

Living In the Surplus

The Key to Financial Freedom
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Unless otherwise identified, Scripture quotations are from the AV version of the Bible. Other versions used include: The Living Bible (TBL) Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1975; The Amplified Bible (AMP) La Habra, CA: Zondervan Corporation and Lockman Foundation, 1987.

INTRODUCTION

They are not printing any more Bibles. Oh, for sure they are printing, more copies, new translations, and reprints, but everything that the Scriptures have to say on this matter has been said. We have nothing to add to what has already been revealed, and we can't take anything from it. God's word is forever settled in the Bible.

We have all that God is saying to us on any given matter, all He felt He needed to say, and all He feels we need to know for the present." For we know in part," and the part He has given us to know is sufficient for now.

Don't expect anything extra-Biblical in these writings.
And don't allow the traditions of men or movements to mould your thinking or influence your decisions.

Be courageous and strong as you act upon the truth, then watch it start to set you free as it works in your life

NUMBERS 23:19-20.

"God is not a man that He should lie: neither the son of man that He should repent: hath He said and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken and shall He not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless and He hath blessed and I cannot reverse it."

Many times Jesus said, "Let him that hath an ear to hear listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying."

He is not talking to people who are deaf but to people who have ears. He is saying listen, pay attention to what I am saying. Why? Because my words are life and peace, they are health and prosperity. May God help us during this time we have together to hear Him speaking to our hearts?

TITHES AND OFFERINGS

God's method for financing His Kingdom on earth under the old covenant was through Tithing, and to a much lesser extent Offerings. (When we speak of offerings we are not referring to the sacrificial offerings of Leviticus).

THERE ARE TWO SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT WITH REGARD TO TITHING:

1. We are obligated to tithe on our income plus make offerings.
2. That tithing is not applicable under the new covenant.

Let us now have a look at the following.

If somebody believes he is obligated to do something and doesn't do it, to him it is sin James 4:17. In other words if you believe that you are under an obligation to tithe as many do, then you are morally bound to obey. Unquestionably there are multitudes of Christians who can testify of God's provision and blessing as they faithfully tithed their income. We believe them when they say God honoured their obedience and faith about what they believed. We tithed as believers for many years and can verify that God honoured what we did in obedience to our convictions.

Yet we also know that many live under condemnation because they have been taught that if they don't tithe they are disobedient and God won't bless them. In recent years, many no longer accept they are obligated to pay tithes, and here are some of their reasons.

Before I do I wish to go on record and say that when we were under the burden of tithing we never gave to the Lord anywhere near as much as we regularly do now. Perhaps 10% is a good yardstick to begin with, but stewardship of all we have is the acceptable method for New Testament believers!

We have no doubt about our responsibilities to give, and perhaps 10% is a good yardstick, but as for tithing being incumbent upon New Testament believers in the view of a growing number of Christians this is simply not true.

The survival of expansionary church programs is very much dependent on committed tithers. In many churches anybody who does not tithe is considered to be an uncommitted member.

Many churches keep financial records. In the USA this is a common practice. It is not uncommon nowadays to find an automatic teller machine in the foyer of the church that the members are encouraged use. The preferred method in some churches is to have the tithes and offerings of members paid by direct debit.

Throughout the Old Testament God's tender mercy towards the weak and poor is evident as seen in Deuteronomy 14:29. It seems clear beyond contradiction that God instituted the storehouse mentioned in these verses for the provision of the unfortunate.

God's heart has always been thus inclined. Jesus continually crystallized this concept amongst those who would listen, driving home a fact that is self-evident beyond all argument that, "As you've done this to the least of my brethren you've done it unto me."

It's totally inaccurate to say Malachi 3:8-10 upholds the claim that Christians not supporting their church institution with 10% of their income and more are robbing God. That interpretation is totally incorrect, and will not stand up to true scriptural investigation. Any church that claims the law of tithing is still enforceable, and then uses those tithes contrary to that law, is under the curse of that law. This chapter is addressing the oppression of four classes of people by the rulers. The hireling of his wages, the widows, the fatherless and the strangers who were all suffering because of the people's hard-heartedness. However it is only reasonable that if you attend a church, and accept the benefits of that institution, then you have a moral obligation to support it.

One can't help but conclude, that any church that does not support the poor and destitute consistently and generously, but demands the tithe to consume on their building programs, is in flagrant violation of the first tenant of pure religion, which is to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction. Jesus said this kind of religion is in vain. James 1:26.

NEW TESTAMENT GIVING.

The giving of alms has an unfamiliar ring about it. To many the word sounds quite alien when spoken, it induces mental images of beggars in dirty streets, soiled bandages and poverty. And yet alms were seen as an expression of mercy, pity and love, given by the fortunate to the unfortunate as worship to God during the New Testament times.

Jesus himself taught us how to give alms before he taught us to pray. (Matthew 6:1) Jesus, in his rebuke of the hypocritical Pharisees, advised them to give alms 'as you are able' before deriding their practice of tithing (Luke 11: 41-42).

In the following chapter Jesus goes further, telling those who would seek the kingdom to "sell all that you have and give alms." This is not a ritualistic, law-bound tenet, but a dynamic form of worship wholly acceptable to a merciful God. The very nature of alms transcends Christian boundaries. It seems to be written on the heart of any man who earnestly seeks his creator's countenance that in providing for the destitute, he's serving his God.

Cornelius we're told was a devout man, one that feared God, giving much alms to the people and praying to God always. In response to his devotion the Lord appeared to him saying, "thy prayers and thine alms are came up for a memorial before God".

Cornelius was a gentile and as such was barred from the Jewish place of worship. And yet his devotion led him to pray and to give alms. Acts 10:2.

In the previous chapter Tabitha, a disciple, was described favourably as a women "full of good works and alms deeds". Paul himself confessed to giving alms (Acts 24:17).

In fact, the teaching of alms giving is one of the most concise and scriptural attested practices of the New Testament. Yet, when was the last time you were exhorted to give alms?

SUMMARY:

The New Testament church was a body of believers that came together regularly. The meetings occurred spontaneously within the houses of the believers, therefore, no precedent was established to indicate how a latter-day, asset-orientated, church infrastructure was to support itself. Faith offerings are fine but somewhat unreliable, and erratic. An institution that has consistent and regulated expenditure requires a constant and reliable source of income.

Therefore tithing has become the “cash-cow” that financially dependent institutions rely on heavily. This is not a comment on the validity of the structure itself but the means by which it supports itself. The point is that any church that cannot stay afloat without demanding tithes of its members as a right for its support should go out of business.

We are stewards of our possessions and all that we acquire from our lawful employment. And it is essential that a steward should be faithful. The Lord should always direct our giving, with special consideration to the less fortunate. Not forgetting that the workman is worthy of his hire.

MATTHEW 25:45 “In as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these brethren ye did it not to me. Depart from me ye cursed.”

If this asset rich church continues to invest tithes and offerings in buildings, carpets, padded seats and parking lots, while our brothers and sisters in third world countries sit in the dirt worshipping Christ with empty stomachs, then we that will be cursed. The apostles never taught tithing but giving with a willing heart and cheerful attitude. 2 Corinthians 8:8; it is not an order, or commandment but an exhortation. “And if the eagerness to give is present then it is according to what anyone has, not to what one doesn’t have.”

It was never the apostles intention that people be burdened. Legalism has no place in the Christian assembly. He that gives to the poor shall not lack; but he that hides his eyes shall have many a curse. Proverbs 28:27.

The apostles never threatened the people with consequences for their failure to tithe.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:13-14.

“For it is not intended that other people be eased and relieved of their responsibility and you be burdened and suffer unfairly, but to have equality, share and share alike,

YOUR SURPLUS OVER NECESSITY at the present time going to meet their want, and to equalize the difference created by it, so that at another time their surplus in turn may be given to supply your want. Thus there may be equality.”

“As it is written he who gathered much had nothing over, and he who gathered little did not lack.” Exodus 16:18.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:14-15. We are encouraged to give and then “only” over and above our necessity.

It is sad to hear preachers telling people to pay their tithes first, and to tithe on their gross wages, and if they don't have enough for their necessities, then trust God. In the light of these scriptures there is a growing number who used to tithe but don't any longer. They believe that if they did tithe; that is, if they gave money to aid and abet programs they'd be robbing their children as well as the needy. They are also of the opinion that revival will tarry as long as we continue to pay credence to error while truth suffers side by side with millions of starving people. It has been clearly shown that the tithe teaching in the majority of structured churches is purely for the benefit of the organization and the men that support the structure.

MUZZLE NOT THE OX

Grain in the East is usually threshed by spreading the sheaves out on a floor, over which oxen and cattle are driven back and forth until the grain is trodden out. Moses ordained that the ox was not to be muzzled while threshing. It was to be allowed to eat both the grain and the straw. Deuteronomy 25:4.

