Giving always results in receiving!* You have God's Word on it:

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 [measure] it shall be measured to you *again*.

Luke 6:38

Look closely at these *key points*:

1. God promises to return your gift to you. He says *you will receive* a "good measure," literally "running over." God will bless you when you give to Him.

2. God says your blessings will come from men who shall give to you. God uses people, and so He has no difficulty blessing you from *unexpected* places. The source God uses doesn't matter. What is important is that you understand this biblical principle: when you give, you will receive a return.

3. You will receive in the same measure that you give. Remember, the measure is not *how much* you give, but how much you give *in proportion to your income*. This scripture does not promise that if you give five dollars, you will receive five dollars in return. It says if the five dollars you gave is simply casual pocket money, you will not receive a very large return. You will receive the five dollars back, but not in a greatly multiplied measure.

However, if that five dollars is a very critical part of your remaining funds, a precious seed out of your limited remaining resources, it becomes a *great measure* in God's eyes, and *you will receive a great measure in return* from Him. Your gift will be greatly multiplied.

When you become a giver, you automatically move yourself into the realm of a receiver. There are no exceptions to this rule. However, there are levels of receiving: "... some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred [fold]" (Mark 4:8). The measure you use in giving will determine the measure God will apply to you in receiving. No matter with what measure you give your gift, when you give to God, you *will* receive a return. "Give,

and it shall be given unto you..." (Luke 6:38).

Remember:

Be not deceived [don't be fooled]; God is not mocked [He cannot be fooled]: For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

Now you understand why the title of this lesson is so important. Do not forget it! Giving always results in receiving.

## Lesson 52

### Giving Is Your God-Given Right

Look at this verse again.

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.

Luke 6:38

The above promise is not restricted to any particular group of saints. Every saint has the right to claim it if he or she puts into action God's principle of giving.

What a joy and a *God-given right* it is for you to be a giver!

Suppose your local bank promised you that every time you wrote a check, it would credit your account with *more than enough* funds to cover the draft. Surely you would consider yourself a very fortunate person. At first, you would probably be a bit cautious, and write checks for moderate amounts. But, as the bank proved itself faithful and honored your checks again and again, putting more and more money into your account, you would soon realize that this wonderful new relationship was opening up a whole new life to you and your loved ones. Not only would it be a blessing to you, but any neighbor or friend who found out about your bank would want to have the same sort of account. It would be wrong for your bank to offer this program to you alone.

Of course, we know that banks don't operate that way, but God clearly declares He does! He promises to give us back more than we give, and He guarantees this return to all His *depositors* (all those who give to His work). When I say all, I mean *all*! God declares in His Word that He is no respecter of persons. More than once He promises that we will receive in return more than we give, every single time!

Are you grasping that truth?

Since the resources of the entire universe are at His creative disposal, our Heavenly Father will never run out of funds. He will always be able to meet His promise of giving back to us more than we give to Him.

Do you see what this message is doing to your thinking about giving to

God? Giving to Him is not an obligation. It is an *opportunity* to put God's biblical principles into action! It is a chance to begin operating your heavenly checking account according to a principle that contradicts the world: *the more you give away to God's work, the more He will return to you so that you can give to His work again!*

Yes, God will give you much so that you can give away much....

2 Corinthians 9:11 TLB

If the entire Body of Christ began to operate in accordance with this biblical principle, we would witness the abundance Moses experienced in the Book of Exodus. His people were so willing to give to build the sanctuary that Moses finally had to stop the giving.

... Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.

For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and *too much*.

Exodus 36:6,7

Begin to grasp your God-given right of giving. Act upon God's promise to return to you more than you give. If you will do so, there will come a day when the abundance of God will literally overtake you. You will have enough money to fulfill every desire to give to God, with plenty left over to meet your every need.

## Lesson 53

### Giving Unleashes Power in Your Life

When you give to God, your gift allows God the opportunity to bless you, to keep His promises, and to give you more than enough. By your faithful obedience in giving your tithes and offerings, you set into motion God's principles of biblical economics. Your precious gifts unleash God's power in several areas of your life.

1. Your gift will prosper you. God promises that when you are a giver, your gift will increase and multiply.

A gift ... whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth.

Proverbs 17:8

2. Your gift will provide you a place in life, and will bring you before great (godly) men in society.

A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.

Proverbs 18:16

3. Your gift will bring you friends.

... every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.

Proverbs 19:6

This does not advocate buying friends with your money. It simply means that your giving sets up a magnetism that draws others to you.

4. Your gift will stop anger.

A gift in secret pacifieth anger....

Proverbs 21:14

Just for fun, try this when someone is angry with you.

Send that person a secret gift and watch his anger calm down. Don't ask me how it works; I don't know. But it does work, for I have seen it do so again and again.

Do you understand what God intends to do to your life when you give? When you are a cheerful giver, God will bless you and give you back many blessings out of His abundance!

God cares about *you*, and He ministers to you in many areas when you unleash the biblical process of giving. Not only does He minister to you in the area of finances, He also ministers spiritually to you, and to those around

you. Being a great giver produces a positive, cooperative atmosphere all around you!

## Lesson 54

### Giving Will Spread the Gospel

You know that Moses was overwhelmed by the generosity of the Israelites and asked them to stop giving. They had literally given too much!

I believe that if Christians will grasp the principles of biblical economics in this book, and apply them in their daily lives, every church, every mission outreach, every Christian television ministry—and yes, every Christian home in our world—will be able to say, "Stop, Lord, we've got *too much!*"

Your faithfulness in giving to God's work guarantees that a day of abundant prosperity will eventually come to you, a time when the reapers will overtake the sowers. But no matter how long it takes the whole church world to come to that moment, you can begin right now to have more than enough by applying these principles and seeing their benefits materialize in your life before your very eyes.

That is not my promise; it is *God's* promise!

When you learn to act upon this promise, you can ask God how large your financial gift should be to a certain Christian television ministry, a strong missionary outreach, or to your own local church. Whatever God tells you to do, you will have the money to do it—when you catch this God-given vision!

Remember, giving is a *key* part of your Christian walk. It is not a separate, non-spiritual act of writing out a check. Giving your finances to God is a deep, personal interaction with God Himself, and is as much a part of your Christianity as your time of prayer.

So do not just give your money without thought or prayer. Ask God where you should direct your gifts, and even ask Him how much you should give. God has a definite plan for your finances, and He cares about your individual offerings.

Nearly 20 percent of all the verses in the Bible relate to finances, land, money, goods, cattle, personal belongings, and so on, so you can be sure God is concerned about your personal possessions and finances. He cares about every part of your life, and each part relates to your overall walk as a Christian.



