

BOOK NAME: "ALWAYS ABOUNDING" by John Avanzini

## GIVE EXPECTING TO RECEIVE

Every time God shows me something in the Scriptures that shatters man's normal way of thinking, my first reaction is shock. Not long ago when I was helping in a telethon, I received just such a shock.

Kenny Forman was delivering a message, and he made a statement that stirred my spirit. Kenny said: "It is God's way of giving...to give, expecting to receive something for the gift. It is a godly way to give to expect something for what you give!"

Those words really jarred my entire system. His statements were exactly backwards from everything I had ever been taught. Every teacher who ever had an impact on my life had taught me I should give, but never expect anything in return for my gift.

My mother and father had taught me that. All of my school teachers had taught me that. Bible college professors had taught me that. Everyone had taught me this very same principle-not the principle Forman taught, but the exact opposite.

They taught me never to expect something back from something I gave. How could it be godly to expect something back from my gifts to God?

When I began to study and search the Scriptures on this topic, how different I found the teachings and truths of God to be from the errors of man.

Your Creator has always given, expecting to receive something in return! In the very beginning, God created man out of the dust of the earth. He breathed into man the great gift of life-God's second gift. But when God gave man life, He was expecting to receive something back for the gift. God was expecting man to give Him worship, reverence, love, service, and obedience.

And if that first example of God giving, expecting to receive, starts to strip the cobwebs off your traditional ideas, then begin to digest the power of this thought: God's greatest gift of all, his most precious Son, Jesus Christ, was given by God with an expectation! When God sent Jesus Christ to the earth, He wanted something back from man. He expected to receive men and women who would become His children.

Let this truth soak into your spirit: Expecting to receive something in return is a godly way to give.

The truth is often shocking. You are probably saying: "Why, Brother John, that thought just goes against all I've been taught, all that I know about how a good Christian gives to others!" Now is the time for you to stop thinking man's thoughts. Learn now to hear God's Word, and think God's thoughts without putting a short circuit in your mind. If the Bible clearly teaches anything, it teaches to give, expecting to receive.

Ask the Holy Spirit right now to remove the spiritual blinders and to help you see Luke 6:38 in a fresh way. You have read it many times before, but this time read it with the anointed eyes of truth:

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

I believe God is working on your spirit right now, and that you are beginning to understand His Word for you. Now look at what God says in Malachi 3:10.

He says that when you tithe, He will "...open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing."

See what God says in Galatians 6:7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Give, expecting to receive. Expecting to receive something in return is a godly way to give. If you have financial needs, if you are sitting there staring at a stack of overdue bills, if you need something from God, then give something to God.

If your house payment is past due, and you are wondering what to do, the Word tells you this: Today, this very day, give something back to the Lord. Give, and it shall be given back to you.

I started this chapter with a shocking statement, so it is only appropriate that I should also end it with one. If you are currently experiencing a tight financial situation in your life, it is very likely that you have not been giving enough away-to God.

"But Brother John, that just doesn't make good sense!" shouts the Skeptic.

You are right. It might not make good sense, but it certainly makes God sense. Read what God says in Isaiah 55:8,9:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

In God's world, the first shall be last. In God's world, the leader must be the servant of all. In God's world, you must give away what you want in order to receive it. If you want to receive from God, you must first give to Him.

Paul understood this principle of giving to receive when he wrote in Philippians 4:15-17:

"Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from

Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account."

Paul understood the principle: expecting to receive is a godly way to give. He felt concerned when those he loved failed to apply God's principle in their lives. Paul knew the result of the application was fruit to their account.

Every time God speaks in His Word about giving, He also speaks about what He will do as a result.

Tithe, and the windows of heaven will open. Give, and it shall be given unto you.

Let this message sink into your spirit: expecting to receive is a godly way to give.

## YOU CAN BANK ON HIS PROMISES

Whenever I write about giving, somebody gets angry.

But the one person who never gets angry when I write about money and giving is God. He is glad when I write about giving. He knows it is only when you give that He can begin to release His wealth back to you to meet your needs.

If there were some thoughts in the last chapter that shook some of the shackles from your traditional thinking, then look at 2 Corinthians 9:6-11 in The Living Bible which contains a principle so powerful it will stagger you.

Read this passage and make it part of your thought process, and it will change your life! But remember this-if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.

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

God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more, so that there will not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over to give joyfully to others. It is as the Scriptures say: "he godly man gives generously to the poor. His good deeds will be an honor to him forever."

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

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

What powerful verses of scripture! Begin now to grasp the significance of this principle. God

tells you He will give you much fruit so you can "give away more" from your harvest.

So often this part is not stressed in teachings about giving. Givers do get, according to the Bible.

But they get to give again to His work! God wants to entrust His wealth to those who will wisely "give away more" for His purposes. When you plant seed money in the gospel ministry, into His fields for His work, then He promises it will bring forth a great harvest.

When a farmer puts a seed in the ground, he does not get back just one seed. He puts that seed into the earth, the seed produces a stalk of corn, the stalk produces an ear of corn, and that ear produces hundreds of new seeds-all from one seed the farmer planted!

That is why God is able to give you...everything you need and more (v. 8).

"But Brother John," you say, "I simply cannot give to God. I have too many immediate and pressing needs."

Quit listening to that old man. Quit listening to the devil whispering in your ear about scant rations, about doing without. What does God say? He tells you to plant your money in His work, in the Gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He tells you that if you will give to His work, then He will give you everything you need and more.

Many of His people this very day are beginning to catch the vision of being bankers for God. They have learned that they literally cannot give too much away when they give in the name of the Lord. Each time they give an offering, and are in the will of God, He uses it for His purposes, and returns it multiplied to them to give again in greater abundance for His purposes.

The cycle continues to grow, because we cannot outgive God, no matter how we try.

During these times of economic chaos and unpredictable money markets, these "spiritual bankers" have found the secret to God's abundance, and they now bank on God, bank on His promises, and look to no other earthly bank for their source.

By now the Spirit of God is already working on you as you read this book; you are not reading it by accident. I believe God wants you to know and understand His Biblical principles so you can begin to apply them in your life, and so He can begin to bless you in your giving to Him.

In fact, He cannot bless you financially until, by your gift, you first release Him to act. You must first give, so He can return back to you.

This "release process" applies not only to money, but to any area of your life. Every day, spiritual forces of faith and fear fight on the battlefield of your mind and spirit. You are constantly faced with decisions to trust God and His promises in faith, or to function in fear

apart from His promises.

Every day you make a choice: either you exercise faith and feast in the abundance of God's supply, or you give in to the devil and fear, and suffer personal famine.

In Genesis 26, God's servant Isaac fought the same battle. There was a famine in his land. The ground was dry. Isaac had a need, but there was seemingly, no answer in sight. Fearful he would starve if he stayed in Israel, Isaac decided to go into Egypt to avoid the famine.

In this situation, Egypt and Israel are symbolic for your life. Egypt stood for the world and man's ability. Israel stood for God-His ability, His supply. God warned Isaac not to go into Egypt!

In fact, God instructed Isaac not only to stay in the land, but He instructed him to sow in the midst of famine, in the midst of hunger, and in the midst of drought.

Now, Isaac had to make a decision. He could ignore God, give in to his fear, see only the circumstances of drought and famine, or he could see beyond his circumstances, exercise faith, and be obedient to God.

He chose to stay in the land and sow. He chose to obey God. He chose faith over fear, obedience to God's promises over fear.

Do you know that before God prospered Isaac, Isaac had to do one more thing? He had to put his faith into action!

He had to sow seeds-precious seeds. Never are seeds more precious and valuable than in a time of famine, a time of personal need. By his actions, Isaac released the power of God in his life.

The Word records that Isaac did sow, in the midst of drought, and God blessed him a hundredfold-in the same year! (Genesis 16:12.) Your choice is the same as Isaac's. You can release the power of God to meet the needs in your life.

The example of Isaac provides two vital keys:

1. Choose faith over fear, and
2. Exercise your faith-bank on God's promises by your action.

Read Ecclesiastes 11:1-6. It not only says to cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days (v. 1), it also says, He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap (v. 4).

Now is the time to take your eyes off your circumstances. If you are in famine, take your eyes off your fears. Put your faith in God's promises into action, and sow in your time of

famine.

God is faithful, and as you act, He will multiply your action back to you.

God wants to make a mighty witness of your faithfulness, just as He did with Isaac. Nothing can stop God's promises, except you. Please do not misunderstand me here. God is all powerful; He can do all things. But this is His principle: You must act before God is free to bless your action.

Isaac could have stopped the flow of God's abundance and supply simply by refusing to act, simply by refusing to sow his precious seed. If Isaac had decided to hoard his precious seed, he would have starved.

The world teaches: "Hide your treasures; times are hard. Get all you can; can all you get; then guard the can." The Word teaches: They that sow in tears shall reap in joy (Ps. 126:5).

When do you sow in tears? When the seed is precious, when the times are hard! These are not my words; these are not my ideas; they are from the Word of God.

You can bank on His promises.

#### TODAY'S TABOO TOPIC: TITHING

By now your spirit is starting to grasp the necessity of giving so you can free God to act in your life with His abundant blessings.

You are convinced you need to plant seed in order to begin to reap a harvest, and are now asking: "Well, Brother John, just how much seed money do you think I should plant? Don't forget, I've got the house payment coming due, and there are three other payments in the next two weeks. So, go easy on me, OK?"

If you listen to the Word, your life will be easier.

Read Malachi 3:8:

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein [how] have we robbed thee?..."

Look at the answer:

"...In tithes and offerings."

Tithing is the first step toward receiving from God.

For some strange reason, tithing seems to be today's taboo topic. In their eagerness to talk about a loving and gentle God, preachers seem to want to avoid the dear but strict

requirement God has for His faithful stewards.

Many would have you believe tithing is not for today.

Tithing is for today!

Many preachers feel tithing is too legalistic, and that it has to do with the Law.

Tithing is not from the Law. In Hebrews 7:1-10, we see that Abraham (before the Law) paid tithes. He not only paid tithes for himself, but he paid tithes for Levi, who did live under the dispensation of the Law.

We are Abraham's seed. Galatians 3:7 tells us that they that are Christ's are Abraham's seed. Abraham tithed for all of his posterity: for his natural seed, for his seed that lived before the Law and during the Law, and for his seed that now lives in the dispensation of grace.