We are not saying it is wrong to receive financial support, but our service should be gratuitous and free from expectation. It is clear that scripture plainly teaches for the believers to give as God gives, liberally and freely. And that it is right for those who labour in the Gospel to be supported from the offerings of the people to whom they minister. If we follow the pattern of the Apostle Paul, he supported himself and others throughout his ministry by tent making, yet he gladly accepted on occasions was given to him.

Five times Paul mentions he laboured with his hands. Acts 18:3; 20:34; 1 Cor 4:12; 2 Cor 9:8-9; 2 Thess 5:8 not only for himself but also for those that travelled with him Acts 20:34. But in Galatians 6:6 Paul plainly states that those that are taught in the word have an obligation to communicate, and distribute material support to those that minister.

PHILIPPIANS 4:14-19.

“Notwithstanding ye have well done, to communicate with my affliction. Now 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 that may abound to your account. But I have all and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things, which you sent a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God. (I have all: or, I have received all) But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

They received offerings from only one church during the entire first two missionary journeys. Modern missionaries are reluctant to go anywhere without guarantees.

FEAST OR FAMINE

Is Financial Freedom a myth? Or are we just tormenting ourselves by even considering such a possibility? Yet the prospect of being financially free and secure certainly excites the emotions, but then other thoughts begin to come thick and fast.

Does God want me to be free from all the pressures that inadequate finances generate?

Could He trust me with enough to meet my daily needs?

Could I be trusted with a surplus after meeting all my needs?

Is it His will that I should be debt free?

These questions arise whenever God's attitude and ours with regard to financial freedom are raised.

Let us take courage in this book to take a close look at the answers the Bible has concerning these questions.

We are going to endeavour by God's grace, to put aside our prejudice as we examine the infallible Word of God, and arrive at the only conclusion possible; that poverty is a curse, and the borrower is always servant to the lender. Like His people of old, God has delivered us from out of the house of bondage. Freed us from slavery and servitude to the oppressor, and released us from the hand of one that was stronger than us, that we might be free to serve Him and Him only.

LUKE 4:18.

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor. He hath sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and the recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised."

Bondage means to be enslaved; to be trodden down. I do not know of anything that causes more concern, heartache, and desperation; or that is more depressing, destructive, demoralizing and devastating, than continued financial pressure. According to statistics in western society it is one of the chief reasons for marriages failing. In addition it can bring on deep depression leading to severe illness, driving desperate people to suicide.

In the very first commandment given by God to Moses He reminded Israel that He had brought them out of the house of bondage (Exodus 20:2).

MALACHI 3:10. "Prove Me now herewith saith the Lord."

God is the God of the now, He always was; He always will be. He is the "I AM," and He wants us to prove Him now, not later, not at some other time in some other place. "Herewith" is the word of the Holy Spirit.

Research in the natural can be a costly undertaking. It requires sophisticated equipment, and in this technological age and society special training is necessary.

How we all rejoice when we hear of a break-through in a particular field of endeavour, because of the benefit it will bring to mankind. Yet in the spiritual realm, we have all that's necessary to do some serious research the results of which would benefit our lives and life-styles immeasurably. But sad to say, so few have bothered to take the opportunity. God's promises present to us the most wonderful opportunity ever offered to mankind to be blessed and be a blessing. I dare you to put Him to the test.

I KINGS 18:21. Elijah challenged Israel of Old, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If God be God then follow Him, if Baal be God then follows Him."

You cannot sit on the fence. You will live your life on one side of it or the other. You can't have it both ways. You will either go God's way, or your own.

PROVERBS 1:31. "We have eaten the fruit of going our own way."

This has always been man's basic problem, going his own way, and it has left a bitter taste in his mouth. If you want to change your life-style, change your thinking. May Joshua's response be our response?

JOSHUA 24:14,15.

"As for me and my house we will serve the Lord."

Not, we should serve the Lord, or we might, or we could, or that we intend to at some later date, but to serve Him here and now.

YOU WILL OR YOU WON'T.

YOU DO OR YOU DON'T.

IT'S NOT THAT YOU CAN'T.

CITIZENS OF ANOTHER KINGDOM.

We have a new vocabulary.

A language, which is immutable, and unchangeable.

An economy with spiritual overtones.

A new currency, and medium of exchange.

NEHEMIAH 13:23-24.

"In those days also saw I Jews that had married wives of Ashdod, of Ammon, and of Moab, and could not speak in the Jews' language but according to the language of each people. And I contended with them, and cursed them, and smote certain of them, and plucked off their hair."

It takes more than just preaching about it, or teaching it, or studying it. It takes you and me living by Kingdom principles, and flowing with its laws so we can enjoy its benefits. This is why so many Christians are miserable and in debt. They have come into the Kingdom and have not learned to live by its body of law.

If you don't live by the rules of the Kingdom don't blame God if you're unhappy.

When you live in one jurisdiction, and try to live by the rules of another you'll end up in prison. In Mexico where Napoleonic Law applies you must learn to abide by it. If you went from England to the United States of America, and tried to live by British Law you would be in serious trouble. If you drove your car on the left-hand side of the road, you would probably end up in hospital. It would be no use complaining about the country saying, "what a terrible place

this is." The country is not the problem, but the way you live in it is.

The same applies to the Kingdom of God, people who live by its laws are blessed, happy, to be envied, successful and prosperous. The laws are precise, constant, and immutable. They apply to everyone, no matter who they are. In other words they are universal.

MATTHEW 6:10. "Thy Kingdom come."

COLOSSIANS 1:13.

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of His dear son".

When we were born again, Paul tells us we were translated "out of" one, and "into" another Kingdom. Whereas once we were subjects of the kingdom of darkness, and bound by the power of sin, we have now been delivered, and more than just delivered "out of", but we have been translated "into" another Kingdom, namely God's. Now through our Lord Jesus Christ, we have become subjects of a new King, and subject to a new set of laws.

This Kingdom is mentioned 130 times in the Scriptures. More often even than the Church, which is referred to 115 times.

The Kingdom is the realm God rules over. It encompasses everything that was, that is, or ever will be, including the universe, time and the reaches of space.

JOHN 1:3. "All things were made by Him and without Him was not anything made that was made".

Therefore, because He made everything, then everything is subject to Him. When we came into this Kingdom we came into a whole new set of standards. These standards are foreign to this world and to our old way of life. We are citizens of another Kingdom.

To become naturalized citizens of the country of their adoption, candidates must swear allegiance to its laws. The blood of Christ has made us who were once foreigners and strangers, citizens of a heavenly country. But if we are to enjoy the blessings and benefits of our new citizenship, we are going to have to understand its laws and learn to flow with them.

When a dispute goes to trial lawyers are usually engaged by each party to present their case for judgment in accordance with the law. If you attempted to defend yourself you would run the risk of being held in contempt. There are procedures that must be followed.

You only get splinters when you go against the grain. Professions such as medicine and law have their own procedures and language. You must be competent in your particular field. You would be a menace if you tried to treat a patient, or defend a client in a court of law if you weren't qualified to do so. It's the same in the Kingdom of God.

PSALMS 89:34.

"My covenant will I not break nor alter the thing that has gone out of my mouth."

I KINGS 8:56. "There hath not failed one word of all His good promise."

The failure of God to keep any of His promises in the Bible has never been recorded, nor will it ever be. He will always be faithful to keep His word, and fulfil His promises to all who meet the conditions laid down therein. This much is certain God can be relied upon.

2 CORINTHIANS 1:20.

"For all the promises of God are yea, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God by us."

JOSHUA 21:45.

"There failed not ought of any good thing that the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel, all came to pass."

JOSHUA 23:14.

"And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth, and ye know that in all your hearts, and in all your souls that not one thing hath failed of all the good things that the Lord your God spake concerning you, and not one thing hath failed thereof."

Time, space, or circumstances do not effect universal truth. It applies to all in every situation, and will be just as valid tomorrow as it was the day it was first uttered. Now let's begin to look at the laws on this vital issue that effects us all, namely, financial freedom, prosperity, and the power to create wealth.

DEUTERONOMY 8:18.

"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 swear unto thy fathers as it is this day."

God gives power to get wealth. It's not sinful in itself. It's the abuse of wealth contrary to the laws of God that constitutes sin.

FIVE AREAS THAT AFFECT OUR LIVES

1. MORAL OR SPIRITUAL HEALTH

2. PHYSICAL HEALTH.

3. MENTAL HEALTH.

4. SOCIAL HEALTH.

5. FINANCIAL HEALTH.

God wants to lead us into spiritual, physical, mental, social, and financial wellbeing. His desire is to prosper us in all these areas.