Remember, giving will help spread the gospel.

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?

And how shall they preach, except they be sent?....

Romans 10:14,15

I believe there is an answer to this crucial question. They will be sent by those who have complete dominion over every aspect of their finances, those who have put God's plan of giving and receiving to work.

## Lesson 55

### Giving Brings a Harvest

Most Christians do not have an agricultural mentality. They read a book like this, get all excited, go to church on Sunday and give an offering to God, then wake up Monday morning complaining: "Hey, Brother John, I gave, but it didn't work."

The Bible says whatever you have planted will come up. You see, giving to God is like a farmer planting seed. The day after he plants, the farmer does not run out to his field and say, "It didn't work! It didn't work! My wheat seed didn't come up."

Today, many people function in an industrial mentality. Everything is instant. We have instant printing, instant mashed potatoes, and instant banking. But, the principles of biblical economics are based on farming, not industrial principles. God is not the great *spiritual slot machine* in the sky. You do not put in a hundred dollars and instantly get back a thousand. No, you plant a hundred dollars into God's work. You let that seed grow, mature, and develop so that "in due season" God will return to you many times what you have planted.

It takes faith and patience to bring these God-given principles to their fullest potential. You must regularly plant your seed. At first your sowing may look futile. However, there will come a day when the harvest will begin to come up in such abundance that you will have more than enough!

. . . in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Galatians 6:9

When you begin to receive the harvest, go ahead and eat some of the seed. Go ahead and buy a nice car or a new suit, or whatever you desire. Just be sure you save enough seed to plant again. Keep putting more money seeds into the gospel. Then God will return to you even more of His abundance in constantly increasing harvests so that you can finance His end-time work.

## Lesson 56

### Giving Always Prospers the Giver

By the world's principles of economics, when you give something away, you then have less. If you give away money or land or food, that leaves you with less of the thing you have given away.

But such is not the case according to God's principles of economics. He teaches that when you give something away it *always* ends up returning to you, *multiplied*. You cannot lose ground by giving to God.

According to God's principles of economics, when you give a gift, you release His energy into your own life to duplicate the gift in multiplied quantity. Gifts become very powerful forces that reach beyond the natural realm into the spirit realm. They increase, some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold.

*The world says* that giving a gift depletes wealth. *Logic says* that when a person gives something away, he no longer has it. But, *God's Word says* that a gift does not deplete a person's assets, it *increases* them!

The principles in God's Word teach that every gift you give becomes an invisible miracle force that draws right back to you more of whatever you have given away. That is a powerful concept.

Look again at this marvelous promise God makes to the giver.

Many will entreat the favor of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts.

Proverbs 19:6

When you give gifts, it shows that you are willing to meet the needs of others. The Bible teaches that because of your generous nature, you will have friends. Your gift will not "buy" their friendship, but your generous nature will supernaturally attract people who will have your well-being at heart. The dimension of this supernatural power will even reach into the camp of your enemies. When you obey God in every aspect of your life, which includes giving as He directs you, even your enemies will be caught up in a new attitude toward you.

When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Proverbs 16:7

Your gift is a natural key that unleashes a supernatural miracle-working force in your life. Giving always prospers you.

## **Lesson 57**

### **God's Giving Guarantee**

We have learned that giving releases supernatural miracle-working power in and through our lives.

Now I want you to realize that this entire process is completely guaranteed! It is a spiritual law, as powerful and as dependable as any natural law:

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 [measure] it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

So often, when the offering plate is passed in church, or a ministry asks for your support, a question goes through your mind: "I wonder if I can afford to give?"

Well, you are asking the wrong question. The question you should be asking yourself is: "Can I afford not to give?"

You see, God has guaranteed that a gift always comes back, in good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over. Whatever you sow you will reap.

That is certainly better than Wall Street can promise you! That's better than the interest at your local savings and loan! The Bible says that men will give into your bosom.

(Notice, it does not just say the saints will give to you; it simply says "men.") Today, there are more than 4.8 billion people in the world—that's how many instruments God has available to bless you.

That's God's promise. When you give to His work, you can trust God to give back to you.

Once again, this process of returning the gift to you is not just left to chance. It is a guaranteed rate of return: it comes back to you in the same

measure that you gave. If you give a thimbleful, you will get back many times that amount of blessing. If you give a teaspoonful, you will get back many times that amount of blessing. But, if you upgrade your gift and start giving by the shovelful, look out, because God must move up to shovels of blessings.

Do not be afraid if you want to move into the "big league" of giving. God has truckloads for those who give by the truckload. You see, He promises the same measure as you give. Give a little, and you will receive a little. Give a lot, and God will overwhelm you with His blessings in return.

But remember this—if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.

2 Corinthians 9:6 TLB

## Lesson 58

### Giving Brings Forth Abundance

You believed God for your salvation—and got it.

You believed God for your healing—and got it.

You believed God when you asked for the Holy Spirit —and got Him.

Now, surely, you can believe God in gift-giving. When you do, I believe you will see something similar to the time of Moses when the giving was so generous that Moses actually commanded:

... Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing.

For the stuff they had *was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.*

Exodus 36:6,7

Every mission outreach could have more than enough. Every Christian television program could have more than enough. Every church expansion program, every Sunday school auditorium, every Christian camp, could have more than enough. Every home in the world could have a Christian worker knocking at the door, inviting the family members to become children of God, and offering to meet their needs, no matter what they are.

What a miracle day that would be! But for it to happen, we who are being enlightened to the principles of biblical economics must press into dimensions of giving and receiving that will release such a floodtide of abundance into the gospel ministry that Satan's lie of insufficiency will be rendered powerless. As our brethren lay hold upon this truth in mass numbers, they can eliminate hunger, want, and insufficiency from our planet.

Our giving can usher in a new day of plenty in a new Kingdom of God here on earth.

All of Israel was involved in giving. That's why Moses had to command the people to stop. There simply was too much. Call us dreamers, if you must, but the truth of God in regard to abundance will come to pass. The reapers will overtake the sowers.

## **Section IX**

### **Four Kinds of Giving**



## Lesson 59

### The Tithe-Is It Still Necessary?

There is probably more confusion in the Body of Christ about tithing than any other type of giving. However, God is not the author of confusion, and His Word on the tithe is clear.

*Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.*

Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat [food] in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open [for] you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:8-10

If you are going to receive the optimum in your life, you must not overlook the basic building blocks of biblical prosperity. It is absolutely necessary for you to follow the biblical plan of tithing. To get the windows of heaven open, you must tithe. *Tithing is not an option.* The tithe is something you literally owe to God.