Tithing reached across the lines of the pre-law period and the patriarchal period. Then it extended into the Levitical era and it went on into the era of grace in which we live today.

Jesus approved of tithing.

In Matthew 23:23, referring to the Pharisees who had tithed in mint, cummin, and anise, Jesus made the statement: "These ought ye to have done [judgment, mercy, faith] and not to leave the other undone" (speaking of the tithe). This Scripture indicates very clearly that tithing is for our day.

Many Christians believe the tithe is discretionary and that they can tithe whenever the mood hits them.

But we saw earlier that to fail to tithe is to rob God.

Read further what God says happens when you fail to meet your obligation to Him:

"Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat [food] in mine house, and prove [test] me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast its fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts." - Malachi 3:9-11

Feel and understand God's Spirit in this. He warns His people not to take from Him what is His-do not rob Him. Instead He tells us to bring in tithes.

Why? So He can make us poor? So He can see to it that we miss our next house payment? So He can watch our children miss the next several meals?

No! So He can open for us the windows of heaven.

Christianity goes through teaching cycles. Before the subject of tithing became taboo, preachers used to teach it as something you must do out of obedience, out of painful necessity.

But read His Word! Once again, we see that the teachings of man often do not capture the spirit of the Scriptures.

God does not ask you to tithe to punish you, to make things hard.

God wants you to tithe so He can bless you.

Grasp the totality of God's will for you. Tithe, so He can open the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing.

During the time of Jesus, the government did not withhold taxes from paychecks. Many children of God come to me and ask: "Brother John, do I tithe on my income before I pay my taxes or after I pay them?"

Let Jesus answer that question for you. Read Luke 20 25:

"And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's."

You decide who has top priority in your life. Does the government have first place, or does the Lord have top priority? Can you give the Lord the first fruits of your harvest if you have already given away the taxes?

I believe if you think and pray about this matter, you will find that Caesar-that is, the government-certainly does not have priority over the Lord. The first fruits should not go to Caesar, but to the Lord God Almighty.

Once you have decided that you need to tithe in order for God to bless you, and you accept that you will give one-tenth of your income, before taxes, toward His work, you still have another question to answer.

Where do you tithe?

Again, let's look at the Scriptures. They say to bring your tithe "...into the storehouse, that there may be meat [food] in mine house...."

I believe the Bible clearly teaches that you bring it to your spiritual storehouse, the place where you receive your meat. If you belong to a good, Bible-teaching, Bible-preaching, meat-producing church-a place where you are getting fed-then you should bring your tithe into that

place; that is your storehouse.

I suggest you put your tithe in an envelope and follow the Bible's instructions. Send it to the storehouse from which you are receiving spiritual nourishment.

## WITH THE SAME MEASURE

With great sorrow, I make this next statement . . . Most Christians do not tithe !

For many years I was confused as to the reason for this miserable showing.

For a while I thought it was because non-tithers did not love God. Experience has caused me to change my mind about this.

Since traveling worldwide and meeting millions of God's children, I am now convinced there is another reason. Most have simply been misinformed as to what the Bible actually promises the tither.

The majority of non-tithers are in disobedience because of one simple reason. Their problem has been caused by what the King James Version of the Bible teaches in Malachi:

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Malachi 3:10

This promise has never taken place. I am not saying God makes a promise He won't keep. Neither am I saying the Word of God is not accurate. What I am saying is that the King James Version does not translate Malachi 3:10 accurately.

Please think this through with me. Have you ever met a tither who was receiving so much that he could not receive any more? You and I know the honest answer to that question is No! There are no tithers who have to turn down money or possessions because they have no more room to receive them.

Actually, the very opposite of this is true. All the tithers I know or have ever heard of are not only capable of receiving much more from God, but they are actually expecting more from God. In all honesty we must conclude that something is desperately wrong with the translation of this verse.

I must confess, I silently pondered the inconsistency of this verse for many years. Then one day, just as if a light had been turned on, God showed me the answer to the problem. It was the King James Version that made it possible for me to detect the error.

The way the King James Version of the Bible is written is of immeasurable help to the serious Bible student. It has a code in it to alert the informed reader of any deviation from the exact words of the original manuscript. Every word in the translation that does not appear in

the original language is always printed in italics. This allows the reader to instantly identify the word the translator has added to clarify the original text.

It is a universally accepted rule of Bible interpretation that when a word is italicized in the King James Version, it can be omitted without losing the meaning of the original text. If you have not noticed, please notice now. Malachi 3:10 is one of the most italicized verses of scripture in the entire King James Version of the Bible. Seven of the last ten words are in italics. "...that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Malachi 3:10

Notice how the meaning of the verse is completely changed with the removal of these seven words. With the italicized words in place, the text erroneously says that the tither will be given a blessing in so much abundance that there will not be room to receive it all.

However, when these italicized words are omitted, the verse tells us when we open the windows of heaven with our tithe, it is not enough. After the tithe is given, there is still more for the tither to do.

Look at the entire tenth verse again, but this time do not look at it with the traditional understanding. Look at it with your spirit open, allowing God to form His thoughts in your hearts:

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that not enough." Malachi 3:10

If you look closely, you will see that it is the Lord's house, not our house, that will be filled with meat (abundant supply) by our tithe. ...that there may be meat in mine house. See how our traditions tend to make the Word of God of no effect.

In this book, italics are primarily used to show emphasis. Please refer to the King James Version text for the exact words italicized by its writers. "Making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition...." Mark 7:13

The plain teaching of the Scriptures is that God is not obliged to give anything to anyone until something has been given to Him. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38

Most Christians make the mistake of considering their tithe as a gift to God. According to the Bible, the tithe belongs to God. Those who tithe are simply returning to the Lord that which is already His. "...all the tithe of the land...is the Lord's; it is holy unto the Lord." Leviticus 27:30

Not only does the tithe belong to the Lord, but it is clearly stated that it must be returned to Him in a timely manner. If not, He charges the delinquent tither a very high interest rate.

"And if a man will at all redeem aught [hold back any] of his tithes, he shall add thereto the

fifth part [20%] thereof." Leviticus 27:31

There it is in black and white. The tithe is the Lord's, and it must not be kept back from Him. If it is, God charges twenty percent interest! Let this sink down into your spirit.

God does not owe anyone so much that there shall not be room enough to receive it when they tithe. The tithe is His already.

Realizing this, let me help you to see just what giving the tithe does for us. It opens the windows of heaven. It is a universal practice among men to close and lock the windows and doors to keep thieves out of the house. Is it any surprise to find that God does this same thing?

As long as a person robs God of the tithe, the windows of heaven stay tightly closed over his life. While the windows of heaven are closed, the increase of God is blocked.

Look again at God's promise to open the windows of heaven over your life each time you faithfully tithe: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing...." Malachi 3:10

Every time you tithe, the windows of heaven open. God then stands ready to pour out a blessing. But remember our three important words, "that not enough."

Something more is needed. God says it is not enough to simply open the windows of heaven with your tithe. Everything in heaven won't just start tumbling out through those windows.

The blessings must be poured out. The words poured out speak of a measured amount. In Ferrar Fenton's translation of this verse, he refers to the windows of heaven as the sluice of heaven. A sluice is a special water gate used to measure specific amounts of water from a reservoir. It allows water to be measured out to the community according to the portion it has invested into the reservoir.

God does not pour out the same amount of blessings to everyone who tithes. Each tither must establish the measure God is to use. Go back with me to Malachi 3:8 and notice the last words of the verse. ..."Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." Malachi 3:8

Here is the missing key. God is reporting a twofold robbery. There is not just a robbery of the tithe, but there is also a robbery of offerings. The measure of the blessing God can pour out is always established by the measure of your offerings.

Look with me again at God's greatest offering scripture: "Give, and it shall be given unto you...for with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38

Your tithe opens the windows of heaven. Your offering determines the measure God can use to bless you. If you give your offerings with an eyedropper, you have bound the hand of God to bless you with an eyedropper.

Whatever measure you use when you give to God, He is bound by His Word to use that same measure when He gives to you. If you use a teaspoon, God must use a teaspoon to bless you. If you give offerings to God by the cupful, He will joyfully be able to bless you by the cupful.

This principle works right up to the train load and beyond.

Let me encourage you to begin giving with this new understanding for just six months. If you do, you will never stop. Begin by returning the tithe to God from every increase. Then add to this a generous offering.

The missing ingredient in the lives of most tithers is the offering. When the tithe is faithfully given, and the offering is generous, then Luke 6:38 will be fully realized: "For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38

In case there are any who do not believe it is proper to omit the seven italicized words in the King James Version of Malachi 3:10, I would like to suggest you check the following accepted translations of this verse. The Berkeley Version, The Jerusalem Bible, The Douay Version, The New English Bible, Ferrar Fenton's Version.

You will find that none of these say there will be a blessing so great that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

## SIX STEPS TO A PROPER OFFERING

Before you can decide the right amount of money to give in an offering, you must know there is a definite difference between your tithe and your offering.

Remember, the tithe is not a gift to God. Neither is it a part of your offering to God.

The Scriptures say the tithe is always the Lord's property. When you pay the tithe on your increase, you are simply returning to God the portion of your income that already belongs to Him:

"...All the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord." Leviticus 27:30

There should not be any difficulty determining the amount of your tithe. The Hebrew word tithe literally means "tenth," and the Scriptures clearly show that the tithe is ten percent of your increase.

The Bible confirmation of this can be found by comparing the following verses of scripture:

"...And he [Abraham] gave him [Melchizedek] tithes of all." Genesis 14:20

"[Melchizedek] To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all...." Hebrews 7:2

Without question the tithe is ten percent. All Christians should give ten percent of their income to the Lord each time they are paid, or any time they receive an increase.

The offerings are a totally different matter.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings." Malachi 3:8

Every Christian is required to give offerings, according to this verse.

A proper understanding of this chapter will greatly increase the return you experience from your giving. You will learn to let God guide you in giving the amount He desires you to give.

It should not be supposed that every offering will be the same dollar amount.

Each time an offering is given, it must be considered as a separate event. Many Christians make the mistake of setting a standard amount to give for certain types of offerings. For instance, they might give \$20 to every visiting evangelist, \$30 to every missionary, exactly \$5 each week for Sunday School, and so on.