PROVERBS 3:6.

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths."

Don't always be running to, the Minister, the Doctor, the Banker or the Counsellor; but run instead to the Lord.

PROVERBS 8:34.

"Blessed is the man that heareth Me, watching daily at My gates, waiting at the posts of My doors."

FROM THE MOST IMPORTANT THING SPIRITUAL.

TO THE LESS IMPORTANT FINANCIAL.

Notice I did not say unimportant, but less important.

SPIRITUAL PROSPERITY

Let's take these five areas one at a time, and instead of using the word 'health'; let us substitute it with the words, prosperity and wealth. Wealth means anything of value.

Our relationship with God is not an emotional one, or an intellectual one, but rather a moral one. It's right that we should feel great, and begin to have an understanding of things we never had before. Nevertheless, it's our sins that separated us from God.

I CORINTHIANS 1:20,21.

"Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

I CORINTHIANS 3:19.

"For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

Moral means "holiness of life". It has to do with everything that's compromising, not just what we call moral or immoral. This includes truth and integrity, not just expedience, but having a conscience void of offence towards God and man. Spirituality and morality does not mean prudishness. It means wholeness, being a whole person, someone who has got it all together.

Jesus is just that. He has it all together. He is wholly as well as holy, and He wants to help you and me to be the same.

MATTHEW 16:26.

"For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

LUKE 12:18.

"This will I do: I will pull down by barns, and build greater, and there will I bestow all my fruits and goods. And I will say to my

soul, soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?"

Most of us are afraid that if we go God's way its going to interfere with our plans and we will be the worse for it, but this is the lie of the enemy, because the opposite is true.

Watching a baptismal service a man was heard to make this comment, "The only thing that is stopping me is my fear of getting wet." What's stopping you?

In every one of these areas, the world says the Bible's instructions are absurd.

I CORINTHIANS 2:14,15. "But the natural man receives not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man."

PHYSICAL PROSPERITY:

This is the second area that greatly affects the lives of us all. The options for people who do not know the Lord as their Saviour are limited to the power of medicine and the ability of men.

We are grateful for the efforts of doctors, and nursing staff who help to alleviate suffering, and pain, with modern wonder drugs that carry the fight against disease. However, above all we are thankful for the marvellous work of the Atonement, and the provision God has made through divine healing, not faith healing but divine healing.

MATTHEW 8:17. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet saying, Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."

I PETER 2:24.

"Who His own self bare our sins upon the tree, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed."

The incident I am about to relate took place during a conference held by a well-known evangelical group who were unsympathetic to the message of divine healing. After the meeting was thrown open for questions a 15-year-old high school student (the son of a minister friend of mine) posed this question to the chairman. "Does Calvary cover the curse?" immediately the chairman found himself in a dilemma. Because if he says no then Christ's sacrifice was insufficient, and did not fully atone for the fall. But if he says yes, then divine healing must be included. Choosing not to answer the question he dismissed the young man and suggested that such questions be left to the adults.

MENTAL PROSPERITY:

Next we have this most important aspect, "peace of mind".

JOHN 14:27.

"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Someone once said that the only thing Jesus left behind when He returned to the Father was His peace.

Peace means the war is over; it's the cessation of hostilities.

ROMANS 8:6.

"To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

ROMANS 5:1. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Information precedes transformation. If you want to change your life-style, change your theology. Your theology is either a bridge or a barrier to God. It will be a stumbling block or a stepping-stone to the fulfilment of your dreams.

A man's theology determines his life-style.

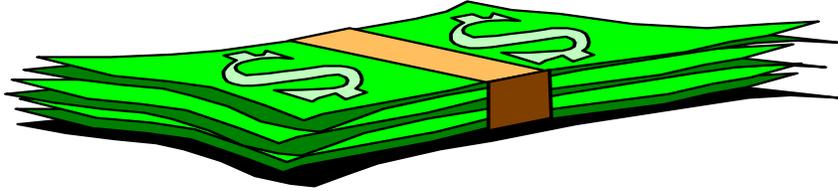
ROMANS 12:2. "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed. by the renewing of your mind."

ACTS 10:38. "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and power, who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him."

The cares of this world are a real killer. You're not what you think you are, but what you think you really are.

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7.

"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."



SOCIAL PROSPERITY: Social prosperity starts in the home. The home can either be a place of love, provision and protection, or a battleground. Finances play a major role in this arena.

PSALM 127:1. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it."

This Psalm has been called the builders Psalm with good reason. No nation is any stronger than its homes. This entire Psalm deals with relationships and the blessings of a God-centred home. The words happy and reward are used in this connection.

God always starts with a personal experience and then moves on from that point.

I CORINTHIANS 3:11.

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus."

The strongest rope known to man is a three-fold cord; a three stranded rope. Christ is the third strand in every successful union.

FINANCIAL PROSPERITY:

Last but not the least in order of importance is material wealth. The world exalts it as the highest level of prosperity and tries to get you and I to believe that also, yet it cannot buy the other four.

It can buy some things, such as medicine, clothes, food, cars and houses. But it can't buy peace of mind and heart, or physical health, or salvation. It can't buy a good marriage, or restore relationships. In fact, the prosperity of this world is hollow and empty.

Why are we reading this material or attending this seminar?

I might have said finance is the least important but I didn't say it's unimportant, because there are too many things in life you can't achieve without it.

As a nation we spend 85% of our annual income on ourselves, save 12% (for retirement) and give 3%. Hence, most of our wealth doesn't have the blessing of God on it, but rather the reverse.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

If you inherited a large sum of money such as \$100,000, how would you spend it?

Just take a minute to think about it.

Would you ask God what to do?

Would you give to a needy widow? the fatherless?

Would you give for the furtherance of the Kingdom of God?

Would you pay off your home?

Would you buy yourself a new car?

Would you put it all in the bank?

If you answered the first three in the affirmative, do you do it now?
And if not, why?

I CORINTHIANS 4:2. "Moreover it is essential in a steward that he be found faithful."

LUKE 16:12. "If you have not been faithful in that which is another man's who shall give you that which is your own?"

God reminds us in Corinthians that we must prove that we are trustworthy.

WHO SAYS MONEY IS NOT IMPORTANT?

Money is a medium of exchange. We need it to purchase the necessities of life, and conduct business in this world of ours. We exchange it for goods and services. Our whole economy revolves around money, so it plays a large part in our lives.

The woman in the parable of Luke 15 is seen searching the house for a lost coin. Why, because as long as the coin is lost, it has no purchasing power. It has to be circulating to be of benefit. The church in many ways has lost its power to purchase the faith and resources necessary to propagate the Gospel Rev 3:18.

Jesus said in Luke 18:8: "When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth." He will certainly find a lot of churches in debt, but will He find faith?

The greatest challenge the church faces today apart from sanctification is not salvation, divine healing, or the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It's the financial freedom of its members.

It's an economic crisis we face. Some say money is dirty but how can that be? Money is amoral. It won't bite you, kick you, or hate you. It can't of itself injure you in the least. What money does to you is not the problem; it's your attitude to money that makes it a blessing or a curse. Money takes on the character of the user. With it you can bless people or destroy them. You can use it to support a mission for the extension the Kingdom of God, or pay the price of a harlot. It's how you use it that makes it a blessing or a scourge; but of itself it is harmless.

So you still say it doesn't mean that much to you. Have you ever been hungry without the price of a piece of bread? Or had an emergency arise that was a matter of life or death. You may have needed to visit a dying relative or a sick member of your family

living in another part of the country and never had the money to buy an airline ticket to get there. If you had you wouldn't talk like that. If you have ever faced an emergency without money, you would know how necessary it is. No matter how sympathetic the airline official maybe, he will not give you a free ride.

The lack of money has turned millions into beggars. Make no mistake about it, money is important. Have you ever had a need you couldn't meet because you didn't have the money? If money is really not that important to you then why don't you give it all away? Or at least give a little more than you do? Whenever money is mentioned there are some people who always get upset.

LUKE 16:14. "And the Pharisees also who were (money lovers) covetous heard all these things: and they derided Him."

Many teachers are afraid to mention it for fear of the reaction they feel they will surely get from certain elements in the congregation. (The covetous however are always on about it for all the wrong reasons). Yet Jesus talked about material things more than He talked about faith, (24 times), prayer (8 times), Hell (14 times), or Heaven. We believe all the aforementioned are important and yet we continue to ignore this major element, which plays such an important role in our lives.

Gospel means "good news," and it has some good things to say about material things and our relationship to them.

Half of all the parables, and one verse in every seven in the Gospels refer to our stewardship in the material realm; Why? Because God knew what an immensely important part these things would play in our lives.