Please remember that these are not my thoughts. God says if we do not tithe, we are committing robbery. He says we owe Him the tithe. We pay the tithe *because God commands it*. By faithfully bringing the tithe to Him, we establish our basic honesty and obedience. (Leviticus 27:30-33 clearly says the tithe belongs to the Lord.)

If you don't tithe, God says you are a robber. So think about this. If you knew your next-door neighbor was a robber, you wouldn't leave your windows open. Instead, you would close and lock them to keep out the thief. The same is true of God. When we fail to tithe, we are stealing from Him, so He closes the *windows of financial blessing*.

In Hebrews 7:1-10, we see that Abraham paid tithes for himself before the dispensation of the law. He also paid them for Levi, who lived under the dispensation of the law. In fact, Abraham tithed for all posterity—for his natural children (seed), and for his spiritual children (seed) who now live in

the dispensation of grace.

And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Galatians 3:29

The obligation of tithing reaches across the pre-law dispensation, the dispensation of the law, and now, into the post-law dispensation of grace.

Remember, tithing opens the windows of heaven. Without the windows of heaven open, nothing can flow from God to us.

## Lesson 60

### Where to Give the Tithe

There is great controversy as to where Christians should give the tithe. Some say it should go to the local church. Others say Bible colleges should receive it. Still others want the tithe to go strictly for world evangelism.

The biblical answer is found in the third chapter of Malachi. There we see that the tithe goes into *the storehouse*. The context indicates that the storehouse is the place where the *meat* (the Word of God) is kept and supplied to the saints.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

Malachi 3:10

Where are you being fed the Word of God? That is the question you must answer to determine where to give your tithe. The place you are being spiritually fed should be your local church, and above every other place, that is where you should tithe.

The truth is, there are not enough local churches reaching into every level of society to make this a hard and fast rule. Many saints are sick or otherwise unable to journey to church. They may receive their spiritual meat from a Christian television or radio program, or a good ministry to shut-ins. Surely these circumstances are an exception to the general rule that the tithe should go to the local church.

Some may not agree, but I must be faithful to the convictions God gives me from His Word. I understand the necessity for the tithe to go into a good local church, because for over twenty-five years I served as a pastor. I instructed my congregation that if they were receiving their spiritual meat from the church storehouse, that is where their tithe belonged. Never did I have any trouble with any reasonable saint of God failing to tithe. I found the best way to insure the tithe would come to our church was to be sure it was always full of good, strong meat (the Word of God, rightly divided).

Notice another aspect of Malachi 3:10. God says to tithe and "prove me."

God is literally challenging us to put Him to the test in this matter of tithing. He wants the windows of heaven to be open in our lives. I know of no other place in Scripture where God so clearly challenges us to test Him and His Word.

*God wants to bless us*, but He cannot do it through closed windows! Let's keep putting God to the test by consistently tithing, and we will see the windows of heaven open in our lives.

Remember, the tithe goes where you receive your spiritual meat on a consistent basis. For most people, it is your local church. However, if you attend a church that doesn't preach the entire Word of God, go before the Lord and ask Him to lead you to one near you that will faithfully feed you the meat of His Word.

## Lesson 61

### Can There Be Prosperity Without the Tithe?

God wants to build an end-time temple, a holy habitation not made with hands. To do this He must have an end-time army of special saints to accomplish His vision. This truth came to me by revelation after years of studying the Bible. It is totally based upon Scripture. God will give the responsibility of building His great end-time dwelling place to those who have proved themselves faithful in financial matters.

When King Josiah commissioned workers for the restoration of the temple, he gave the work to those craftsmen who had already proved themselves *faithful in their financial transactions*.

And let them deliver it into the hand of the doers of the work . . . to repair the breaches of the house, unto carpenters, and builders, and masons, and to buy timber and hewn stone to repair the house.

Howbeit *there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, because they dealt faithfully*.

2 Kings 22:5-7

God did not choose these men for the labor because they had *promised* to be faithful. He chose them because they had already *proved themselves faithful*. When it came time for King Josiah to choose who would work in the great restoration of the temple, God told the king to select these men because they had an established record of *dealing faithfully in their finances*. God uses people who are faithful in their finances, and tithing is part of that faithfulness.

Many times people have said to me, "Brother John, when I get a large sum of money (such as an inheritance, sweepstakes, or windfall from some get-rich-quick scheme), I will become a faithful tither to the Lord."

That's not God's way! God *requires* that we first be faithful in the little matters, right in the midst of our current circumstances. Then He will grant us an abundance. It was true in the Old and New Testaments, and it's true today. Read what the ruler said to his faithful servant in the Parable of the Talents.

His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; *thou hast been faithful over a few things*,

*I will make thee ruler over many things:* enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Matthew 25:23

Remember what Jesus said to His disciples about faithfulness.

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

Luke 16:10

If you want to be a part of the next big move of God, don't just get your finances in order temporarily. Keep them in order from now on, and be faithful.

Moreover it is required [not just desired] in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2

## Lesson 62

### What Is an Offering?

By now you probably know that an offering is different from a tithe. The tithe is clearly 10 percent of what you have earned, an amount set by God. It is a non-negotiable obligation you owe Him.

An offering is a different matter. An offering is not a specified amount. It is totally discretionary on our part, an amount we give freely to God. The amount of our offering establishes the measure, or rate by which God will bless us and increase our substance.

...For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38

An offering is anything you give over and above your tithe. You are not generous in the eyes of God when you tithe. Tithing is simply evidence of honesty and obedience. It is paying God what you owe Him. However, when you hear the voice of God leading you to give beyond your tithe, that is an offering. It is a *freewill love gift to your God*.

You can give offerings to help finance your local church, a missionary, or any Christian outreach. Many ministries in the Kingdom of God survive solely on the freewill offerings of God's prosperous people. In many cases, offerings are God's way of meeting their needs.

Remember, your tithe only opens the windows of heaven. God begins to pour out His blessings when you give generous offerings. Your offerings determine the

measure God will use to give back to you. Through your tithes and offerings, you will move into a dynamic new realm, working with God, ministering to the needs of a hurting and needy world.

And they went forth, and preached every where, *the Lord working with them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Mark 16:20

## Lesson 63

### The Hidden Blessing of Giving to World Missions

If you seriously search the Word of God, you will discover there is a spiritual gift of giving. That spiritual gift has many different manifestations. One is the releasing of the tithe. Another is the giving of an offering. In this lesson, we will talk about giving to world missions.