This is an easy habit to fall into. It is also a very destructive one. Realizing the exact amount God wants you to give in each offering is of the utmost importance to you.

As you learn to discern His will when you give, you will find yourself participating in the full abundance of God.

After 31 years of Bible study, most of which have been spent in the area of Biblical economics, I have found six simple steps that will help guide you in determining the amount you should give in each offering. If you faithfully follow these steps, I can say with confidence that you will always know exactly how much God wants you to give.

Step One: You must have a willing mind. If you are not of a willing mind, it is impossible for God to guide you. God never drives His children. It is always the devil who tries to drive us. God always leads His children.

As long as your mind is not willing, you cannot give a proper offering. In one of his letters to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul stated that willingness was a requirement for giving a proper offering:

"For if there be first a willing mind...." 2 Corinthians 8:12

Proper giving always begins with a willing mind. The greatest offering ever recorded in the Bible was given when only the willing-hearted were allowed to participate:

"Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord: whosoever is of a willing heart." Exodus 35:5

The amount of that offering was so great, the Bible says it was more than enough. It was so much that the people had to be restrained from giving:

"...The people bring much more than enough for the service of the work, which the Lord commanded to make. And Moses gave commandment...Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing." Exodus 35:5,6

If you put a limit on the amount you will give to God, you do not have a willing mind. In this state of mind, you will not be able to give the amount He wants you to give. Only when you are of a totally willing mind will you be able to give a proper offering without reservation:

"For if there be first a willing mind..." 2 Corinthians 8:12

Step Two: You must only think of the good things. Most Christians make a terrible mistake when they are deciding how much to give in an offering. They allow their minds to be filled with the wrong things. Instead of concentrating on the things they have, their mind wanders to the things they do not have.

For instance, they will begin to think about the new tires they need instead of concentrating on the automobile God has given them. When your mind is fixed on your needs, there is a natural tendency to lower the amount of money you are willing to give God.

You must fix your mind on the good things God has already provided for you. If you do this, you will have a tendency to give the amount God tells you. That is why the Apostle Paul told the Corinthians to give according to what they had instead of according to what they did not have.:

"...it [the offering] is accepted according to that a man hath (his blessings), and not according to that he hath not [his shortage]." 2 Corinthians 8:12

It is reasonable to assume that if your mind is full of the blessings God has given you, your spirit will be much more open to His instructions as to how much to give.

God wants you to give according to the good things He has given you, not according to the shortage Satan has caused in your life. Do not penalize God for the devil's work. Reward your God according to the blessings He has already brought you.:

"...it is accepted according to that a man hath." 2 Corinthians 8:12

Step Three: You must determine the amount you give will be given cheerfully. The spirit in which a gift is given always has an effect on the person to whom the gift is given.

Some people are able to make you feel bad, or even guilty, when they give to you. Some even give with a martyr's complex. They actually put on a long face and sad eyes as they tell you in great detail of the tremendous sacrifice they are making to give you the gift.

They will let you know you must be very careful with what they give you, for they will suffer much for giving it to you.

God has no pleasure in an offering given in the wrong attitude. This is made clear in this scripture:

"...cheerful givers are the ones God prizes." 2 Corinthians 9:7 TLB

"...God loveth a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:7

The Living Bible says God prizes cheerful givers. The King James Version says He loves cheerful givers. Both translations make it clear that He prefers receiving from those who give cheerfully.

Think how you would feel if a person who made you feel bad every time he gave you something asked you how much he should give you. Even if you did need something, your answer would probably be, "Oh, no. I don't want you to give me anything." You would answer this way to keep from having to feel bad after receiving from him.

I believe God has the same attitude toward grumpy givers. He will be reluctant to tell them how much to put in an offering. If you want to enjoy the status of one of God's preferred givers, you must remain cheerful while giving.

God is eager to reveal this exact amount He wants given if He is speaking to a cheerful giver: "...cheerful givers are the ones God prizes." 2 Corinthians 9:7 TLB

Step Four: You must refuse to give when man puts pressure on you. It is better to give nothing than to give an amount someone pressures you into.

This does not mean that when people emphasize the urgency of the need, they are putting pressure on you to give. They may simply be relaying to you the pressure they are under. If your pastor tells you of an emergency need, this should not be considered pressure. If he emphasizes that everyone will have to give a generous amount, he is simply giving you vital information about the size of the need.

Pressurized giving takes place when psychological force is used to cause you to give more than God is telling you to give.

The Scriptures are clear on this matter. Do not feel guilty if you do not give when pressure is

applied. The Bible places the responsibility on the one who is taking the offering not to apply pressure to the ones who are giving.:

"...Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to for cheerful givers are the ones God prizes." 2 Corinthians 9:7 TLB

If you feel that psychological pressure is being applied or the amount God says to give is not large enough, do not give anything at that time. God has said His people should never feel forced to give more than they really want to give.

When you feel pressure, you can be sure the offering is not being taken properly. Please note, this does not necessarily mean the offering is not being taken for a good purpose.

It is proof that it is not being taken in a proper manner. The application of pressure does not mean God does not want you to give. It only means the one taking the offering is not familiar with God's due order, or he is not trusting God to speak to His children about the need.

While the application of pressure does make an offering suspect, it does not disqualify it from being valid. If pressure has been applied, my advice is to wait for a few days to pass. If you still feel a burden after this time, apply these six steps. God will reaffirm to you the amount He wants you to give.

Remember, it is the responsibility of the person taking the offering to take it properly.:

"...Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to...." 2 Corinthians 9:7 TLB

Step Five: You must let God impress you with a specific amount. Many people are confused by the term, "hearing from God," or "letting God speak to you."

There are numerous ways God communicates with His children.

The way I have found to be most common is by impression. In this method of communication, God will impress your consciousness with a certain amount of money He wants you to give.

Keep in mind that this is not the only way God communicates with His children. It is the most common way. When you are deciding how much you should give, several different amounts may come to your mind.

We have all heard well-meaning ministers say if two amounts of money come to your mind, the larger amount is the one God wants you to give. They say the lower amount is the one the devil wants you to give.

If you will just think about this, you will quickly realize the devil will never tell anyone to give any amount of money to God. It is possible that neither of the two amounts that come to your mind are what God wants you to give. Then again, it might be the highest figure. It is even

possible that it might be the lower figure.

Here is a scripture that will always help you choose the amount God is telling you to give.:

"...let the peace of God rule in your hearts...." Colossians 3:15

The English word "rule" in this verse does not properly convey the full meaning of the Greek word that is used in the original text. The literal meaning of the word is better translated "umpire."

Paul said to let the peace of God be the umpire in our hearts. When you are faced with conflicting amounts of money to give, always give the amount you have God's peace with.

Let the presence of God's peace in your heart make the decision for you. Only when you have His perfect peace will you be able to give with confidence, knowing the amount of your offering is correct:

"...let the peace of God rule in your hearts...." Colossians 3:15

Step Six: You must only give when you can believe God will give back to you.

The Bible says if we do not act in faith, it is sin. I have never heard anyone say a person could give in such a way that it would be considered sin.

However, the Bible says:

"...Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Romans 14:23

If you do not expect anything back from God when you give to Him, you have not given in faith.

See the Bible's definition of faith.:

"...faith is the substance of things hoped for." Hebrews 11:1

God's Word says that whatever is given to Him will be given back to the giver:

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom...." Luke 6:38

To give correctly, you must have a desired return in mind. If you are not hoping for something back from Him, you are not giving in faith.

From the Scriptures we can conclude that when God tells you how much to give, you must have the faith to believe He will give it back to you.

If for some reason you have trouble believing God will multiply back to you that which you are about to give, don't despair. There is a prayer that will remove unbelief.:

"...help thou mine unbelief." Mark 9:24

Give only when you have enough faith to believe God will give it back to you, for "...Whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).

Let's review the six steps to follow to know how much money to give in an offering:

Step One: You must have a willing mind.

Step Two: You must only think of the good things.

Step Three: You must determine the amount you give will be given cheerfully.

Step Four: You must refuse to give when man puts pressure on you.

Step Five: You must let God impress you with a specific amount.

Step Six: You must only give when you can believe God will give back to you.

Begin today. Put these six steps to work in determining how much your offerings should be. You will be surprised how much difference it will make in the way God is able to bless you. I suggest that you jot down these six steps in the front of your Bible.

Experience has proven that if you use these six steps, you will never have to feel that you have missed God in an offering.

Try it. You will like the result it brings.

## HIS ABUNDANCE, YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Galatians 6:6-9 best begins to clarify the concepts that have been covered so far, and serves to summarize the substance of the giving spirit:

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto [share with] him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

In verse 6 God says to share your good things with your teachers. These are not my words; God says it! You have a responsibility to share with your local church, a book or tape ministry -wherever your teachers are, the Word says to share your good things with them. God wants you to act first-to sow the seed, so you can begin to reap.

This is clearly seen in verses 7 and 8. "God will not be mocked."

In verse 9, God answers the question people often ask: "Brother John, I gave \$25 to the Lord two weeks ago, and I haven't received anything back."

God's reply? "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

What farmer would plant a seed in the ground and expect to see a plant the next day? What farmer would plant a seed one day, then dig it up the next to see how it was growing?

Please begin to grasp the total giving plan as God has worked it out for your life:

1. You must act first. God will respond when you plant the first seed.
2. When you plant your seed, you free Him to bless your life with harvest.
3. The harvest is always abundant, but in relation to the amount of seed planted. Plant a little, and God will return the seed multiplied. Plant a lot, and God will return a lot-multiplied.
4. It is not enough that you simply give; you must give for His purposes, for His work, where His meat is being given to His people.
5. As He returns your gifts back to you, increased, you have the responsibility to turn right around and plant some more seed for His purposes. As you show you are trustworthy of His gifts, His blessings for your life will increase.

The salvation of the world depends upon Christians like you fully grasping and applying these principles in their walk with the Lord.

The informed child of God knows that God wants us to give so He can give back to us, so we can give again to His purposes!

God wants us to give, not just so we can benefit, but also for the benefit of lost souls needing to hear His message. People on the next block, people in Africa, people in Atlanta, people in China-people everywhere are waiting to hear the Gospel.