IN HIS IMAGE AND HIS LIKENESS

There's an instinctive urge in the hearts of all men that makes them want to succeed and prosper. Why is this so? It is because we were made in the image and likeness of our Creator.

God is successful. He is prosperous. It's His nature to be so. Peter tells us we have been made partakers of the Divine nature. Prosperity is a Divine idea.

The Devil has come to rob, kill and destroy prosperity. Poverty is part of the curse of sin. Christ has become a curse for us. We need to come out from under the curse.

Thank God there's coming a time when Satan will be bound, and life and prosperity will replace poverty, sin and death. But we don't have to wait; we can enjoy the blessing of the atonement now.

Jesus never condemned riches, but rather commended those who traded their talents wisely. A talent is not ability, but a scale for the measurement of goods and money in the Bible.

I CORINTHIANS 16:2.

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as **God has prospered him.**"

Yes God prospered him, not the Devil, but God. He wants to prosper us so that we may use it to bless mankind.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY PROSPERITY?

True prosperity is the ability to be able to meet your own needs, and have sufficient left over to help to meet the needs of those around you using God's power and resources. Those needs may be spiritual, physical, mental, social or material. God wants us to be part of the answer and not just part of the problem. We all had problem areas in our lives before we came to Christ; but we no longer need these problems to remain and control our lives.

It's not necessary to be financially prosperous to be a Christian, nor is it necessary to be a Christian to be financially prosperous. But it is necessary to be a Christian for total prosperity. There's only one-way to keep your prosperity and enjoy it, and that's to serve God and obey Him.

PROVERBS 30:8-9.

"Feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be full and deny Thee and say, who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor and steal and take the name of my God in vain."

The above is really a selfish prayer. You need more than just enough to get by on. Jesus said, "if someone has a need don't just pray for them, give them what they need." You have to be living in the surplus to do that.

I JOHN 3:17-18.

"Whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children let us not love in word,

neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

You will have nothing to give, if you don't have something left over. God's intention for us is to live in the surplus.

You will never have enough, until you have enough to give.

EPHESIANS 4:28.

"Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour with hands the thing which is good that he may have to give to him that is in need"

To have to give, and to have to distribute, not just to lend but to give away.

That means you must have surplus to your own requirements to be able to do it, that's true prosperity.

And until you have enough to give you'll never have enough.

ROMANS 12:13.

"Distributing to the necessity of the saints."

NEGLIGENCE OR DISOBEDIENCE?

MATTHEW 13:24-25.

"Another parable put He forth unto them saying, the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his fields: but while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way."

The world, the flesh and the Devil are — the foe without — the foe within — the foe above; that's an impressive list without adding to it. Many wounds are self-inflicted. We need to eliminate the obvious. Negligence because of ignorance has played a major role in our lives. We have been influenced by the traditional viewpoint: that money is evil, blessed are the poor, and wealth is ungodly. There's nothing blessed about being poor; poverty is a curse. Being so very rich Himself, God made quite a few friends of His rich as well.

PROVERBS 26:2.

"So the curse causeless will not come."

Don't expect your ship to come in if you never sent one out.

EPHESIANS 4:28.

"Let him that stole steal no more."

If it's negligence because of ignorance, remember negligence is still a crime. Often our disobedience is not so much wilful, as it is fearful. It takes faith to give things away expecting no return. Every act of giving is an act of faith.

Fear stops people from giving.

It means we have believed a lie; we have listened to the liar. "Hath God said?" is always the enemy's tactic. To slander the word is his method. The bottom line is, either God is a liar or He is a supplier.

IS MATERIAL WEALTH EVIL?

Are riches a blessing from God or a trap from Satan? This most important question needs to be addressed and answered.

Are material wealth, financial gain, prosperity and success evil? If they are, then what does that make God? For He made a covenant with our fathers, that they would possess heaven and earth, and possess the gates of their enemies.

DEUTERONOMY 28:1-14.

Sets forth the blessings of God upon an obedient people.

Vs. 15-68 tell us of the fruit of disobedience.

The New Jerusalem has in its foundations every precious stone:
The gates are made of pearls, and streets of gold.

HAGGAI 2:8.

"The silver is mine and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts."

These are things of great value in our society.

PSALMS 24:1.

"The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."

In fact, God owns everything and has the right to give it to whomever He pleases. God made many men rich that He associated with.

GENESIS 13:2.

"And Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold."

Abraham the friend of God was very rich. David a man after God's own heart gave millions (taken from his enemies) to build God a house.

We have seen what God did for Job after the Devil stripped him of all that he had, and that was to give him back twice as much as he ever had. Satan is the personification of all evil; D-"evil".

His tactic is to keep us ignorant.

Legalism in Religion can be just as cruel and heartless.

GALATIANS 4:1.

"Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child differs nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all."

If you think education is expensive then try ignorance.

EPHESIANS 6:10.

"Put on the whole armour of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil."

The Devil doesn't want you to prosper because he knows that you will give to the Gospel.

Ignorance is not bliss. It can be devastating.

WHAT GOD HAS TO SAY ON PROSPERITY

ROMANS 8:32.

"He that spare not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

When God gave His Son for us, He gave us the very best that He had. He that never withheld his dear Son will hardly withhold things from us. If your heart's desire is in tune with His, you can rest assured your request will be granted.

PSALM 35:27.

"Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour My righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servants."

“Pleasure in the prosperity of His saints”! Think of it; God gets a kick out of our prosperity, not our poverty.

MATTHEW 7:11.

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him."

Give good things...things...things.

We have a Father, a good Father that loves to give good things to His children.

PSALM 23:1.

"The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want."

PSALM 34:10.

"The young lions may lack and suffer hunger but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing."

Shall not want. That sounds like living in the surplus. To have no want is to live without lack.

The doctrine of no want is one of the clearest in God's word.

PSALM 84:11-12.

"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. O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusted in Thee."

PROVERBS 22:4.

"By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, honour and life." These three things are the most sought after in life. But God and God alone is the author and source of each one. "All these things the Gentiles (sinners) seek after." Most men seek for them in the wrong place.

PROVERBS 10:22.

"The blessing of the Lord, it makes rich, and He adds no sorrow with it."

But the blessing of the Lord brings no sorrow with it.

DEUTERONOMY 28:2.

"And all these blessings shall come upon thee and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God."

Vs. 11-12.

"And the Lord shall made thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow."

That was the old covenant; we live under the new covenant, one that has been established upon better promises.

PROVERBS 8:20-21.

"I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment: that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures."

Think of it! I just don't want to become an heir I am that already. What I would like is to have some of my inheritance here and now; that's exactly what God wants for me too.

Many times we are like the elder son in Luke 15:31: "Son, everything I have is yours." He looked upon his father as someone who was mean, and did not want him to have anything, yet all he had to do was ask.

He could have had a ring, a robe, a fatted calf, and shoes on his feet whenever he wished, but his conclusions about his father robbed him of that which rightfully belonged to him.

God has given us richly, all things to enjoy.

3 JOHN 2.

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

LET'S DEBUNK SOME MYTHS

Let's deal with some of the arguments used by many well meaning but ignorant people to discredit biblical prosperity.

I TIMOTHY 6:9-10.

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and many snares and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

The love of money, which some coveted after.
The question here is a question of covetousness.

Money is not evil or wicked: Nor is it the root of all evil. It's your attitude towards money; it's that and that alone, which makes it a blessing or a curse.

The shekel of Egypt became the shekel of the sanctuary.

PSALM 10:3.

"The covetous whom the Lord abhorreth." (covetousness always leads to immorality).

LUKE 16:13.

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

This is a popular verse used by antagonists.

One day when I was praying, this verse came to mind and while I was thinking about it and agreeing that it was so, suddenly the Spirit of the Lord said to me, "Yes, that is true son, but you can serve God with mammon."

JAMES 1:16-17.

"Do not err my beloved brethren, every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Good gifts come from God; bad things come from the Devil.

Poverty is bad.

Satan is the one stealing your possessions.

The only power Satan has over you is what you give him.

MARK 4:18-19.

"And these are they which are sown among thorns, such as hear the Word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in choke the Word and it becomes unfruitful."

Riches are deceitful, because they offer false security. God and God alone is our security.

ECCLESIASTES 5:10.

"He that loves silver shall not be satisfied with silver, nor he that loves abundance with increase: this is also vanity."

God's words laws and statues are more to be desired than gold, than much fine gold, that's absolutely true. Yet, nowhere has God told us that we can only have one or the other, but on the contrary both are available

MATTHEW 6:33.

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

The key to the things we need to sustain our lives and to fulfil the various tasks He has called us to do, is to seek His righteousness; that is, to be born again having not our own righteousness, but His. Then as we walk in integrity we can expect God to bless our lives.

PROVERBS 8:17-18.