God gives a *special type of blessing* to those who support world missions. Read this key verse in its context.

Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia [on a mission journey], no church communicated [shared] with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only,

For even in Thessalonica [one of the mission fields] ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.

*But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:15-17,19

Well-meaning Christians usually quote that last verse out of context. They claim Philippians 4:19 because it sounds desirable, but read the entire passage. The promise is for an exclusive group of people. The context shows God will supply all the needs of those who do what the Philippians did, give to world missions.

Also notice that Paul did not say God would supply all their needs *out of* His riches in glory. He stated clearly that God would supply their needs *according to* His riches in glory. The words *according to* speak of blessing in the same *quality* (not quantity) as God's own riches in glory.

God has provided a way for us to have both abundance and quality. Don't allow evil imaginations to arise in your mind and find fault with that statement. Remember that our Lord Jesus freely gave the *best wine* to His friends at the marriage supper. He also approved of the woman anointing Him with *costly oil*. When He was crucified, the soldiers cast lots for His coat because it was a quality garment. In the first chapter of the Book of



Revelation, Jesus stands among the golden candlesticks wearing *a girdle of solid gold*.

God will supply the needs of those who support world missions *in accordance with His riches in glory!*

## Lesson 64

### Scriptural Giving to Your Teacher

Most Christians receive instruction from at least one special teacher who is vital to their Christian lives. It could be your pastor, an evangelist, a prophet, or someone like me who teaches about biblical economics.

The Bible says if we are receiving a blessing from a teacher, we should share good things with that teacher.

Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto [share with] him that teacheth in all good things.

Galatians 6:6

This verse says we should share our good things with those who teach us God's Word. I'm not bringing this up because I desire a gift from you. Like the Apostle Paul, I desire fruit that will abound to your account. I am teaching this concept because *it is the truth*. Only when you know the truth can you be set free.

What a great plan it is! The Lord gives us anointed teachers to bring us His wonderful Word. After we learn the Word, we benefit and prosper from it. Then we share some of our prosperity with our teachers to help meet their needs and fulfill God's Word which says **"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn"** (Deuteronomy 25:4). God has decreed that our teachers should eat freely from the harvest they plant in our spirits.

When you give to your teacher, you unleash God's prosperity even more powerfully in your own life. You give the Heavenly Father yet another avenue through which He can bless you. What a wonderful, ever-increasing cycle of blessing! Now look at the very next line of that scripture.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

As you sow a blessing *to* your teacher, you will reap a blessing *from* your teacher by growing into an even deeper understanding of God's Word. Bless those who teach you, and God promises He will bless you in return.

## Lesson 65

### Removing the Veil From Malachi 3:10

Over the years I have heard many Christians make a statement something like this: "Brother John, I have been faithfully tithing now for over ten years, and frankly, I have never, even once, received a blessing so great that there was not room enough to receive it!"

They are talking about God's promise in Malachi 3:10 which says, **"... prove me now herewith ... if I will not ... pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it.*"**

There are seven words in this text which are written in italics in the *King James Version*. It is common knowledge that all italicized words in the *King James Version* have been added to the original text by the translators to help clarify the meaning. You should be able to leave the italicized words out, and still understand the meaning of the verse. However, that is not true in this case. Here is one of the few big errors in the translation. In my opinion, the seven words in italics actually add a meaning that God did not intend. The passage should properly read **"... and pour you out a blessing, *that not enough.*"**<sup>[1](#)</sup>

It's not enough only to tithe. After tithing, we must give offerings to establish the rate of return through those open windows. Our offerings are critical because they determine how much we will receive back from God.

... For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38

Remember, your tithe opens the windows of heaven, but that's not enough. You must also give offerings. Your offerings establish the measure God will use to give back to you through the open windows.

## **Section X**

### **The Abundance of God**

## Lesson 66

### Creation in Abundance

We serve an abundant God. His creation proves it. He created abundant water, land, mountains, animals, plants, trees, insects, and much more. It only makes sense that He would desire for our lives to abound, too. The Word of God agrees.

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly *above all that we ask or think*, according to *the power that worketh in us*,

Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Ephesians 3:20,21

These scriptures contain three critical points. First, God not only wants to give us more than we can ask. He clearly states that He wants to give us more than we can even think! It is difficult enough to understand God giving us more than we can ask; but according to this verse, we can stretch our imagination as far as it will go, and we will still come short of God's desire for us.

Second, God wants to give us this unlimited blessing “... **according to the power that worketh in us.**” His promises will operate through us only to the degree that we allow His *power* to operate in us. Our relationship with God is critical. We must be totally submissive to His will in our lives if we are to break into the wonderful realm of *above all we can ask or think*.

Third, we see the true purpose of this abundance. Contrary to the beliefs of many Christians, God intends abundance for us so that we will not be hindered from bringing glory to Him. Remember, this realm of *more than we can ask or think* belongs to those who seek His glory, not their own.

You cannot effectively penetrate your community for God from a position of poverty. However, when you walk in the abundance of God and go beyond simply meeting your own needs, you can do some powerful and wonderful things for the Kingdom of God. You can more easily further God's plan when you don't have to worry about such basic needs as rent, groceries, utilities, and car payments. In the realm of *all you can ask or think*, you will have enough resources available for all the ministries God lays on your heart.

*God wants to give you more than you can ask, more than you can think, because His plan for you is infinitely greater than you can ask or imagine!* Most Christians can't think in this realm, for the devil has crippled their divine imagination with thoughts of impossibility and insufficiency.

By faith, you can now break out of insufficiency thinking, and God will open new visions of abundance that exceed anything you can imagine. He wants you to flourish in His abundance so that you will have more than enough to finance the end-time harvest.

## Lesson 67

### Walking in Abundance

You have already taken *the first step* toward walking in abundance, for you know it is what God intends for His children.

Once you *know* God desires abundance for you, you are ready to take the *second step*. Right now, form an effective *giving and receiving covenant* with God. Pray this prayer out loud to the Lord:

*Dear Lord, I sincerely desire to give an ever-increasing portion of wealth to you for the financing of your great end-time harvest. Today, I solemnly pledge to become more involved in the spreading of the gospel by sowing money into the Kingdom of God. I will begin by giving \$\_\_\_\_\_ (weekly, monthly) into your work, in addition to the tithe.*

*Beginning today, by faith, I am planting these money-seeds to start your flow of abundance in my life. I promise that as you multiply a money harvest back to me, I will always reinvest a generous portion into the gospel.*

*Thank you, Lord, for revealing these principles of biblical economics to me. I am now determined to unleash these bold, new principles into my own life. I thank you now for your abundance which this positive action on my part will bring to pass soon. Amen.*

Now take the critical *third step*. Exercise the covenant. Not only must you *know* God's principles of biblical economics, and *make a covenant* with God, you *must faithfully exercise* the covenant; you must now put these principles to work.