But let's not fool ourselves. These people will not just wake up one day and realize they need Jesus. They need someone to tell them, and it takes money to send the literature and the preachers to those places. Romans 10:14,15 makes some very specific points about this problem:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?

Every single person who ever received salvation was told about Jesus by someone; someone delivered the Word, and someone gave to send that preacher.

Praise God! He has the total power of the universe; He has more than enough! But God has voluntarily limited Himself. He cannot, He will not, release His wealth, His riches, His abundance until somebody puts to work His laws of giving to receive!

You may be saying: "Oh, that man! He is just trying to get me to give some money to his ministry."

No, that is not what I am trying to do. I am trying to get you to pay attention to what God says. The Word says to tithe to the ministry that is your storehouse, that provides you with meat. Give to any ministry that nourishes you with the Word of God.

If my ministry provides you with the Word of God, then by all means give not to us, but to God's work going on through us.

If you do not like what I am saying here, if you do not care for how all of this sounds, you have no argument with me. Your argument is with the Word of God.

Yes, you need to give your money to any ministry that preaches the Word of God. You need to give where you are nourished in order that souls will be saved, and in order that you might receive more back from God, so you can give again and again, each time more abundantly-for His purposes.

The unsaved world is just sitting there waiting for the saints, the children of God, to put this principle to work in their lives.

Don't keep them waiting for eternity. Plant your seed for their souls today.

## IN YOU GOD TRUSTS

When we studied God's law concerning giving in the earlier chapters, we discovered some shocking truths. We discovered something exactly opposite from that which is often taught: expecting to receive is a godly way to give.

If that blew your mind, then hold onto your hat for this next truth, because it shocks everyone who hears it for the first time.

In Luke 16:11 it says:

"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"

Once again, we see God's ways are not the ways of man. It seems only natural that if you

were faithful in spiritual matters, then God would trust you with money and wealth. But that is not what the verse says.

The verse clearly states that we must be first faithful in money matters, and then God will trust us with "true riches"-the spiritual and eternal matters.

The motto on our coins and money in the United States is "In God We Trust." Have you ever thought that the reverse is also true? In You God Trusts.

This is backwards to the way most Christians were taught to think. This is a truth that you must begin to absorb, however, if you truly desire spiritual responsibility in your life.

You must first be faithful with your money before God will trust you with spiritual matters.

Oh, I can hear some of you saying as you read this: "Brother John, don't tell me that stuff about my finances. I am trying so hard to be faithful to God, but I just do not have much money."

Do not let the devil lie to you about this matter. You will never be strong with God if you are not faithful to God in your finances.

Read Luke 16:11 again:

"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"

These are not my words; they are God's. This is not my law; it is God's. This is not my principle; it is God's.

Let me refer you to a beautiful illustration of God's principle in Second Kings.

The house of God was in need of repair. Whom did the king call upon to repair it? He chose men who could be trusted with money. He picked the carpenters, the brick masons, based on their past record of faithfulness.

When King Josiah was told to build the Lord's house, he called together the carpenters, masons, and hewers of wood and stone, and in Second Kings 22:7 he states:

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

Dear reader, it is important that the king used the past tense, dealt. These men were not chosen because they promised to deal faithfully with money, or because it appeared that if they were given money, they could handle it. No, they were chosen because they had already proven they could handle their financial affairs; they had already dealt with the financial area of their lives.

These workers had been working on all types of secular ventures. They had learned their trades in other building projects, but had always been faithful in their financial matters.

So when it came time for the king to choose who would do the work on the house of God, God told the king to choose men who had dealt properly with their finances.

But you say: "Brother John, can my finances really be that important to God?"

Is His Word that important to you?

Over and over, the Bible deals with money and how God expects us to handle our finances-how we are supposed to operate with our financial responsibilities. If it is important to God, shouldn't it be important to you?

These builders were so faithful in their finances that they did not even have a "reckoning made"; no receipts were demanded for their expenditures! The tradesmen were chosen not because they were going to deal faithfully, but because they had dealt faithfully with their finances.

The carpenters were those carpenters who had given a part of their income for the things of God. The masons were those who had been proper in their finances.

Read again those words of Luke 16:11:

"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, how will ye commit to your trust the true riches?"

In you God trusts. God uses people who are faithful in their finances. These are the ones who receive the true treasures, the true spiritual responsibilities.

First, be faithful with your money; then the true riches of God shall be given unto you.

The next verse in Luke has equal shock value for the Christian who is reading with an open mind, and the blessing of the Spirit:

"And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, how shall ye give to him that which is your own?"

Some people have asked me, "Brother John, I feel the Lord is leading me to start a ministry, but the finances just are not there yet; what should I do?" My answer? Read Luke 16:12.

Faithfulness to the ministry of another is the prerequisite to your having a ministry of your own. That scripture clearly shows that if you do not faithfully support the ministry of someone else, then you will never have one of your own.

This verse shocks the senses of the average Christian, but it is the logical extension of the law of sowing and reaping. How can you plant your own ministry without first planting ministry seeds somewhere else? People can run all over the world trying to get their ministries started, but the key to God's spiritual success is clear:

"And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?"

As you are faithful to God in your finances, He has a very special reward for you. It is not a crown. It is not the honor of sitting in a certain place in heaven. It is not a hilltop mansion on Hallelujah Boulevard.

But His reward is so special that any person committed to God would hunger to receive it. This special reward is found in Matthew 25:15-23 which deals with the servant and the talents.

One servant had five talents, another had two talents, and another had one talent entrusted to his care. When the master left, the servant with five talents increased them to ten. He doubled what he had and was a good steward before the Lord. The one with two talents used them properly and returned four to his Lord. But the one with a single talent buried it in the ground. He did nothing with it.

Who received rewards? The two servants who had increased their talents.

Listen to what the Word of God says they were to receive for their reward:

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

Wouldn't that be the greatest reward of all-to be able to hear Jesus Christ say to you: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant?"

No mansion could compete with that glory! No place on Hallelujah Boulevard would be so sweet. No crown would wear quite as well as those words. Oh, the feeling of joy that would come, for the Lord to look over and say: "Come here, thou good and faithful servant."

That reward is yours in eternity, but it must be purchased here. You must take whatever God gives you-one talent, two talents, and plant it in his work, so He can multiply it again to be used for His glory, the plan of salvation.

It is the only way I know of whereby God can say to you: "Well done, my good and faithful servant."

And notice the other key line in this passage: "Thou hast been faithful over a few things (maybe you only have little money); I will make thee ruler over many things."

If you want to rule over many things, if you want God to trust you with the true riches, if you expect God to honor your own ministry, then your path is clear.

Hear His Word and obey it.

## FAITHFULNESS- THE DIVINE EXPECTATION

It seems as though the children of God go through many different phases in their Christian walks.

One of the popular cries I often hear is: "Oh, I just know the Lord is getting ready to use me in a mighty way."

Maybe He is getting ready to use you in a mighty way, but it is my experience that He expects some basic things from us first, and the most essential expectation is our faithfulness to Him.

I do not think there is anything nearer to God's heart than faithful stewards who work and accomplish His purpose each and every day. In the last chapter, we saw the reward for the faithful servant.

In this one, let us look a bit deeper into the area of faithfulness. Let me show you a verse of scripture with such a powerful thought to it that I want you to let it infiltrate your life; memorize it, and then practice it diligently as part of your daily relationship with God.

The scripture is First Corinthians 4:2, which reads: "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." Notice it says not mighty, but faithful. And notice, please, it doesn't say it is desired, or it is suggested, or it would be nice if, it says it is required.

There is a great deal of difference between that which is desired and that which is required. There are many desirable things a steward could have: talent, natural ability, good personality, and energy.

But none of those qualities will fulfill the Biblical requirement for stewardship: faithfulness.

There are many ways the Lord can use your life for Him, but if you want to be a good steward, it is required that you be faithful. He tells us that if we are going to be counted upon as stewards in the house of God and attend to the important matters of His Father's house, we will have to be faithful.

There are four main areas in which I believe God's stewards must be faithful:

1. Faithful in prayer. Pray for all of these vehicles now functioning to bring about His endtime plan: your local church body, the missionaries going to foreign lands, and the radio and television ministries reaching the shut-ins and the unchurched. All of these properties of God need your constant, unceasing prayer so God's will for this planet will be accomplished.

2. Faithful in witnessing. God wants you to be not only a praying Christian; He wants you to be a speaking Christian. All four Gospels end with the same exhortation as that of Luke 24:47,48: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things."

God wants you to share His forgiveness and love in all corners of the world, beginning at Jerusalem; that is, beginning in your own neighborhood. Galilee was Christ's own backyard, and He preached and performed miracles there first, before He went, or would let His apostles go any other place.

So, too, with you! Many of you feel a calling to go off into a foreign field to preach His Word. Many of you feel God calling you to another place. Before you go, ask yourself if you are being a good steward where you are. Are you leaving your Jerusalem before you have functioned there as a faithful steward?

3. Faithful in living. The only Gospel many people will ever know, the only Gospel they will ever come in touch with, is your life as you live the Christian way before them. At work by the water cooler, you are either reflecting His glory or you are speaking in a way that reflects the world.

The world has so many mammoth problems. Often people come to me and ask questions like: "Brother John, what can I possibly do to prevent nuclear war?"

"Not much," I tell them, "but through the power of Christ in you, you can do anything. You can pray against nuclear war, and God will honor your prayer." Be faithful in your praying. Be faithful in your witnessing, and be faithful in living your Christian life. Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only (James 1:22).

4. Faithful in giving. We have seen earlier in this book what a joy it is to give to the Lord. We have seen that when we give with the right heart, to help further His will on earth, He returns to us our gift in abundance so we can give again for His glory.

The Lord takes the financial responsibilities of stewardship very seriously. We saw in Galatians 6:7: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Now turn to Ecclesiastes 5:4,5 to understand what God expects when we pledge our finances for His glory: "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."

I believe and know that you no longer need to be fed only spiritual milk; you are ready for meat. Praise God! Preachers have been telling us lately how much God loves us, and He does; and how much God wants to have a personal relationship with us, and He does-but some of them forget to remind you that God has divine expectations for us-and believe me,

He does.

He has given us life, expecting to receive back from us service, love, obedience, worship, praise, and fellowship. He has given us our finances, expecting to receive some of it back for His plan.