"I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honour are with me, yea durable riches and righteousness."

Riches and honour are partners with wisdom, which is God.

Earthly riches are not durable. Money certainly isn't, its value diminishes. Given time, interest inflation and recession eat it all up. But spiritual riches never depreciate and are ever durable. But once again, we are not asked to forego one in order to have the other.

GENESIS 24:35.

"And the Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great, and He hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels and Asses."

Who gave all this wealth to Abraham? God did, yes He did, and there can be no argument about that.

God blessed Abraham's obedience after he left his country, his home, and his father's house him. As Abraham's seed we can expect the same response for our obedience to God as Abraham did.

THE BLESSING OF OBEDIENCE

PSALM 37:25.

"I have not seen the righteous forsaken or His seed begging bread."

2 CHRONICLES 26:5.

"As long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."

2 CHRONICLES 20:20.

"Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established, believe His prophets so shall ye prosper."

Moses was a prophet. His writings are full of the promises of God to the obedient.

The prophet Isaiah said in 1:9; "If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land."

JOB 36:11.

"If they obey and serve Him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures."

Yes, it's conditional, to obeying, serving, and seeking.

It really is a matter of you and me getting our priorities in order.

GOD.

YOURSELF.

SPOUSE.

CHILDREN.

EMPLOYMENT.

SELF-ESTEEM

For all the thousands that say God can, very few say He will do it for me. Grace is the unmerited favour of God. We need to understand that He is more than willing to get involved on our behalf. We all know He is able, and if He wants to He can, but herein lies the problem:

Is God willing to use His ability on my behalf? Am I willing to let Him? We labour under such dreadful self-image. We have a malfunction of memory. We tend to remember the things we should forget, and forget the things we should remember.

ROMANS 5:8. "But God commended His love toward us, that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

We had nothing to commend us; it was all grace.

COLOSSIANS 2:13. "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all your trespasses."

PSALM 130:3. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities O Lord, who shall stand?"

If God gave us what we deserved, He would shoot the lot of us.

Vs. 4-5. "But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait and in His Word do I hope."

Grace is God giving you what you can never earn and don't deserve. God has used His ability on our behalf through Christ our Lord.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:9. "For ye know the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor that you through His poverty might become rich."

Think of it, might become rich. Let that sink in.

Not everyone "will be" but if the challenge to financial freedom made possible by the grace of God is accepted, they can be.

JOHN 3:16. Says, "should not perish." Not everyone will be saved just because Jesus came, He must be received personally. The same choice applies here.

SUBSTITUTION

Substitute, according to the dictionary means "a person or thing that acts or stands in the place of another." We have a substitute, Jesus Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21.

"For He made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

I CORINTHIANS 1:30.

"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."
"In Him", that's the key.

ISAIAH 53:5.

"The chastisement of our peace was upon Him."
He became all these things; He was not always like that. He stripped Himself of every glory that He had and for "your sakes" the scripture says, "He became." He became that we might become.

HE BECAME SIN.

HE BECAME SICK

HE BECAME POOR.

THAT WE MIGHT BECOME RICH.

Some claim this refers to spiritual riches, but Jesus was never spiritually poor. He healed all that came to Him. He raised the dead, calmed the sea, fed the multitudes; even demons cried out in His presence. He was equal to every situation on all occasions until the time came for Him to go to Calvary.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:9.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His

poverty might become rich."

"Though He was rich," the Greek word for rich, "Plouteo" (aorist tense) is the same word used in I Timothy 6:9, and we have to acknowledge that it's not referring to spiritual riches alone here, but in all forms of prosperity and to be abounding in the same.

1 TIMOTHY 6:9.

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare."

How rich was He? Well that's beyond our ability to comprehend, but it was rich.

The Greek word for poor, "ptocheuo", is "to be poor as a beggar," that's a very significant choice of words.

God has provided redemption from poverty as well as from sin and sickness.

1. If we sin, we have 1 JOHN 2:1.
2. If we are sick, we have JAMES 5:16.
3. If we are in debt, we have LUKE: 6:38.

The answer is not to borrow, but to give.

LUKE 6:38.

"Give and it shall be given you, good measure, pressed down, 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."

Does it work? Oh yes, it does!!!

Give and it shall be given unto you. Not it should be, or it could be, or it might be, or it ought to be, or it is supposed to be, but it shall be.

He became poor that we might become completely rich.

LETS SUMMARIZE WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED:

THAT POVERTY IS A CURSE.

MATERIAL WEALTH IS NOT EVIL.

IT IS GOD'S WILL

FOR HIS PEOPLE TO PROSPER.

WHY DOES GOD WANT TO PROSPER US?

He wants us to prosper in order that we might **have to give** and not just for us to consume on our own lusts. This is what living in the surplus is all about, that we might have to give.

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DON'T LET ANOTHER TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE.

MANAGING YOURSELF

It's hard to be spiritual when the creditor comes knocking on your door.

1. Build up sales resistance. Learn to say **NO**.
2. Learn to get the best buys.
3. Don't be frightened to negotiate.
4. Guard your good credit. Pay your bills promptly. Credit comes from the Latin, "Credo."
5. It means I believe in you.

God believes in us, not because of any ability of ours, but because of the confidence that He has in His ability to make us successful.

When you lose your credit you have lost your credibility.
What your creditors are saying is, "We don't believe in you."
They are reporting that you're a bad risk.

DIFFERENCIATE - IS IT A DEBT OR AN INVESTMENT:

Debt is anything which one person owes to another.
A bad debt is a debt that has become overdue.

Investment is the allotment of resources (usually money), to a particular purpose because of the expectation of a future return, or appreciation of those resources. A home certainly falls into that category. You actually own the equity in your house, and you own more and more as time goes by.

Depreciating items are not an investment. These items should always be bought outright whenever possible.

Always remember the borrower is the servant of the lender.

Sooner or later money seals the eyes, freezes lips,
Paralyses the hands and the heart.

LEARN TO RECEIVE

1. **By honest work.**
ROMANS 12:11.
"Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."
LUKE 6:38.
"Give and it shall be given unto you."

2. **By imaginative creative resourcefulness.**
PROVERBS 31:16.
"She considers a field, and buys it."

3. **By fervent prayer.**
MATTHEW 21:22.
"And all things, whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

4. **With grateful thanksgiving.**
PSALM 100:4.
"Be thankful unto Him and bless His name."

5. **By giving first.**
ACTS 20:35.
"It is more productive to give, than it is to receive."

6. **By giving with a cheerful disposition.**
2 CORINTHIANS 9:7.
"God loves a cheerful giver."

KNOWLEDGE OR INFORMATION

HOSEA 4:6.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."
(The knowledge of God's ways.)

It's not the lack of information that destroying us, but the lack of knowledge. True knowledge is the result of intimacy and obedience; the rest is nothing but information.

JOHN 8:32.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Truth won't set you free, (it can kill you) only knowing it will.

JOHN 7:17.

"If any man will do His will, he shall know."

You have to be a doer to know the will of God.

The Church is made up of two classes: 'doers' and 'be'ers'.

They marvelled at Jesus. They said, "He sounds like He has a degree. How can it be when He's had no learning? How do we know if what you say is so?" they asked. This was a logical question. His answer was "If you want to know if it's real or not do it." Luke 6:38 works. It absolutely works.

Submission and obedience is the key to financial freedom and security. God's word carries it's own endorsement.

JOHN 14:21.

"He that hath My commandments, and keeps them, I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

The trouble is you can't keep what you haven't got! God longs to manifest Himself to us 'in' the situation. He did for Daniel 'in' the lions' den, for Jonah 'in' the whale's belly, and for the three Hebrew boys 'in' the fiery furnace.

ABUNDANTLY ABOUNDING

2 CORINTHIANS 9:7.

"Every man according as he purposes in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity, for God loves, prizes above all things, is unwilling to do without, a cheerful, joyous, quick to respond, and do it giver."

GIVE IN ANTICIPATION NOT JUST DESPERATION: VS. 8.

"God is able to make all grace abound (that is, over and above, or surplus) toward you, that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound unto every good work."

This means that always, under all circumstances, whatever the need, you will be self-sufficient, possessing enough to require no aid or support, and furnished in abundance for every good work and charitable donation. Why, because you give.

YOU SOW BOUNTIFULLY TO REAP BOUNTIFULLY: Vs. 10-13.

"And God who provides seed for the sower and bread for eating, will also provide and multiply your resources for sowing and increase the fruits of your righteousness which manifests itself in active goodness and charity. For the service the ministering of this fund renders, does not only fully supply what is lacking to the saints, but it overflows in the many cries of thanksgiving unto God. Because of your standing the test of this ministry, they will glorify God at your loyalty and obedience to the Gospel of Christ which you confess as well as your generous hearted liberality to them and to all the other needy ones."