Begin giving today, and God will begin blessing and returning to you larger and larger amounts of wealth to liberally reinvest into the gospel ministry.

Give, and it shall be given unto you....

Luke 6:38

Give to your local church, Christian television, or those ministries God puts on your heart. Always remember that your increase does not come from the specific ministry to which you give. You are really giving to God, and He has no limit on the ways He will choose to give funds back to you.

## Lesson 68

### Prosperity in Abundance

God's thoughts are not our thoughts. In the natural realm, the proper way to achieve abundance is to keep all the wealth we can, carefully tucking it away in a safe place and drawing a moderate rate of interest. We believe it will gradually grow into even more wealth. However, that's not God's plan for the greatest increase in wealth.

In God's Word, we read we must first give away that which we want to accumulate. If you desire abundance in finances, you must give away a part of your finances. Paul wrote about this principle.

Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning *giving and receiving*, but ye only.

For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

Not because I desire a gift: but I *desire fruit [finances] that may abound to your account*.

Philippians 4:15-17

To have prosperity in abundance, you must first begin to give, creating a new, life-giving flow to your finances. Stagnant finances cannot draw new money to you. Remember, Paul said giving *and* receiving are interrelated and interdependent upon each other. By now you are beginning to realize the true meaning of the following passage.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:8,9

Unfortunately, even with this clear disclosure of God's viewpoint, most Christians are not thinking the thoughts of God about money. For so long we have heard it is wrong to seek prosperity. But those ideas did not come from God. In Scripture, He plainly declares:

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto



thy fathers, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 8:18

If God did not desire for you to have abundance, He would not have given you the power to get wealth. If God did not want you to prosper, the Apostle John would not have prayed this prayer.

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 2

## Lesson 69

### Abound in Faithfulness

A faithful man shall abound with blessings....

Proverbs 28:20

If you want to become faithful, you must first promise to be faithful to something. You see, not until you make a promise and keep it have you proved yourself to be faithful.

Think back to the giving and receiving covenant you made with God. You promised to begin planting a specific amount of money into the gospel. Now as you faithfully keep that promise, God will consider you to be a faithful person, and He will cause you to begin abounding with ever-increasing blessings.

Traditionally we have been led to believe that God promises only *spiritual blessings*, and not financial or material blessings. The context of the following verse shows clearly that the blessings of faithful men are material and financial.

He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain persons shall have poverty enough.

Proverbs 28:19

There is no question that God wants us to have spiritual blessings. But He also desires that we have plenty of bread, a symbol of our material needs. He is not just interested in spiritual blessings. He also talks about basic needs and desires.

When God speaks of abounding in blessings, the context of this verse indicates that He is talking about more than spiritual benefits. He is referring to bread for the table, a car for transportation, a home for shelter, and finances to reach a lost and dying world.

Notice that those who are not faithful, who follow after vain persons, or operate a futile plan, shall be poor. However, if you are *faithful* in keeping your promises to God, He will be faithful in keeping His promises to you. Remember, in Luke 6:38 He said if you give, it will be given back to you in greater abundance. That is God's promise for the faithful man or woman.

Be faithful in your pledges to God. Give as much as you promised, and

even more, and give it when you said you would. As you obey this principle of biblical economics, God will be faithful to His promises and abundantly bless you.

## Lesson 70

### Poverty Is Not Godly

You may be living in poverty or great need right now. You may be in a financial wilderness, and it must break your heart to read page after page about the abounding prosperity God intends for you.

I don't want to hurt you with this message, and neither does God. He wants you to abound. So let's look at a situation of deep poverty that was changed forever by the same truths I have been teaching you in this book.

The Macedonian church was in *deep, deep poverty*. They were so poor that when they put together a financial gift for the gospel ministry, they had to beg the Apostle Paul to receive it.

They begged us to take the money so they could share in the joy of helping the Christians in Jerusalem.

2 Corinthians 8:4 TLB

Because the Macedonians understood the principles of biblical economics, they prospered so much that their testimony was used to encourage other churches to give. This pattern takes place throughout God's Word. Remember the example of the widow of Zarephath in 1 Kings 17. She was in deep poverty until she cast off fear and gave to God's prophet. When she gave of her food, she became a prosperous woman, with more than enough to meet her own needs.

If poverty were God's will for His children, He would not bring them out of their circumstances. If it were godly to be poor, God would not have given the widow of Zarephath so much that she and her household **"... did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not [was not used up], neither did the cruse of oil fail..."** (1 Kings 17:15,16).

If you do not have enough money to eat or meet your daily needs, then by all means, follow the principles of biblical economics that the widow of Zarephath and the church at Macedonia followed.

The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

Proverbs 11:25

Remember, God can change your poverty to prosperity, even when you

are down to your last few crumbs. He did it in Bible days, and He is willing to do it for you today.

## Lesson 71

### Giving in Abundance

You may consider yourself a generous giver. You may be faithful with your tithe, and even give generous offerings when prompted by a well-presented need, or moved upon by the Holy Spirit.

Now I want you to enter a whole new dimension of giving and receiving. I want you to experience a bold, new realm, far beyond what now seems substantial to you.

Your *giving horizon*—the highest, greatest, most blessed experience of giving and receiving you can imagine—is merely the starting point. A whole new giving experience is beginning to take form in your spirit today.

Satan is trying to keep you from rising above your current level of giving. He wants to keep you in a low level of awareness, far short of what God intends for you, and far short of what you desire to attain. Now is the strategic time to make up your mind you are going to think some bold, new thoughts and make some financial breakthroughs.

When I was going to Bible college, once a month I went down to the government welfare office in Springfield, Missouri, and got my box of surplus commodity cheese, canned meat, and rolled oats. The first thing I ate was the cheese. Then I ate the canned meat. Finally, for the last twenty-eight days of the month, I ate rolled oats.

One day I realized most folks ate better food than I did. They were simply living on another economic level, a financially superior level, right there in the same town. Then I realized that I could live on a higher level too.

Once you fully realize the new level of abundance God has planned for you, you can rise out of your current dimension and reach a far more prosperous level. No matter where you are now, it is time to move into a new dimension of giving. God has a divine plan for your life, and you can be sure it isn't a cheap, second-class plan. Begin now to prayerfully elevate your thoughts and finances to a new dimension, asking God to guide you into a new level of plenty. God wants you to go from glory to glory (level to level) in your finances, so you can consistently increase the amount you give to preach His gospel throughout the world.