I know that as the Spirit deals with you as you read this book, your life will fall into complete order and stewardship for His glory in all areas of your life: praying, witnessing, living, and giving.

## YOUR EYE IN THE SKY

When I was a young boy, I would often indulge in a particular fantasy as I played in my own private world.

In this fantasy I imagined an all-seeing, gigantic eye that would always watch out for me. If someone tried to beat me up, the eye would save me. If I was having problems in school, the eye would come to my aid. I imagined this powerful, all-seeing eye knew all about me, watched over me, and met every need in my life.

[Ed.Note: Beloved Cyclopea--the "All-Seeing Eye of God"--is the Elohim of the 5th (Green) Ray of Supply and Abundance. What an amazing story for Mr. Avanzini to be telling!]

After Christ became a reality in my life, I realized the "eye" I had imagined was indeed a living reality in the person of my faithful God.

God is continuously watching out for you and me. He is your eye in the sky. God doesn't want harm or danger or enemies or misfortune to rule your life. God promises He will be the source of your protection, the watchful eye in your life.

But, as you learned in an earlier chapter of this book, all of God's promises have conditions. In Psalm 101:6, we read:

"Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me."

In a previous chapter we learned that God has a strict requirement for the life of a steward-faithfulness.

Now we see God has a promise for His faithful stewards:

"Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me."

God's condition is if you are a faithful steward. God's promise is that His eyes shall be upon the faithful and that they may dwell with Him. Wouldn't you like to be counted among those who have His eye, who are able to dwell with Him?

His promise is conditional upon your faithfulness.

In this day and age it seems there are so many terrible things going on in the world. The horrible sin of murder is being disguised in the clinical-sounding name of "abortion." Rape victims suffer, while rapists roam the streets free when courts bend in ridiculous attempts to grant the criminal "his rights." Young thugs think nothing of knocking down an old lady to steal a few dollars from her purse. Financial problems are rampant in middle-class America, and bankruptcy proceedings are now commonplace and accepted.

In the midst of this, wouldn't it be wonderful to know that God's eyes are continuously upon you? Wouldn't it be a comfort to know that God knows about the next house payment you have to make, the next bill you have to pay, the next item of clothing you have to buy-and to know that He cares about it, and that He will help you to do something to meet those financial obligations?

He promises that kind of involvement to you if you are faithful to Him. He does not get involved on a day-to-day basis with those who are not faithful to Him. The Bible clearly says, Without faith, it is impossible to please him [God] (Heb. 11:6).

But read what He says will happen to the faithful in Psalm 31:23,24:

"O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer. Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."

God watches over the faithful and plentifully rewards the proud doer! God watches over you if you are faithful to Him. If you are faithful to God, He will be just like that eye I imagined as a child.

He will be looking over your shoulder; He will see those bills that need to be paid and that problem with your family that needs special attention, and He will faithfully deal with it.

It is a frightful thing to live in a world where inflation runs unchecked. Interest rates could double what they were only a few years ago. Gasoline prices could double or even triple as they have in the past. A simple automobile today costs more than a complete home did when I was a boy.

Yet, with your God watching, with His eye upon you, you can be at peace. You can go to bed tonight knowing that every need you have is being met by your God.

As long as you are faithful to Him, He knows about the bill sitting on your desk that must be paid tomorrow and He knows the way for you to pay it! Let me encourage you not to despair over the circumstances of your life, but rather, to lift your head and rejoice. Know that if you are faithful, God will take care of all of your needs.

Some of you reading this are skeptical. You are saying: "Well, Brother John, this all sounds real nice, but it still seems like you are engaging in adult fantasy. Life simply does not work in the way you describe it here, with God looking out for my every need."

Read carefully First Thessalonians 5:24:

"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

Those are precious words. "Faithful is he that calleth you." I like that. Right now, you may really need to read and understand the spirit of those words.

He is faithful to you, and will do it. He will do what needs to be done in your life. Whatever your problem, God will deal with it; He will do it, for He is faithful.

You simply cannot believe one part of the Word and reject another. Either it is all true, or none of it is true. There can be no compromise.

Why is it so easy for us as Christians to believe God will judge unbelievers, but so hard for us to believe God will reward those who are righteous?

Look what Jesus said: "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5).

Burn that into your mind, into your spirit. Let Satan's lie that "God does not care about you" die once and for all.

God is faithful to us-that is His promise to those who are faithful to Him. What did David say in Psalm 37:25? How magnificently he put it! "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Glory be to God!

We serve a God who is faithful. The next passage I want you to read here is a little long, but I want to quote it all to you because it is essential that this become part of your very being. Look at Matthew 6:25-33:

"Therefore, I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

In this precious passage, we are told not to worry about what we are going to eat or drink or wear. Let's face it; in today's world, when you talk about food and clothing, you are talking about the greater part of your expenses in this life.

Our God says He knows of these needs in your life, and will supply them. This passage in paraphrase simply says: "Beloved, look out your window, and see how faithful I am. You see that bird over there? He doesn't sow, he doesn't reap, he doesn't have a job or a lunch bucket or a credit card. But every day and every minute I take care of the little fellow. He can't even fall to the ground without My knowing about it."

Perhaps the most beautiful and comforting line in the Scriptures ends the passage: "...for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

His promise? Be faithful, and I will take care of you. God will be faithful to you. He wants you always abounding in the good things of the Lord.

As you sow faithfulness to Him, you will reap a harvest of His abundant faithfulness back to you!

#### WHO SIGNS YOUR PAYCHECK?

In a previous chapter, we saw that God will honor your faithfulness, that He will take care of those who abide in His will.

I hope your spirit is now beginning to grasp that as you are faithful to God, He will in return be faithful to you in all of your needs.

In Second Corinthians 1:20, there is a scripture that perfectly describes God's attitude toward His promises:

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

God tells you, that all of His promises are yes-so be it. Everything that God has promised for your life, He will deliver to you.

If you fail to get anything else out of this book, understand this: God and His promises are your source.

You may be thinking: "Why, Brother John, that all sounds nice, but my job is my source-it's what pays all of my bills."

No, you are wrong! God is your source. Your job is just the current circumstance God uses to bless you.

But your boss does not sign your paycheck; God does! His name may not be on it, but if you are a faithful steward, I guarantee you-and the Word guarantees you-His blessings are in it, just as though God himself had signed that check on payday. Your boss and your employer are not your source.

Now, you may have a very fine employer and you may work for a very good boss, but all of that is nothing more than the instrument that God, your source, uses to get to you the wealth He wants you to have.

Your talent is not your source. Right now, God may be using you as a carpenter, or an electrician, or a secretary, or a computer expert.

But make no mistake about it, God can use you for His glory no matter what your talent. If you are open and faithful to Him, then He will bless you, no matter what your particular talent is. No company, no talent, no boss, no political party, no worker's union-none of these is your source.

The only true source you have is your great God, and He is all you need! All of the circumstances and talents in your life are only the instruments that God can use to bless you.

God could get His wealth to you even if you did not have a job. God has the ability to take care of His children.

In every country I go into, I find God's people are prospering. God is getting His wealth and prosperity to His people throughout the world, no matter where they live.

Your job is not your source. Right now, you may be in real estate-and the circumstances may say the housing market is moving very slowly. Yet, every day some piece of property is being sold. God can bring you a buyer if you only trust Him and are faithful to His expectations.

If you look to God, He will meet all of your needs.

In Second Peter 1:3, we see how totally God wants to involve Himself in our lives:

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

It is His divine will to give us all things that pertain to life and godliness. I'm excited to be able to tell you that God does sign your paycheck!

I'm excited to tell you that no matter what the current economic circumstances indicate, no matter what E. F. Hutton says, no matter what the state of the country looks like, God can provide. You have His Word on it.

You may be shaking your head, saying: "Well then, Brother John, if God signs my paycheck, then when is He going to give me a promotion?"

I'm happy to say the Bible answers that question, too. Turn to Psalm 75:6,7:

"For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another."

Look to God for your promotion. Psalm 75 says He is in charge of promotion matters. You do not have to look to your superintendent or to your boss; if you are looking to God as your source, He gives the promotion.

Notice in the passage that the directions covered are east, west, and south. What happened to north? Promotion does come from the north. The throne of God is in the north.

As a child of God, learn that your promotion on your job will come if you go to God, expecting Him to do the arbitration for you, expecting God to burden the hearts of those around you to give you the promotion.

As with any promise from God, there are things you must do. If you are a slothful saint, do not expect just to lie back and let God give you a promotion. God is not in favor of slothfulness and will not reward it.

But if you are working properly and are an honest, hard worker, then go to God and ask Him to begin the arbitration process. Continue to put the interests of the company you work for ahead of your own, and God guarantees He will protect and watch out for your interests.

God is able to promote you. And the best part about His ability is that when God decides one of His children is to be promoted, then no person on this earth can cheat him or her out of it.

How many times have I heard someone say: "Oh, I was about to get a promotion, but then the relative of the boss came in and cheated me out of it."

When the God of heaven decides it is time for you to be promoted, then no relative, no boss, no circumstance can stop the process.

Getting a promotion on your job is a very simple process:

1. Become a good worker, an honest worker, giving your employer a full measure of energy for the time you are on the job.
2. Live your life as a good steward, in accordance with the will of God.
3. Use your time wisely on the job, and work for the interests of your company, turning your own interests over to the protection and intercession of the Father.

4. Express to God in prayer your desire for promotion, and tell Him you know He is your source, your boss, and the one who is in charge of your promotion.

"But Brother John, you don't know my boss. He just doesn't seem to like me. He has it in for me."

God is in charge, and He can change hearts.

In Proverbs 21:1, the Word says:

"The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will."

God can change the heart of a king, and He can change your boss' mind, your superintendent's mind, your company's mind.

God not only signs your paycheck, He is in charge of your promotion!

## WEALTH, PROFIT, AND THE PROPHETS

By now you are well aware that this is not the usual Christian book. We have explored some shocking and tradition-shattering ideas about giving, receiving, and money.

In this chapter, the shock of God's Word will continue to shake your spirit, and help you break out of the shackles of financial bondage that some of Satan's lies may have put you in.

In the last chapter, we said God is the source of all of your needs; He signs your paycheck and gives you your promotion.

Now I want you to know that God is the power that allows you to receive wealth!

At that point, Brother Skeptic may have fallen out of his chair.

"Now hold on there, Brother John," He is shouting. "Enough is enough."