FINANCIAL LIBERATION

God wants to increase the cash flow of His church. He will increase that flow greatly by bringing us into an understanding of the principles that bring financial liberation. He doesn't want a rich church, as much as He wants a giving church. Having to give but not recklessly.

The secret lies not in what we have in the way of amounts of money coming into our situation, but rather what we do and how we handle what we have whatever the amount. For like time, its only true value is in its use. To be of value it has to be used. The whole concept of stewardship is built on that principle.

We are stewards. Stewards are not beggars. We do not subscribe to the theory; "to keep him poor is to keep him humble." Wrong concepts have plagued the church; i.e., "the key to spiritual prosperity is financial poverty." Rubbish! It's clear from Scripture that God does not intend His people to be under constant financial pressure, but the fact of the matter is many are.

This state of affairs is incompatible with what God wants to do; i.e.; extend His Kingdom. How? By releasing ministry into the field, and this takes money. I can see from this gathering, many going forth because of what He is doing in preparing lives. The finances it will take is not going to grow on trees, neither is Santa Claus going to drop it down the chimney. It will be provided through the same channels that God has used down through time; namely, His people, a people whose basic attitude to material possessions is God's attitude.

PSALM 132:15.

"I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread."

THE CITIZENS OF THIS WORLD ARE WISER?

We need to have a clear understanding of stewardship. And so Jesus gives us a parable to help us to do just that.

LUKE 16:1-9.

"And He said also unto His disciples, there was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, how is it that I hear this of thee? Give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer a steward. Then the steward said within himself, what should I do? For my lord takes away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, how much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, an hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore. And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

In our thinking we tend to separate the material from the spiritual but God never does. This steward is losing his job. So in verse 5 & 6 he calls his master's debtors, and marks down their accounts. In Vs. 8 Jesus commends him. This is a hard passage to understand for He cannot be approving wrong.

It would seem that what the Holy Spirit is trying to show us, is that He flowed with principles that worked in His situation. He functioned in a way that ensured success. When in Rome, do what the Romans do. In every situation there are principles for us as Christians that guarantee success. In this context, Jesus continues to say in Vs.9 "and I say unto you, make to yourselves

friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitation." "They", being the Lord's debtors. Because you have faithfully ministered to them, it now returns to you in your hour of need.

PHILIPPIANS 4:17.

"Not that I am eager for your gift, but I am eager for the fruit which increases to your credit, the harvest of blessing that is accumulating to your account."

Don't hoard up things to provide for your security on earth. The Lord wants us to learn to give, not to accumulate. If you feed an appetite until it is full, you will not satisfy it, but only increase it. The basic principle we need to understand if we want to learn to abound is not to be acquisitive but to let it flow through. As possessions and finances flow through your life, God doesn't mind if a little splashes over onto you. He does not want the channel blocked, or for just a dribble to get through, but a flow of blessing that will benefit the recipients and us.

What money can and cannot buy
A bed BUT NOT sleep
Books BUT NOT brains
Food BUT NOT appetite
Finery BUT NOT beauty
A house BUT NOT a home
Medicine BUT NOT health
Luxuries BUT NOT culture
Amusement BUT NOT happiness
A crucifix BUT NOT a Saviour
A church pew BUT NOT Heaven

For this to happen, there are certain principles that need to be learned, and here Jesus clearly married material responsibility to spiritual maturity. Coupled to this is the concept that God is not against us having finances. We need this fact to become a part of our thinking once and for all. For He knows it's necessary to have this flow through His people to further His Kingdom. Poverty is not a sign of spirituality, neither is it the key to humility. There's no special virtue in being poor. I have never envied a poor man yet. It takes money to get things done. God wants you to pay your way, to live in surplus.

WHAT THIS TEACHING IS AND WHAT ITS NOT:

This is not a get-rich-quick scheme, or a scam put together by some financial wizard.

You don't have to be smart, just faithful, to benefit from this teaching.

This is not an investment seminar. You will not learn how to forecast stocks and bonds.

Nor will you learn how to arrange your portfolios, so as to earn maximum yield.

This is not a financial planning seminar. This is not to show you how to budget or balance your books. Only bankers know how many of us need that.

The teaching you will receive in these pages is taken from a biblical perspective. It's for people who have a desire to be used of God to extend His Kingdom through financial resources but have never been able to acquire those resources to be able to do so.



It's for those people who want to help financially but cannot. This has been written for Christians by a Christian whose one desire is to see other Christians set free.

GIVING THE SECRET TO LIVING

Giving is at the heart of the Gospel. John 3:16. God so loved that He gave. He gave the best. He could give nothing better. He gave his only begotten Son.

Until you learn to give, you will struggle all your life financially and in every other way.

JOHN 12:24.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it will abide alone, but if it die it will bring forth much fruit."

If you want to grow, you must begin to sow. You sow what you want to grow. Whatever you start to sow, you reap in kind but not in quantity. There's no limit to the ability of what one seed can produce; but you have to keep sowing from the harvest you have reaped. The reason the Dead Sea is lifeless is because it's a taker and not a giver. It receives water from the river, but won't allow any to flow out. The water is unfit to drink because it is poisonous. Every living thing that flows into it dies; is as it's name implies, Dead.

The more you sow, the more you reap.
You can count the number of seeds in an apple; but can you count the apples in a seed?

SACRIFICIAL GIVING

2 CORINTHIANS 8:1-4.

"We want to tell you further brethren about the grace (the favour and spiritual blessing) of God which has been evident in the churches of Macedonia (arousing in them the desire to give alms). For in the midst of an ordeal of severe tribulation, their abundance of joy, and their depth of poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can bare witness (they gave) according to their ability, yes and beyond there ability and they did it voluntarily. Begging us most insistently for the favour and fellowship of contributing in the ministration for the relief and support of the saints in Jerusalem."

HEBREWS 13:16.

"But to do good and communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased."

BEYOND THEIR ABILITY:

Sometimes we are called by God to do something extra-ordinary. (To sacrifice, to give beyond our ability and by faith trust Him for the outcome).

YOUR MONEY IS YOUR LIFE:

You give time for money. Time is the kind of stuff life is made of, so when you give your money, you give yourself, your very life.

The normal workweek is 40-50 hours. In return we are paid money for the amount of time devoted to work. What you are actually doing is exchanging your life in return for a financial reward. Everything you buy with that money, you are buying with your very life.

How you spend your money is how you spend your life. Your house, your car, your clothes, your education, your food are all being paid for with your life.

WHEN YOU GIVE TO GOD, YOU GIVE YOUR LIFE

How you spend your money is how you spend your life. If you are a tither you are working for God three days a month. When you give you are giving your life to God. The only way a Christian can really give to God is by giving himself, a life that includes everything material as well as spiritual.

**It is hard to say you're a completed Christian
while at the same time be so poor that you can't
Provide for those that are dependant upon you.**

EPHESIANS 4:28.

"That he may have to give to him that is in need."

He is talking about material giving. There are different kinds of giving.

ECCLESIASTES 9:13-16.

"This wisdom I have seen under the sun, and it seemed great unto me: There was a little city, and a few people in it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it: Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man. Then said I, wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless, the poor mans wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard."

It's hard to take advice from someone who obviously seems to have more problems than you do.

STEWARDSHIP

There can be no restoration in the House of God, the Church, or in individual lives until there is a restoration of stewardship.

GENESIS 1:26-28.

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that crept upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

GENESIS 2:15. Man's duty was to "dress" the garden and "keep" the garden; to hedge it about.

GENESIS 3:24.

The man was to beautify, cultivate, guard, protect, and keep out all intruders. When you do that and do it well, God will make you ruler over it. We become heirs through salvation but faithful stewardship gives us our inheritance.

DEFINITION OF STEWARDSHIP:

The practice of systematic and proportionate giving of time, abilities, and material possessions, based on the conviction that these are a trust from God to be used in His service for the benefit of His Kingdom. All our abilities, time and possessions are given into our care. They are not our own. Nothing we have is ours. We are simply stewards. Paul said, "ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price."

GIVING: IS THE KEY TO PROSPERITY

LUKE 6:38. "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 we mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

The rewards are for giving.

Until you learn to give you will struggle all your life in every conceivable way.

This is not a get-rich-quick scheme. God is not interested in prospering us for selfish reasons. The Bible is expressly against this.

MATTHEW 6:19-20.

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

JAMES 4:3.

"Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

God's intention in prospering us is that we might "Have to give."

He never intended for His people to be living continually on the bread line, in debt, serving the lender, but to prosper, having more than enough for their own needs; and a surplus out of which they can help meet the needs of others.

PHILIPPIANS 4:19.