## Lesson 72

### The Cost of Living in Heaven

How much do you think it will cost to live in heaven for one year? Will you have to buy food? Is rent expensive there? Will there be any doctor bills? Of course not! Everyone knows there will be no need for money in heaven. Money will have no purpose in heaven. Obviously, material blessings will become completely worthless once we enter the pearly gates.

Let me ask you a more serious question. Why does the Bible speak of an increase in our money and material wealth? Why does the Bible talk about prosperity at all? Surely God knows money, wealth, and prosperity have to do with activity going on right now on this earth. Prosperity, money, and wealth are for this realm.

Listen carefully to the words of Jesus as He promises an increase of goods beyond our wildest dreams, not after we get to heaven, but right here and now.

... There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

But he shall receive *an hundredfold now in this time*, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands ... and in the world to come eternal life.

Mark 10:29,30

Houses and lands will have no value in eternity. The only time a new house will mean anything to you is *now in this time*. Such things have no worth in heaven.

Yes, God is deeply concerned about your spiritual blessings, but He is also vitally concerned about your material blessings *now, in this life*.

## Lesson 73

### God Is the Author of Abundance

God wants you to abound, and it is *His blessings* that enable you to accumulate wealth. Here is a *key principle* in biblical economics.

The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.

Proverbs 10:22

God is the author of your abundance. In the Scripture, He has laid down a firm foundational plan to teach you how to become rich without sorrows. Keep in mind that these are God's words, not mine.

Why has God given us this clear plan for increasing in wealth? Surely it is not just so we can buy a nice home or drive a new car, although God is not opposed to these things.

*God's basic desire for us is that we grow beyond simply being blessed, and become a blessing to others.*

The Book of Romans tells us that giving is a spiritual gift. Giving liberally to finance the end-time harvest will bless people in precisely the same way as prophecy, teaching, exhortation, or even speaking in tongues.

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

... he that giveth, let him do it with [liberality]....

Romans 12:6,8

We continually hear about the gift of prophecy, the gift of teaching, the gift of exhortation. When was the last time you heard a sermon on the gift of giving? But there it is, in black and white, in the twelfth chapter of Romans.

Virtually every great work of God has to have a *faithful group of supporters* behind it, people who *minister with their finances*. You will need more than enough if you are going to have a ministry of giving. That is why God is the author of abundance. *His blessing* can make you rich without sorrow.

Remember, the only way out of poverty, want, shortage, and insufficiency is generous giving. Whatever you give to God, He will always give back to you.

Be faithful over a little, and God will give you a lot to be faithful over. If



you exercise faithfulness and patience, eventually you will find yourself in the *ministry of finance*, and you will become a banker for God.

## **Section XI**

### **Who Is Behind Poverty**

## **Lesson 74**

### **The Source of Poverty**

Many people believe poverty and prosperity are both matters of birth or luck. They believe some people are meant to be poor and others are meant to be rich. By now you know that is not what the Word of God says.

God has established certain principles of economics that govern who will be rich and who will be poor, and He will not violate His own laws. If we follow the principles that lead to poverty, we will be poor. We all play an important part in determining our own financial situations.

Satan does his part, too. He will lie to us in every imaginable way to keep us poor. He will tell us myths about money. He will say that money is evil or that money will corrupt you. He might even suggest that it is godly to be poor or that you will become even poorer if you give to God.

You see, poverty is a partnership. The devil wants us to be poor, and he will lie to us to keep us from following the biblical principles that will result in wealth. Poverty is a joint venture between us, Satan, and our ignorance of God's Word.

God's law of prosperity says if you are a liberal giver, your money will increase.

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

Proverbs 11:24,25

The God-kind of prosperity is based upon giving. When you operate God's law in your life, you will begin to experience ever-increasing abundance.

## Lesson 75

### Satan Exposed and Deposed

Satan is a thief. He is a deceptive, calculating plunderer. If left unchecked, he will move in and out of your life at his own discretion, trying to find ways to rob and defraud you.

He has stolen finances from many of the saints by convincing them that poverty is godly, and prosperity is evil.

His lies have kept us crippled, ineffective, and impotent long enough! Satan has stolen from many Christians the quality of life God intended for all His saints.

Establish this principle clearly in your mind. God wants you to be prosperous, and the devil wants you to be poor. God has given you the biblical principles of economics to achieve prosperity, and Satan tells lies to keep you poor. Prosperity is a *material state*, but it is attained through a *spiritual battle*!

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Ephesians 6:12

Please realize that this lesson covers a very important issue. You see, if you do not learn how to stop the devil's robberies in your life, no matter how much you seek to prosper, you will make no real progress toward abundance.

It is time we expose the devil for the father of lies that he is (John 8:44)! It is time we depose him from his position as ruler of the darkness of this world. The devil has used his lies about money to destroy good relationships, break up families, and even split churches. But, the money wasn't evil. It was Satan's lies about money that were evil!

It is time to serve notice on the devil! He has deceived us long enough. For too long he has "ripped off our possessions and indiscriminately robbed the saints of God, literally diminishing our quality of life.

It is time to take a stand.

## Lesson 76

### Recognizing Your Prosperity Heritage

Prosperity is a part of our *heavenly heritage*. It comes with being a child of the King!

You have the ability to take back what the devil has stolen. You can claim a significant portion of the riches of this world and use them to finance the final, end-time harvest before the return of Jesus!

This passage of Scripture puts into proper perspective our position in this spiritual battle and highlights our spiritual heritage better than any other.

Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Luke 10:19

God has given us power over the enemy, and by now you know that poverty is clearly one of the tools the enemy has used to keep us weak and ineffective. But we have the power to overcome poverty. It is part of our prosperity heritage as sons and daughters of the Most High God.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.

Hebrews 2:14

Look at that carefully: the devil *had* the power, but today he is defeated. Jesus wiped out the devil's power. He can no longer keep you poor. Now God is calling you to be a great giver and to participate in every aspect of the endtime harvest.

As strange as it may seem, you are now beginning to see that this wonderful truth about abundance is not just an impossible dream; it is a reality that is happening to you. You are possessing a new prosperity mentality. You are walking out of the door of financial impossibilities and crossing the threshold of unlimited financial possibilities through the power of God!

God has given you authority over the enemy. Your Heavenly Father wants you to abound in all good things.

## Lesson 77

### Reclaiming Your Lost Treasures

Think of how much more prosperous you would be right now if you could only reclaim the treasures you have previously lost.