Well, Skeptic, sit back down on your chair and read Deuteronomy 8:18 with me:

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

Once again we have a controversial idea-God gives you the power to obtain wealth. The idea is not mine! If you have any problems with this concept, please take them up with the author of Deuteronomy.

The Bible says God is the One who gives you the power to get wealth. Any skill, trade, profession, vocation-anything that helps you earn income-that ability comes from God.

So often we are taught that when we have a spiritual problem, we go to the Lord.

But He cares not only about your spirit; He cares about all of you. If you have a desire to increase your capacity to earn income, then seek out the Lord. Ask Him where you should go to improve your skills.

If you go to the Lord and seek answers for your financial situation, He wants to help. What better employment counselor could you have than the great God of heaven?

"...it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth...."

In the natural, that sounds almost like a vulgar and crass concept. In the spiritual, when you see your Father as someone who cares about all aspects of your life-even the financial-it becomes just another tribute to the giving, loving, concerned nature of our Creator.

One of the names given to Him in the Bible is the Mighty God, Counselor. So you really think that God would ask you to give something-tithes and offerings-to Him, that He did not give you the ability to get? Of course not.

Do you think God would put it on your heart to give a hundred or a thousand dollars to a gospel project, and then not give you the means to honor that pledge? Of course not.

I believe God does burden your heart to give to a certain project, and I believe God does provide you with the ability to honor that pledge.

Whenever I am in a crusade or any place where there is a challenge to reach lost souls, I want to get involved with the money God has entrusted to my stewardship.

God has never let me down; each time I make a pledge for His work, He gives me the ability to meet that pledge. Why?

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

Deuteronomy 8:18

The Lord not only directs what you are to give, but He also provides you the ability to receive. He has in His hand, and in His power, the ability to prosper you, to speak to you and guide you as you become more and more obedient to His will.

When God gives you a burden to do something, the very God of heaven can also bring it to pass, because it is He who gives you the power to get wealth. The skill is in your hands; the ability is in your mind. The power is from God.

The special talent you have, whatever it is, has been given to you by God-and the proceeds from some of that talent should be used to further the Kingdom of God here on earth.

As God is the source of your paycheck, of your promotion, and even of your wealth, He is also the source of your profit! In Isaiah 48:17,18, we read:

"Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

This scripture is especially important for those of you who are in charge of your own companies, your own businesses. Here is a case where a prophet can teach you how to profit!

The Word of God says: "I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit...."

This verse speaks especially to the businessman in today's society. Note it talks only to the Christian businessman; it reads, "thy Redeemer," so it applies to a special person: the Christian business person.

From this verse it is evident that God wants to become your partner-He wants to teach you how to profit. Any full-or part-time business demands special skills. You do not go out and buy a fruit stand, a meat market, or a computer store and simply start your business.

You must have skill. You need to know about fruit if you are going to sell fruit. You need to know the difference between shank and loin if you are selling meat. You need to know the definition of C.P.U. and why it is important, if you are selling computers. You must have a skill.

But, just as important, you need to have proper timing. You have often heard it said: "He was in the right place at the right time."

Well, who is better to look to for guidance about where to be and when to be there, than your God? Look at that scripture again. He says, I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit and which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

God is telling you He will lead you in the way you should go. As you let the Lord start to lead you, you will find yourself showing up at a certain place, wondering: "Why am I here today?"

And as you are wondering, someone will come up to sit next to you, and an important business transaction will take place. This is not fantasy. It says in His Word that He wants to lead you.

I personally know businessmen who practice letting God lead them, and this very kind of thing often happens. Businessmen come up to me and say: "Brother John, I don't know why I was there that particular day, but I was, and the Lord brought into the same room just the person I needed to see-and in a matter of minutes, we completed a large business

transaction."

God wants to lead you; let go and let Him. In prayer, ask Him where He wants you to go today, then listen for His guidance. Who knows better than God where to lead you to accomplish your task? Let God be a partner in your business.

In today's society, stress seems to be the occupational hazard of so many business people. There are management seminars in "How To Deal With Stress." Inventors have created special isolation booths where people float in the dark on a buoyant solution, allowing their stress to ease.

Psychologists are highly paid to hear the haggard business person pour out one problem after another.

Praise Him that you do not need to attend stress seminars, to learn how to float, or to find a good psychologist! Read Isaiah 48:18:

"O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."

God will show you how to profit. God will guide you. But listen to this great promise He made: He says He will lead you in the way of peace. He will give you peace like a river.

In Hebrew, the word for peace is shalom. It means well being, health, prosperity. God wants to teach you how to be healthy and how to prosper in your business. As you stay in His will and hearken to His commandments, He will be the best partner your business ever had.

Any business partner enters into a contract with his other partner so that there are clear understandings about the rewards of their mutual work. So it is with God. He expects, as part of His partnership with you, that you are first faithful to His commandments.

You cannot operate your business with lies, cheating, and deception and then expect God to guide you. He will not cooperate in ungodly endeavors. So first keep His commandments, then allow Him to guide you.

As your business prospers, and you receive profits, then the next obligation you have to your partner is to reward Him for His work to give Him a share of the gain. As you make profits with God in your business, you need to give back some of those profits to Him, for the things of God.

Right now, today, let God become your official business partner. Let God begin to teach you how to profit, how to be at the right place at the right time. Let God share His shalom, His peace with you, bringing your business the health, the prosperity, the peacefulness it needs. You will be blessed with God as your partner.

And as He blesses you, be sure you return the blessing by giving part of His profit back into

the things of God. Dedicate your vocation, your business, to God. Often, in our spiritual growth, we dedicate our lives to the Lord-our homes to the Lord-our children to the Lord.

Today I would like each of you to dedicate your vocation, your job, your business, to the Lord. If you are a bricklayer, then say: "Lord, you are in the bricklaying business now, right alongside of me. Please guide me and teach me." If you are a computer analyst, then say: "Lord, you are now in the business of interpreting data, right alongside me. Please help me see what you want me to see, and know what you would have me know about these numbers and statistics."

There is a beautiful illustration of how God can elevate your job, your position, as He becomes a part of your daily life. Early in the book of Exodus we find that the Lord is preparing something big for the life of Moses.

Moses has been a wealthy young man, living for a long period of time in Pharaoh's house.

But in the third chapter of Exodus, Moses is living in the house of his father-in-law, Jethro, and his new job-his vocation-is shepherd, watching sheep on the backside of the desert. It is as a shepherd that Moses meets God through the burning bush, in circumstances so sacred he is warned: "Draw not near here: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Exodus 3:5

When God begins to give Moses His plan, and tells Moses he will lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, Moses reacts as an earthly shepherd would: "And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" Exodus 3:11

You know, Moses was right! By himself he could do nothing; he was a simple shepherd, and had no particular power even over sheep, let alone over their entire land of Egypt!

But see what God does. God demands that Moses give to Him his staff- the symbol, the representation of his job as a shepherd. God takes this staff and performs miracles with it, then returns it to Moses. "And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs." Exodus 4:17

Look closely at what happens here:

1. Moses, a mere shepherd, encounters God.
2. Moses, in a humble statement of his own weakness, turns over to the Lord his profession, his shepherding, in the form of a staff.
3. The Lord blesses the staff, and now is in partnership with Moses, as He returns the staff.
4. Moses leaves the mountain still a shepherd, but with the extra dimension of now functioning with the blessing of God.

In chapter 4, verse 20, we see how this changes Moses' life: "And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand."

Notice now that the rod, the symbol of his vocation, is no longer just a shepherd's rod, but it is the rod of God.

So, too, in your life. As you pray the words that give your job to the Lord, you make Him a partner, and then you can draw from His ability, His strength, and His advice. Heed me, as this is one of the most important things you can ever absorb into your spirit.

No matter how bad inflation gets, no matter how many people are out of work, no matter what the interest rates do, you can be secure in your job, in your finances, as you dedicate that responsibility, that function you perform, to God. Like Moses, without God as your source you can only ask, ". . .Who am I?"

But with God as part of your profession, your business, your vocation, then you have the power of God inside you-the same power that God gave Moses to lead an entire nation of people out of Egypt.

As you make your job a joint responsibility between you and God, so, too, He will help you in your giving-telling you where to give, helping you tithe, and seeing to it that you fulfill your responsibility to His ministry throughout the world.

## PLANT YOUR SEEDS - TO HARVEST

So often in this book you have seen that the Lord's philosophy, the Lord's method of operating, is precisely the opposite of the world's materialistic thought.

The Biblical laws of sowing shatter many traditional thoughts of this earth and often send even faithful Christians back to their Bibles in panic, anxiously turning pages. Like the Skeptic, they pray: "Lord, say it isn't so. That means I will have to change my mind, to readjust my way of thinking!"

In the realm of the spirit, the Bible truth can often be painful. But praise God, through His grace, and through His guidance, all things can be overcome! If you have made it this far in the book, then I believe you are ready to shatter some more of those old, traditional teachings.

In an earlier chapter, I touched upon the world philosophy about money.

The world teaches:

1. Get all you can.

2. Can all you get.

3. Guard the can.

Economists everywhere encourage their investors to grab up every piece of property, buy up all the gold and silver, get the greater percentage of a corporation's stock...get all you can, and then hold it. These investment "portfolios" are a supposed source of security in these troubled times.

But look what is happening, even in the natural realm. Property taxes and housing values have slowed from their previous fast pace. Gold prices have dropped in the last few years, and silver investments were rocked over the hoarding by a few investors that caused value to drop drastically. Stock prices have been so up and down the past decade that many investors must be dizzy from the roller coaster ride.

The ways of the world simply are not working.

Well, then, what is God's philosophy?

To answer that question look at Proverbs 11:24,25:

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meat [fitting], but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."

The Word is talking here about a person who scatters what he has all around, and still finds himself gaining an increase.

This is not what the world teaches!

And look further.

The Word says that as you withhold-as you keep your money put away in a safe place-this tends to produce poverty. How prophetic those words have become.

The safest place to put money when I was growing up was a savings account. "Put your money in a bank and let it draw interest," my teachers would tell me. Today, those with money locked into 5 and 6 percent accounts are hurting; they are not keeping up with inflation. They are part of the Bible's group that "tendeth to poverty."