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Christians who are seeking a quick fix to financial problems continually take this Scripture out of its context, but they have not done the necessary groundwork (planted the seeds) that will produce a harvest. The seed is found in Philippians 4: 15-18. What we keep we lose, but what we give is like the scattered seed that returns to us a bountiful harvest.

GIVING GETS GOD'S ATTENTION:

ACTS 10:1-4.

"There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band. A devout man, and one that feared God with his entire house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, what is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God."

Memorial giving: A memorial preserves the memory of a person or event. It keeps alive the acts related to them and it. God keeps records. God is a great accountant. He never forgets or overlooks our gifts, and our service of love to Him and to His people.

HEBREWS 6:10-11.

"For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed towards His name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister. And we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end."

Cornelius' giving did not go unnoticed by God, and neither did the widow's mite. Because you only have a little, that's no excuse not to give, and though it is but a little God does not despise it.

2 CORINTHIANS 8:12.

"If you are really eager to give, God wants you to give what you have, not what you have not."

Let's look at a scene after the Second Advent taken from Matthew 25:31-46. Christ is seen sitting on His throne beginning to judge

the nations and then separating them on the basis of, not what they believed, but what they had done. It was not a matter of doctrine, but rather stewardship. In the light of this event, we need to examine ourselves and take stock of our lives.

You need to give before you can receive. It's a seed sown. You have to give first to be in a position to receive. Every time you ignore an opportunity to give, you lose an opportunity to receive. You literally tend towards poverty.

Your gift is worth only as much as it costs you. If it didn't cost you much, then it's not worth much. There are alms and sacrifices. Let's look at just a couple of examples in the Word of God.

I CORINTHIANS 8:1-4 LB.

"Now I want to tell you what God in His grace has done for the churches in Macedonia. Though they had been going through much trouble and hard times, they have mixed their wonderful joy with their deep poverty, and the result has been an overflowing of giving to others. They gave not only what they could afford, but also far more; and I can testify they did it because they wanted to, and not because of nagging on my part. They begged us to take the money so they could share in the joy of helping the Christian in Jerusalem."

Many times, I have had the personal experience of seeing God respond in a magnificent fashion to sacrificial giving.

EXTRAORDINARY GIVING BRINGS EXCEPTIONAL RESPONSE

It was after King Solomon had offered 1000 burnt offerings that the Lord appeared unto him in Gibeon. Again when Solomon dedicated the Temple and offered 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep, the Lord appeared unto him the second time as he appeared unto him in Gibeon.

1 KINGS 17:8-16.

“And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belonged to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman *was* there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch *it*, he called to her, and said, bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand.”
“And she said, *As* the LORD thy God lives, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I *am* gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go *and* do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring *it* unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day *that* the LORD sends rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat *many* days. *And* the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by Elijah”.

GIVING YOUR WAY OUT OF DEBT

You can give your way out of debt. I know that seems like a ridiculous statement to the carnal mind, and it is; but then to be carnally minded is death. But to be spiritually minded, (that is to have the mind of the Spirit) is life and peace.

LUKE 6:38. "For with the same measure that you mete it shall be measured to you again." When you follow Bible principles you will succeed. If you want true success don't go about it the way the world does. For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. First the natural, then the spiritual:

If you smile.
If you are kind.
If you are merciful.
If you give.
If you care.
You will receive the same.
If you are harsh and critical.
If you are stingy.
If you are grumpy.
You will reap the same.

For with the same measure that you mete, it shall be measured to you again. So many are saying, I wish I had money. I wish I could get out of debt. If you want material resources, you need to give. If you want a higher salary, then give yourself to your job and it won't be long before promotion and a higher salary comes as your reward. It's those who are willing to give who get rewarded. It's not a lucky break. Takers are losers. Takers are troublemakers. People, who give complaints, and if you are having economic problems, start giving, You reap what you sow: yes, you do. We are told to provoke one another unto love and good works. To provoke is to act in such a way as to receive an involuntary response.

GETTING OUT OF DEBT:

For years, whenever I got into a tight spot financially, I would do something a little extra when it came to giving, and God would always honour it. Yet somehow I never realized that God didn't want me to wait until I was in financial difficulty, but to understand that giving is the way to a debt free life.

"Give and it shall be given unto you." Either God is a liar, or He's a supplier. When this revelation took hold of my spirit, I determined that I was going to get out of debt, and not only that but to build a financial base from which I could begin to give as I had never given before. I started, and can testify to God's glory that He honours those that honour him. Yes it works.

SOW YOUR WAY OUT OF DEBT:

Don't eat your seed. If you do, you can never expect to reap a harvest. The widow of Zarephath could have made one more meal, eaten it and died, or sowed it, by giving to the man of God first, and trusting God to multiply it. She chose the latter, and both she and her household lived for many days.

YOU CAN'T GROW WHAT YOU DON'T SOW.

When you eat your seed, you destroy your hope for the future. Some people are always going to give one fine day. They say, "When I have a lot of money then I will give a lot for the Gospel, but right now I can't because I have so many bills." You have to learn to look to God and not your circumstances, be bold, and do what you know to be the truth that takes real faith. Give God a chance to bless you financially, start to give. The more you sow, the more you grow, and the greater the harvest.

DON'T WAIT FOR YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES TO CHANGE: CHANGE YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES

ECCLESIASTES 11:4. "He that observes the wind shall not sow; and he that regards the clouds shall not reap."

We cannot stand back and wait for life to come to us. We must arise and go forward to meet it head on. God never takes a defensive position. We overcome evil with good. We are to initiate life, not just to react to it.

Don't let your circumstances change you change your circumstances. Do not procrastinate. Do not vegetate. But muster up the mental energy of your faith in God, and bring into captivity every lie of the enemy that attempts to put fear into your soul and GIVE.... GIVE.... GIVE your way out of debt.

True faith is 90% courage and 10% tenacity.

GENESIS 26:1,12-14.

"And there was a famine in the land besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went unto Abimelech, King of the Philistines in Gerar. Then Isaac sowed in that land. and received in the same year a hundred fold and the Lord blessed him. And the man waxed great, and went forward and grew until he became very great. For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants, and the Philistines envied him."

In the midst of famine and depression, God blessed His servant because he sowed. Disregarding all else, he put his trust in God and received one hundredfold. It's not a matter of luck. Every dog doesn't have his day. It's not a matter of talent. The bottom rung of the ladder is surrounded by talented people who don't have the courage to trust God's Word that says if you cast your bread upon the waters, it shall return unto you after many days.

AFTER YOU HAVE DONE THE WILL OF GOD

The commandments of God are seldom accompanied by reasons, but almost always by promises. Almost everything we have from God came to us in the form of a promise. To receive it, you must act upon it. First you have to apprehend it and then go on to contend for it. If it's only after we have done the will of God that we receive the promise, then the will of God is the most important thing in our lives.

You find after you have sought.
You receive after you have asked.
The door won't open until you knock.

It's the same with giving. "Give and it shall be given unto you."

Two things are necessary:

1. Do the will of God.
2. Have patience.

HEBREWS 10:35-36.

"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For you have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise."

2 PETER 1:4.

"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the Divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world through lust."

Realize that in giving, you are investing.

Engraved on a tombstone in an old graveyard are these words:

"What I spent I had; what I saved I lost; what I gave I have."

PHILIPPIANS 4:17. "Not because I desire a gift, but I desire fruit that may abound to your account."

Don't expect your ship to come in if you haven't sent one out.

HOW MUCH CAN I KEEP FOR MYSELF?

Treasure, time and talents, all belong to God. How can we keep things from getting us? The material must be surrendered to God, or we will surrender to the material. The real question we must ask then is, "Who owns my possessions, God or me"? Whether we care to acknowledge it or not, the possessions we have are not our own. They are only in our possession for a brief period.

A prominent minister was invited to dine at the home of a wealthy member of his congregation after the Sunday service. After dinner the host gave his guest a tour of his estate and said, "Pastor, this morning you said that we don't own anything" and then waving his hand toward the beautiful broad acres that stretched before them said, "If I don't own these acres then who does?" The minister slowly replied, "Ask me that question in a hundred years."

REMEMBER THIS IF YOU ARE A TITHER.

**When you tithe you are not giving,
You're paying a debt.**

A businessman put it wisely: "I've prospered. Now I want to know how much of God's money I can keep for myself."

For everything I needlessly spend on myself, is taken from some other person's need. I rob him physically, and morally, and I hurt myself. But when out of my surplus I help to meet his need, then I help him physically, and myself spiritually.

God doesn't mind a little honey sticking to your fingers as you pass it around. In every worldly business there are fringe benefits for those who work hard. God is no different. He rewards those who are faithful to Him.

FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT GIVING AND RECEIVING

1. GOD IS YOUR SOURCE. Living in a man run society as we do, it's easy to get the idea that man is our source.

PHILIPPIANS 4:19. "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

JAMES 1:17. "Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above."

Generosity is the character of God. Abundance is the measure of His generosity.

JOHN 10:10. "The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." God is not frugal, but unsparing in His generosity.

ROMANS 8:32. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give all things?"

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8. "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." Look at the universals in that verse "all grace," "always," "all sufficiency," "all things." Here we see God abounding toward us that we may abound. Abound means to overflow, pour over, and overflowing.

ROMANS 5:20. "Grace doth much more overflow."

The Lord cannot pour in unless you pour out. Remember it's not what your source is, but WHO it is!

2. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SOURCE AND AN INSTRUMENT

God uses many instruments. They're often ones we would consider being the most unlikely. God seldom uses someone you have helped as an instrument in your life to meet your need. When you look to the instrument to be your source, you'll be disappointed in most cases. An instrument is just that, only an instrument, no more or no less. Vessels of honour meet for the Master's use.

If you think the people you are dealing with are your sources, then you are limited to their ability, and their willingness. People are just the means, and if one will not respond, then God will find another that will. Besides, men give and are often sorry, but God gives and is never sorry. God is not just confined to men either; if necessary He will use angels.

3. IT'S MORE BLESSED TO GIVE THAN RECEIVE.

We think just the opposite.

4. ACTS 20:35.

"I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Paul reminds his hearers that these were the words of the Lord Jesus. To the natural man, they are hard to believe. Blessed means to be happy, to be envied, and prosperous. Therefore it's more productive to give than to receive. It's not what we receive that's multiplied, but what we give. Someone may say, "I got this, that and the next thing, and I didn't give to get it," that might be true, but more than likely he's living from hand to mouth. When your

receiving exceeds your giving, you're part of the problem instead of being part of the answer. To be truly prosperous you have to be a giver not a taker. When your intake exceeds your output you're headed for trouble.

God has chosen to limit Himself to the Law of reaping and sowing.

"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

It's a law, whatever you want to "Grow in", you "Sow in." If you want to grow a crop of love, you sow love. A farmer does not plant onions and expect to reap lettuce. Genesis 8:22.

5 SOW A SEED AND REAP A HARVEST.

Remember it's only what you give that God can multiply. If you give nothing and God multiplied it, then it would still be nothing.

God didn't say He would supply my needs with His riches in glory, but according to His riches by Christ Jesus. He has deposited into my account all that I will ever need. Jesus opened an unlimited account for you and I in glory to draw upon. The way you make a withdrawal is to give. You may be saying, "It never seems to work for me". Then why not check yourself out?

1. Am I looking to God as my source?
2. Am I sowing by giving, so God can multiply?
3. Am I expecting a miracle?

If you are, then be patient, because "After you have done the will of God, you will receive the promise."

A farmer knows that to plow his field is not enough. Prayer on its own is not enough; you must do what you can.

EPHESIANS 6:13.

"Wherefore take onto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

COME OUT FROM UNDER THE CURSE

The curse of the law when it was broken was threefold:

1. Spiritual death.

2. Sickness.

3. Poverty.

SPIRITUAL DEATH: This is done away with through salvation. When you were unsaved, you were spiritually dead. How do we deal with sin now? We overcome it! We overcome it by the blood of the Lamb, by confession, and by walking in the light.

SICKNESS: When sickness attacks, we go to great lengths to get better. We curse it. We fight it. We claim our healing. We go to the doctor. We might even call the elders of the Church. We will do whatever is necessary to get healed.

POVERTY: But when it comes to poverty, we say its God's. God protects me by keeping me broke. Abraham was the only man called the friend of God. He was very rich. So if you are concerned about your financial success affecting your relationship with God, then remember, you can lose it quicker than it took you to get it. Our attitude towards poverty should be the same as our attitude towards sin and sickness. Rebuke it! Get it out of your life. In the case of poverty, you will become free of it by giving.

DEFINITION OF POVERTY: The inability to pay your way. Poverty is not the same as humility. Humility is the ability to receive gratefully what you don't deserve. Poverty can be the result of sin and stupidity, or caused by great misfortune, but one thing is certain it's not a sign of spirituality. It's a curse not a blessing. God does not bring us to poverty to try to teach us something. It's a part of the curse of the broken law. You do not become spiritual when you are poor. You just suffering from the effects of the curse. Christ came to redeem us from the curse of the law.

THE KEY OF KNOWLEDGE

LUKE 11:52 “Woe to you experts in religion! For you hide the truth from the people. You won't accept it for yourselves, and you prevent others from having a chance to believe it.”

There are several different sets of keys in the Bible; the keys of the Kingdom; the keys of hell and death; of the bottomless pit, the key of David; and the key of knowledge. Jesus has the key to every situation. Keys are crucial. They open and shut, they lock or unlock. A key is also the solution or explanation to something difficult or obscure. Keys can shut in and shut out. Every key has its own unique design and purpose. You can have the right key in the wrong lock, or visa versa. Keys are being restored today. They are lost principles. The Pharisees had taken away the key of knowledge. God's people were being destroyed. How had they taken it away?

1. By keeping people ignorant of the truth.
2. By teaching traditions of men for the commandments of God.
3. By making a man, an offender for "A word."

There is a key to unlock every prison door. Every gate of Hell has a lock, and every lock has a key. The gates of Hell shall not prevail against His Church.

The key to salvation is the blood of Jesus.

The key to divine healing is the prayer of faith.

The key to prosperity is Luke 6:38.

For just as the farmer knows that ploughing his field is not enough if he is to receive a harvest, we also must realize that prayer is not enough on its own; we have to plant seeds as well as plow. We must do our part. Take a step towards your financial freedom and begin to give to somebody in need.

THE END

MINISTRY PROFILE OF SHAUN T KEARNEY

In 1967 the Lord led the Kearney's and their five children, (four sons and one daughter) to Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand. There they began to pioneer a church that was to have a significant impact on the whole church nationally and the community at large. In 1972 this growing body of believers known as "New Life Fellowship" (not the denomination) miraculously acquired a tract of land where a Convention Centre and facilities for a Bible College and Christian Campground were established.

This beautiful location with its own private beach became the scene of many wonderful events accomplished by God. It was the venue for many conferences sponsored by the church for Christian leaders. Speakers from many parts of the world came there to minister to God's servants as they gathered from all over New Zealand, Australia, and as far away as India, South East Asia and the South Pacific. Ministers of every mainline denomination attended these gatherings.

During Brother Kearney's six-year tenure as chairman of the Pentecostal Ministers' Fraternal in Auckland, a milestone was achieved. For the first time in the history of the Pentecostal movement, a conference for all the streams of Pentecost, both classical and independent, was held at the church's convention centre. Accepting an invitation from Brother Kearney Jack Hayford Pastor of "Church on the Way" came as the guest speaker. All the leaders in the nation, without exception attended. As they lived together for five glorious days, the Spirit of God broke down barriers, allayed suspicions, thus paving the way for the formation of the Associated Pentecostal Churches of New Zealand.

The Kearney's went to the United States in 1979 with their family. They went to Australia in 1989, and moved back to New Zealand in 2006. Brother Kearney has travelled in Asia, US, Canada, and Europe extensively. In addition he has authored many books on unstructured "Kingdom Life".

A LIST OF AVAILABLE BOOKS.

THE COUNTERFEIT CHURCH

An in-depth look at some of the things that have been imposed upon us have no scriptural foundation, but are nothing more than traditions and customs.

DUMBING DOWN THE SAINTS This is an intriguing in-depth look at the Pulpit from the pew and visa versa. This is a must for all discerning saints.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

“Do this in remembrance of Me.” Do it “oft” and keep doing it till I come. This is the most powerful book I have ever had the opportunity of writing. It's a must for every lover of Christ.

WEEKLY DEVOTION GUIDE AROUND THE LORDS TABLE

A devotional guide with fifty two meditations as we gather to celebrate around the Lord's Table

WHERE OH WHERE CAN WE GO?

For those that are seeking for something better than what's on offer.

LET US GO TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

What to look for and what to avoid.

A REFORMATION 1600 YEARS BEFORE LUTHERS

Freedom from the Law of sin and death.

THY KINGDOM COME

Christ came preaching the Kingdom We gave Him institutions

PROPHETS PROPHECY AND THE PROPHETIC

This is an insightful look into an area of great importance to the church in this hour in which we live.

FROM ASHES TO BEAUTY Seeing how Judah dealt with the consequences of failure And how they made their way back to righteousness and Peace.

Many books are audio streamed. Downloads are free.

Get “Dovetales” a monthly study with some substance by email below

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