You may have stepped out in faith to be a missionary, only to lose your house and property in the process.

Maybe you have gone through a painful divorce and lost everything.

Perhaps you have been the victim of alcoholism or drugs, and have been fired from your job, or even lost your home and family.

Maybe you loaned someone some money, and have not been repaid.

Perhaps the lawyer or accountant you trusted proved to be dishonest.

God, in His loving concern for you, and as part of the prosperity process, has provided you with a spiritual way to reclaim those lost treasures. God demands double restitution!

If a man shall deliver unto his neighbor money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house, if the thief be found, let him pay double.

Exodus 22:7

Now I know you are probably thinking: "Brother John, that's all well and good, but I have no idea where that crooked attorney is anymore. He has left the state, and no one knows where he went."

Don't worry. You must focus on the true culprit behind these robberies, no matter what you lost. The thief is not the dishonest lawyer, the divorce, the liquor, or the drugs. The engineer of the robbery is Satan himself. He works in and through the children of disobedience, unsaved men and women.

Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the *spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*.

Ephesians 2:2

The devil is the *true thief*; he is the one who takes what belongs to us, whether it is our health, our wealth, our happiness, our job, or any other of our possessions. But the Bible says if *we find the thief*, and accuse him, he must *repay* double what he has stolen!

My friend, you and I have found the thief—Satan himself. We are not

wrestling with flesh and blood lawyers, bankers, real estate agents, or any other person or group of people; we are wrestling with Satan and his host of demon forces.

The next move is up to us. God is waiting for His people to take up the *arms* He has already provided us, the *weapons of our spiritual warfare*, and take back everything the devil has stolen from us.

## Lesson 78

### Take the Thief to Court

Behind every evil activity on this earth there is a single mastermind, Satan. He is behind all the troubles, riots, wars, crimes, murders and thefts that have taken place in the past, and all the evil things which are *still* happening today!

When you name the true villain in your spiritual warfare, and take him to God's heavenly court, you can begin to benefit from God's system of retribution and restoration in your life.

Peter knew how to see past flesh and blood and go right to the source of the problem. In Acts 5:1-11, we have the example of Ananias and his wife, Sapphira. Together, they secretly devised a plot to gain prestige among their Christian brothers and sisters. They decided they could get the same recognition Barnabas received when he gave the total selling price of a piece of land to the work of God. However, they thought they could deceive Peter and keep a portion of the money for themselves.

Peter saw through this lying deception and "laid the ax to the root of the tree" by confronting the *real liar*.

But Peter said, Ananias, why hath *Satan* filled thine heart to lie... ?

Acts 5:3

Peter knew the real culprit was Satan. He boldly took him to the heavenly courtroom of God. As a result, both Ananias and Sapphira received immediate judgment for allowing the enemy of God to operate through them.

Remember, the devil is the root of all sin (lies, theft, hatred, deception, etc.), but Jesus is the root of all righteousness. Your environment is not able to keep you from prospering when you follow God's laws of biblical economics.

If you are in poverty, it is not because of some chance of birth, education, ethnic origin, or whatever you may think is holding you back. Your battle and problems are with the devil and with yourself. If God has given you the power to get wealth, then it logically follows that Satan will try to bring you to poverty.

To begin now to live a prosperous life, start challenging the real thief, the



devil. Accuse him in God's heavenly court. Demand your goods back. Rebuke Satan. Expel him from your thinking patterns; think only on the things God says in His Word concerning you and your prosperity.

Be strong-handed when dealing with the devil. Poverty cannot live in you when you destroy its root causes.

## **Section XII**

### **Seven Important Steps to Prosperity**

## Lesson 79

### Step 1—Give Expecting to Receive

God gave His greatest gift with full expectation of receiving something in return. He gave His precious Son, because He knew He would receive sons and daughters.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

By now you understand that *giving is the first step* toward God's abundance in your life. You cannot achieve prosperity just by *knowing you must give*. You must actually do some giving, and expect to receive something in return.

I hope you have already planted a liberal field of money seed in the name of Jesus. Now expect to reap a money harvest from each and every seed you planted.

Remember, you reap what you sow. If you sow peach seeds, you will reap peaches. If you sow (give) money, you will reap a money harvest.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

If you have believed God's Word and planted money seed, *keep on believing God's Word*. The Bible clearly states you will reap if you don't give up.

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Galatians 6:9

Isn't that wonderful? You can give, expecting a harvest. While you are waiting for your first harvest, you can be planting even more money seed toward your second harvest. Think of it! You can have a perpetual harvest if you have faith for perpetual planting!

Remember, God's Word guarantees that you will reap what you sow. So give, expecting a return.

## Lesson 80

### Step 2—Bank on God's Promises

Every day we hear various commercial banks waging economic war with their competitors. They try to offer us something that will convince us to deposit our money in their bank. Some offer higher interest rates on savings accounts. Others offer checking accounts with no service charges. They sometimes even offer free gifts, just to lure us into investing our funds in their institution.

But God offers us the best banking program ever. Read the generous return He gives for your investments.

But remember this—if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.

God is able to make it up to you by *giving you everything you need and more*, so that there will *not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over to give joyfully to others*.

It is as the Scriptures say: "The godly man gives generously to the poor. His good deeds will be an honor to him forever."

For God, who gives seed to the farmer to plant, and later on, good crops to harvest and eat, *will give you more and more seed to plant and will make it grow so that you can give away more and more fruit from your harvest*.

*Yes, God will give you much so that you can give away much....*

2 Corinthians 9:63-11 TLB

Now that you are putting your money in God's bank, you can expect to receive God's promises which assure you of the provision of everything you need and more.

You literally cannot give away too much money when you give in the name of the Lord. Each time you give an offering, God will return it to you multiplied. Just as an earthly banker knows the world's secrets of abundance, you can literally *bank on God* and His promises. He will see that you have abundant treasures in heaven and on the earth, even more than enough!

## Lesson 81

### Step 3—Choose Faith Over Fear

The only way the devil can stop you from receiving your God-ordained portion of wealth is by getting you to accept his lies about your ability to break through into abundance. He will try to make you so afraid of failure, you will give up your newfound liberty in giving. Satan will desperately attempt to convince you that giving is foolish.

Don't be confused about the origin of fear; it does not come from God.

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of *power*, and of *love*, and of a *sound mind*.

2 Timothy 1:7

God does not want you to operate in fear, but in *power*. Remember, *God gives you power to get wealth!*

But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee *power* to get wealth....