The Word says the man who is stingy, who hoards and clutches at the wealth he has, will soon become poor. It also says the man who gives his money away-the liberal soul-shall be made fat.

The Skeptic just fell off his chair again.

"There you go again, Brother John," he is saying, "trying to get me to give my money away-money I've worked hard to get, and I want to keep."

To dear Mr. Skeptic, and to you if you are like him, let me again remind you, this is not Brother John telling you these things. It is the Word of God!

God's Word is founded in generosity.

Look at Luke 6:38: "Give, and it shall be given unto you...."

Both Old and New Testament scriptures say the same thing: as you are generous in all things, you will be prospered, fat, watered, and blessed.

This is not a sales gimmick invented by some ministry to get you to participate in giving; this is God's guarantee, His Word, His promise to you.

He did not say to give to John Avanzini-and I am not telling you to do that. I am simply reporting the Word to you; it clearly says that for you to prosper, you need to be generous to those who are the storehouse and provide the meat of God's Word in your life.

The devil, the father of the world, is greedy. He would have you be fearful and selfish. If you notice those characteristics associated with your own giving, then you need to kick the devil's lies out of your life and start believing the promises of God.

The Lord, the Father of the heaven, is always generous. His guarantees and promises are built on trust. He asks you to have your mind on others. If you find yourself stingy in your finances when it comes to giving to God, it is because that "old man" is still in your habits; the old man of greed is still trying to dominate your life and deprive you of God's blessings.

Generosity is characteristic of God. When you are generous, it is God's personality beaming through you.

As you sow liberally into God's field, He will see to it that you reap an abundant harvest for His glory.

In order to reap the harvest, every farmer needs to know the laws, the rules of nature concerning how to produce a crop. So, too, in the spiritual realm. It is vital that you understand the Laws of Sowing.

Law Number One: Sowing brings reaping in kind.

How long do you think it would take for an apple tree to grow a peach? How many seasons would have to pass, how many years would roots need to grow, how many apples would have to fall to the ground, before the first peach started to grow? How long would it take for a carrot patch to produce the first fig?

Like begets like.

Sowing brings reaping in kind.

No apple farmer will ever reap a harvest of peaches from his apple trees. No backyard gardener will ever see one carrot patch produce a fig.

Galatians 6:7 takes this natural law of God and puts it into very clear words:

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

Listen to what the Word says here.

Our Lord will not be mocked!

The Word warns us not to be fooled.

If you plant apples, expect apples. If you plant carrots, expect carrots. ...whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

"Why, I know that...that's no big deal in my book," shouts the Skeptic.

Yes, Skeptic, you do understand this important Biblical principle when it is stated obviously with apples and carrots.

But what about other areas? Did you ever stop to think that this law applies to finances, to love relationships, to fellow workers as well?

If you sow friendship, then you can expect the same law will return friendship to you. If you sow hatred to others in your work atmosphere, then hatred will be returned to you.

And if you are stingy in your finances with God then how can money be returned to you?

God is not mocked!

Each time I smile, I can expect to receive a smile in return. When I frown, I had better be prepared to see an ugly face. I always get back what I plant.

Now, think very carefully, because this is where people's thinking starts to get confused.

So often some sweet little lady will come up to me and say: "Brother John, I just don't understand God. I spend a lot of time at the church helping others and doing chores, but I don't experience God's abundance. I am always broke. Why doesn't God love me? I follow His rules and don't lie or cheat, yet I am always broke. What is wrong?"

The problem is in not understanding God's law. Like begets like.

If I ask this person: "Do you have many people helping you?" her answer will be an enthusiastic "Yes."

If I ask this person: "Do many people lie to you?" she would respond, "No, almost never."

You see, she is reaping what she sows. Her helping reaps helping. Her truthfulness reaps truth.

If she wants money, she needs to plant money.

Like begets like.

To apply this principle in your own life, you need only to ask yourself one very simple question: "What do I have a lack of?"

If you have a lack of love, start loving others, and you will have more love than you think you can handle.

If your bills are getting too large, don't do what the world says and hoard what little you have; instead, do what God says and give some of your money away, plant some seed money to reap a money harvest.

You cannot sow money and expect to receive love.

You cannot sow love and expect to receive money.

Whatever seed you put into the ground will yield that particular fruit, and no other. Like begets like.

Law Number Two: Reaping is in proportion to sowing.

"But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." 2 Corinthians 9:6

This truth is so simple that the shocking implications it contains are easily overlooked. Before you read one word further, go back to Second Corinthians 9:6 and read it out loud at least five times, asking God to teach your spirit what He would have you know about this verse.

His principles will not change.

If you are a person who is not liberal to others, God will not change His whole plan just to accommodate you.

The amount of love, the amount of money, the amount of friendship you receive is decided by you!

As you sow sparingly, you will reap sparingly.

As you sow bountifully, you will reap bountifully.

I told you earlier that there are some shocking implications of this verse.

One shocking implication is: God is not moved by need!

On a spiritual shock scale from one to ten, this is an eleven!

When God sees that you need something, He will not necessarily move.

If God were moved only by the need, then He would move primarily in India, in Mexico, and in Africa-where the needs are obvious and great.

When I first heard this concept, it caused me great pain. I thought God certainly must be moved by need. (He cares about the need, but is not always moved to action.)

If He were moved by need, then the only places He would move would be in the lives of needy people. Yet we have whole nations who sleep in the streets. How can this be?

God moves where there is a seed, not just a need.

God says if you have a need-a lack you want to turn into a harvest-then you must first plant a seed from that lack in order to begin to reap.

Faith in God's promises involves an act, a seed planting to release the process of harvest in your own life.

When Jesus walked the face of this earth, who were the people He answered, who were the people who had their needs met? Those who stepped out in faith and acted first.

The sick were healed by acting in faith and touching His garment. They planted the seed of faith and believed for their healing, and they were healed.

Jesus walked past many people who could not see.

Jesus left many sick people in their beds to die.

Jesus encountered countless lepers with sores left open.

Why?

Because He did not care? Of course not.

These people were not touched by Jesus because He was bound by the Biblical principle of sowing: the seed must be planted first.

The blind had to reach out, the sick had to touch His garment...each miracle first needed a seed to be planted before Jesus was free to respond.

If you have a need, and have been asking God: "Lord, why don't you see that I have a need?" then, you need to know He will not operate in violation to his Biblical law.

You must turn your need into seed before you can begin to reap your personal harvest.

The person who needs to give the most today is the person who needs the most.

The person who suffers from a life devoid of love needs to start planting lots of love.

The same book that says in John 3:16:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, also says: But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6).

Many Christians want to use the Bible as they do a grocery store, simply wandering through it picking and selecting only those things that meet their hunger.

You cannot stand on one verse and toss out another.

Praise God, whatever you need, it can be met! You can put an immediate stop to any need simply by beginning to sow whatever you lack-the precious seed of which you have only a small amount-in order for God's law to begin to reap a harvest.

Law Number Three: Sow in all seasons.

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."  
Ecclesiastes 11:4,6

So often I hear someone say: "When the Lord blesses me with a large amount of money [they usually quote some ridiculous figure, like a million dollars] I will give Him back at least half of it. But right now, I just can't afford to give anything."

Do not look at the wind, do not look at the circumstances in your life and expect them to change without action, without seed planting on your part now.

God tells you in the verses above to plant your seeds-no matter what kind of weather you

are having. If you are waiting for perfect conditions before you give to God, you will never give anything.

If a farmer goes out each day and notices a cloud or a bit of wind and decides not to plant, he will never have a crop. Conditions are never perfect.

Some seed will be blown away by the wind, some seed will be eaten by the birds, and some seed will be buried too deep in the ground.

But much seed will take root and produce harvest.

You need to put seed out all the time so that some will find fertile ground and abundantly produce a harvest. If you plant a garden in your backyard, you expect a miracle.

Farmers know that a little seed, thrown on the ground and covered up, will produce the miracle of germination, and a crop much larger than the seed will result. The small package you buy to plant your garden results in a harvest much larger than several grocery bags of food.

So too, people who plant seed money in the Gospel of God should expect miracles of germination.

God can take your dollar bill, your seed, and multiply it in the Gospel and win someone in Africa to Christ. God can take your ten dollar bill, your seed, and multiply it in the Gospel to help produce an hour television show for His glory.

Just as surely as you know one tiny seed can bring forth a huge tree, you should know that your contribution, whatever the size of the seed, when planted in the work of the Gospel, will produce huge spiritual trees, larger than any you have ever seen in the natural realm.

Sow in all seasons.

Pay no attention to the circumstances of your life. If you have abundance, sow.

If your house payment is due, sow.

If you have just received a large raise, sow.

Pay no attention to the weather in your life.

"But you don't know how bad my circumstances are! Sometimes things just get so bad I have to cry."

I love you in the Lord. I would not tell you these things or report to you what the Word of God says unless I practiced the principles in my own life, and unless I deeply believed they would work in yours. In fact, it is more than my belief! It is God's Word!

If your circumstances are currently bad, then more than ever you need to sow.

Read Psalm 126:5,6: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Even if you are in tears from your circumstances, the Word says sow and you "shall reap in joy."

But this passage means more than that. It also refers to your concern for others. As you give your gift to the Gospel, you release that sowing with concern, with tears, with prayers for those to whom it is given.

There are a lot of Christians who send in their five or ten dollars to a ministry, but forget the tears, the concern. God expects you also to pray as you carry forth your precious seed.

Two very important things happen when prayer comes with your seed gift:

1. Your prayer creates an effectual door for the spending of the money you send. When your church or other gospel ministry receives it, their prayer combined with your prayer gives your seed a spiritual elevation. Unless the anointing of God is upon the funds of a ministry, all the money in the world would not bring about one person's salvation.

2. When your seed gift is watered with the tears of prayer, it can only grow faster, higher, taller, and stronger. Your gift, combined with your prayers and the prayers of others throughout the world, is so well cultivated that it can only produce fruit.

The next time you prepare your Sunday church envelope, remember to lay hands on it, to pray over it. The next time you send money to your church, do not send it without first anointing it in prayer, so you can come again...rejoicing, bringing sheaves with you (Ps. 126:6).

## WHAT NOT TO DO IN RECESSION

Many of the things you have read in this book are completely new ideas, and by now, I believe you are grasping in your spirit that the Word of God deals with all of your life-your health, your finances, your prayer, your spirit.