Deuteronomy 8:18

God's way to counteract Satan's lies about your finances is to have you *walk in faith*. Faith and fear cannot operate together. Neither can faith and doubt. They work against each other and bring about instability and failure.

James tells us "**A doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways**" (James 1:8). Reject fear. Reject doubt. Use each step of faith as a way of destroying Satan's attempts to bring poverty into your life. Faith will always conquer fear.

Remember, as you become faithful in your finances, you begin to draw a double reward to yourself.

1. You begin to prosper in the financial realm.
2. You position yourself to receive the true riches of God (spiritual power and authority).

If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

Luke 16:11

You can now see that through your faith in God's promises, and your faithful stewardship walk, you will become like the workers in the temple

who could be trusted with finances.

Howbeit there was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand, *because they dealt faithfully.*

**2 Kings 22:7**

## Lesson 82

### Step 4—Tithe and Give Offerings

Surely by now you are faithfully tithing and giving offerings, because you know God expects it.

You are tithing to open the windows of heaven.

You are giving offerings so that God will pour out a blessing through the open windows, a blessing God will measure back to you with the same measure you have used in giving to Him.

Tithing and giving offerings are necessary before you will make the major spiritual breakthrough you desire in your finances. Both of these actions trigger different sets of promises from God. Those promises come to you with God's strong desire to see them accomplished.

For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

2 Corinthians 1:20

If you meet His conditions, God will deliver everything He has promised for your life. His promises, combined with your faithful giving, will become the basis for your financial prosperity.

Your tithes and offerings will release God's abundance into your life from His heavenly storehouse. So continue faithfully to tithe and give offerings to the Lord. *Stand in faith*, confidently expecting God's promises to be fulfilled in your life.

If you don't see a sudden increase in your income, don't let it change your plans. Even if you have to stay on a tight budget for awhile, don't let your circumstances make a difference in your giving. In time you will no longer live in a financial wilderness. Your desert will bloom like a beautiful garden.

It won't happen because I say so. It will happen because the Word of God says so.

## **Lesson 83**

### **Step 5—Plant Your Seed to Glorify God**

The principles of biblical economics are now firmly rooted in your mind and hopefully in your actions. The Lord's method of sowing comes against most of the world's thinking. The world teaches:

1. Get all you can. (Get every penny you can.)
2. Can all you get. (Save every penny you get.)
3. Sit on the can. (Never spend any of your money.)

In other words, the world leads you to get all the money you can and hold onto it. However, God has a different way.

There is [he] that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is [he] that withholdeth more than is meet [fitting], but it tendeth to poverty.

The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

Proverbs 11:24,25

You have planted your seeds with a cheerful attitude and a good heart in order to glorify God. Now you can expect an abundant harvest. Because you have been generous in your seed planting, God guarantees that you will prosper (be made fat with goods, watered and blessed). That is His promise to you.

When the devil starts to feed you his lies of fear and pending shortage, remember to cast down the evil imaginations. Stand on the promises of God. You have seen them repeated again and again in this book. Repetition is good for you, because God created your mind to learn things precept upon precept, line upon line.

We live in a constant barrage of false precepts every day of our lives. While we might not clearly recognize them as lies, their effect on our subconscious minds is strong. In this book, I have given time to God's truth.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:7

If you will now begin to sow your financial crop, you will soon be reaping an ever-increasing harvest. Then you will have everything you need,



with plenty left over to finance God's end-time harvest.

God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more, so that there will not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over to give joyfully to others.

2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

## Lesson 84

### Step 6—Reap Your Harvest

The circumstances in your life may not show any sudden improvement. Your finances may still be short. Your bills may still be difficult to pay. You may not yet have such abundance that your every need and desire is fulfilled, but keep standing on God's Word.

The devil will probably tell you some lies about your promised harvest. He may say something like, "You gave that big offering last week, and you still don't have anything. All this giving stuff is just a big rip-off."

Stop thinking that way! Learn to recognize the devil's lies and cast them out of your mind. Don't give attention to anything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. These fear tactics are the only thing the devil can use to stop your pending financial harvest.

If you gave according to God's Word, *you will reap* a harvest. As surely as God's Word is the truth, your harvest is already beginning to grow.

Remember, the Word of God guarantees your harvest. You can trust God, knowing He will provide the harvest He has promised you. Sow your seed in faith, and trust the God of Faith to deliver to you an abundant harvest.

## **Lesson 85**

### **Step 7—Always Replant From Every Harvest**

As your financial harvest begins to manifest itself, be sure you identify it. Don't begin to think that your job or your material investments are your source. Keep your eyes open. Watch for God's blessings.

Suddenly your business may start doing great, or your boss may give you an unexpected raise, or your investments may begin to make more money.

Part of your continuing success depends upon your recognition that God is your source. God is the one who supplies everything you need. With every upward advance in your finances, learn to thank the Lord. Recognize your increase as part of the blessing you are receiving for giving. Give honor to God for the abundant harvest you are beginning to receive.

When you recognize the source of your every blessing, you will see your need to take the next step. Now you must replant some of your increase into the Kingdom of God toward the next harvest.

As long as you remember who your source is, you will never forget to plant more seed from your abundance. Continue to tithe and give offerings from *all the income* you receive. Keep planting from every harvest. Remember, if you want to harvest regularly, you must plant regularly.

## **POWERFUL PRINCIPLES of INCREASE**

*Are you tired of being continuously short of the finances you need to fully and completely obey God?*

*Would you like to begin to operate in a bold new cycle of abundance with God?*

*Do you want to have a part in financing the great end-time harvest?*

*Powerful Principles of Increase* is a series of lessons designed to help you experience the financial breakthrough you have been desiring. Some of the lessons include:

How You Can Reap in a Recession

10 Truths About Money Five Major Mistakes About Money The Abundance of God God—The Greatest Giver Five Kinds of Giving

Learn how you can experience God's abundance and be a blessing to others.

*We are on the home stretch. God is looking for a people—a whole new breed—who will become partners with Him! These are people God can trust with wealth—people who are good stewards through whom He can establish His covenant,*

*His Kingdom!*

*In this exciting book by John Avanzini, we have key after key spelled out from the Word of God showing us we can take the resources of this world and use them to establish Gods Kingdom! Let's read them and then do them in Jesus<sup>9</sup> name!*

**PAUL F. CROUCH**

Trinity Broadcasting Network, Inc.

<sup>1</sup> None of the following versions of the Bible translate Malachi 3:10 as saying God will pour out a blessing so great that there shall not be room enough to receive it: *The Berkeley Version, The Jerusalem Bible, the Douay Version, The New English Bible, Ferrar Fenton's Version.*