The Word of God serves as a guide for solving your problems, a guide for getting your promotion.

In this chapter I want to show you certain guidelines for behavior that the Bible outlines for the hard times, the famine in your life.

The first clear statement the Bible makes concerning famine (today, we would say hard

times, depression, runaway inflation, and so on) is: Don't go down to Egypt!

We saw earlier that Isaac was faced with a decision in his life:

- a. He could stay and sow in famine, or
- b. He could go down to Egypt.

Isaac decided to stay where he was and obey God. He had faith in God's word, and obeyed by sowing in drought.

"And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of." Genesis 26:2

Egypt represents the things of the world in our day. God warns us not to dwell in the place, the mental attitude, of the world, but to dwell in the land He has for us.

If you are believing the television commentators who constantly cry about the gloom of the day, then start to hear the voice of God instead of the voice of man. Remember, these same fellows who tell you how bad things become each day are the same people who give bad advice about handling your money. You know by now how that works!

So look to the Word. When the world tells you to stop giving because "times are tight," then you stay out of Egypt!

Pay no attention to the cries and shouts of gloom and doom, but do as Isaac did and sow in faith in the midst of drought. God will honor His Word, His promise, and will bring a personal harvest into your life.

We are down to the final days-the time when you either do what the world says or you do what God says.

The world says when your business is going slow, stop giving to God. That may kill your business or cost you your job.

God tells us that if we are experiencing financial difficulties, it is probably because we are not giving enough to His purposes.

If you bring tithes into His storehouse, He guarantees He will open the windows of heaven over your life. If you give offerings, He will pour you out a blessing.

Stay out of Egypt!

Do not listen to the gospel of the world. The gospel of the world is to keep all you can; the Gospel of Jesus Christ is one of generosity-of giving and receiving and reaping the harvest.

No matter how bad it looks, sow your seeds in the land of God. Stay out of Egypt.

"The liberal soul shall be made fat."

The second clear statement the Bible makes concerning a famine is: Don't eat up the seed corn. Look again at the widow of Zarephath in First Kings 17:12.

There was famine in the land, and the poor woman had only enough food left for one meal. When Elijah asked her for some nourishment, her reply could easily be the reply of many of our widows on Social Security in this modern day:

"And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, 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 [prepare] it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

The prophet Elijah told the woman not to worry, but to go ahead and make her cake and feed him, and that the Lord would provide for her needs.

She obeyed.

She believed the Word of God as spoken through the prophet, and she fed Elijah.

And how did God respond? Look at verse 15: "And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah; and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days."

Suppose she had not obeyed God? Suppose that little old widow had listened to the voices of the world, and she had made that final cake for her and her son?

She would have died.

Instead, she obeyed God and acted in faith. She did not eat the seed corn. As a result, she ate from that barrel until the famine was off the land. Praise God!

The same lesson is also in Proverbs 3:27,28: "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbor, Go, and come again, and to morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee."

The Bible teaches you not to withhold from others when you have it near you, and even if you are down to your last little bit, go ahead and start to plant seeds. Do not eat up the seed corn. Plant some of it in the work of the Gospel; but by all means, for your own protection, do not sit and eat your last bit by yourself.

If you do not plant, how can God give anything back to you? Get hold of this truth.

Before everything is gone, before you have no seed left to plant the garden, put some seed into the ground to start the process of God's abundant blessing in your life.

The way of the world would say to eat the last little bit yourself, to make it last.

God's way is to plant the last little bit, allow Him to make it grow, so you and your family can eat until the famine is over!

The third thing not to do during hard times, during a recession is: Do not reject the messenger of God.

Our modern-day society has created a philosophy that is leading us into destruction, without any instructions on how to escape the final, fatal blow. Our world is being taught, encouraged, and educated to buy on credit.

We are taught by the world's teachers to go on spending sprees where impulse buying is the key, with no view or thought to the next morning's bills. When the bills get too high, and the income is too low, the tower of credit buying starts to come tumbling down on top of the anxious buyer, pushing him into despair and bankruptcy court.

Man is not listening to the Word of God, or to God's men, his messengers. If times are hard in your life right now, listen instead to the words of God, not the words of the credit card companies.

Do not share your money with the makers of hopelessly high interest; the Bible says to sow your seeds in the work of God, and share with your neighbor.

Listen carefully to the prophets God is bringing up in these last days. Read Second Chronicles 20:20 and receive 20/20 vision concerning the things of God:

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

The widow believed the prophet Elijah, and she prospered. Believe God's Word, and you will be established; He will take care of you. Listen to His prophets, and you will prosper!

Being established means that hard times will not harm you, will not destroy you.

As you listen and others listen to God's Word in these matters, I know there will be more than enough to sow into the Gospel to bring Christ to the four corners of the earth!

In Acts 27:9-11 we see Paul acting as a prophet of God, warning the ship's crew about the dangers of setting sail in a storm:

"And [Paul] said unto them, Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the loading [cargo] and ship, but also of our lives." Acts 27:10

The captain of the vessel did not listen. He knew from his worldly experience that the ship would be just fine, and that the ship would not sink. As a result, the ship and all the cargo were lost.

Do not reject the Word of God, God's message to you. Do not reject His messengers- modern-day prophets teaching what the Spirit of God shows them about the Word. Believe His prophets, and you will prosper.

The fourth thing not to do when times are hard is: Don't think you cannot give because you do not have anything.

Hannah was a very powerful woman of God, and because of her love for the Lord, she wanted to give a son to His service in the priesthood. She wanted her son to serve as a priest in the temple all the days of his life.

Unfortunately, she did not have a son to give to God. Even though year after year she was barren, this fact did not stop Hannah. She pledged her son-to-be in faith to God, believing He would give her a son.

When He did, she would then give him back to God in the priesthood. She gave a son she did not have, by faith, by her vow.

In First Samuel 1:11, we read her beautiful prayer of faith. "And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head."

Other women had sons to give to God in the priesthood, but not Hannah. So what did Hannah do? She told the Lord, "Give me a son, and I'll give him right back to you in the priesthood!"

Many of you find your checkbooks or refrigerators are barren. You have no food to give to a neighbor, and no money to plant into the work of the Lord. For many, even the cost of a stamp is too much.

But in your heart, you want to give to God. As you have read this book, the Spirit has convicted you as to the truth of these teachings, and you now want to apply God's principles to your life.

If you are in a poverty cycle and want to break it, but you have nothing to give, do as Hannah did, and pledge your future fruit. Believe God. Tell Him right now in prayer that if He will provide you with a sum of \$5, \$10, and so on, you will plant that seed money into the Gospel for His glory, and will begin to loose the poverty bondage now operating in your life.

You can give, even when you do not have money. God honors your heart, just as He honored Hannah's heart. Make a faith vow to the Lord, and never again think that you cannot give, because you do not have anything. That is the thinking of the world.

The final thing I want to talk about in this chapter that you should not do in recession is: Do

not try to reason your way out!

If you have learned anything from this book, I would hope it is clear to you now that the ways of the world are not the ways of God. No longer do you have to rely on your own worldly reasoning to conquer your problems. No longer do you need to rely on the commentators you see and hear on television.

To stay out of recession, even when it is all around you, look to the Word of God, not to your own reasoning.

The world says to hoard your possessions; the Word says: Give, and it shall be given unto you.

The world says it is crazy to give away 10 percent of your income; the Word says to tithe, and the very windows of heaven shall be open on your life.

The world says "can all you get;" but the Word says sow and you will reap.

The world has countless plans for profit: put your money into gold, into silver, into diamonds, into real estate, into stocks, into banks, and under your mattress; but the Word says to put your money into the Gospel and God will keep on multiplying it for His glory.

The ways of man are often reasonable, yet often lead to destruction. The way of the Word often defies the logic of the world, but always leads to prosperity and abundance!

In First Corinthians 1:19, we read: "For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent."

In verse 27 of the same chapter, it further states: "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty."

And finally, in First Corinthians 2:13,14, we are told to compare spiritual things with spiritual things-not with worldly matters. "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

Do not try to reason with the world's wisdom! The world's philosophies are foolishness, and will not serve you in the faithful manner of the Word of God.

God's Word will produce more blessings for you in five minutes than the wisdom of a man could in five centuries.

Let God's Word be your advisor during a recession. Do not lean on your own logic; stay out of the flesh and let the Spirit lead your decisions.

Let the Spirit show you where to go during the day, and what to read and what to say.

As you are open to His guidance, the Word guarantees that you will not only survive in recession, but you will prosper during it.

## GOD WANTS YOU TO PROSPER

By now, the very foundations of your traditional thoughts on giving, receiving, and prospering have been shaken free of the lies of Satan, and you are grasping the beautiful love of your great God: God wants you to prosper!

Third John 2 says: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

Did you hear that fantastic news? God wants you to prosper. Notice the high priority He gives to your prospering. God wants it for you above all things!

Above all things in the universe, God wants you to prosper. Above all things in the galaxy, God wants you to prosper. Even as God sustains all the molecules and matter in His magnificent creation, He has as His primary desire, that you prosper.

His prosperity is total. God wants to prosper you mentally; He wants you to be at peace. "Peace I leave you, peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." John 14:27

Notice your peace is already here, and in great abundance. Jesus said: "My peace I leave you."

Your peace is not way off somewhere in a distant land called heaven. It is right here and now! It is not in the future; grasp that. He said: "Peace I give unto you..." The present tense.

Your peace, your mental prosperity, is provided by your loving God in the now.

God also wants you to prosper physically-to be in good health, to have health in great abundance. He took on Himself cruel stripes that purchased health for all.

In Isaiah 53:5 we read: "...and with his stripes we are healed." The present tense.

There is more than enough health for you, and it is provided by your loving God in the now.

God also wants you to prosper (present tense) in your finances. Look at Second Peter 1:3: "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things [total, complete] that pertain unto life..."

God desires that you prosper financially. He has already provided for your financial

prosperity in the now. All of this prosperity-mental, physical, and financial-is yours now!

But, notice a critical condition: ...even as your soul prospers.

God tells us to take care of the inner man, to be right with Him in all things.

Feed your inner man. Keep him on a good, healthy diet of God's Word.

Place him on a good exercise program of doing God's will.

Enroll him in a good mental hygiene program, thinking only about the good things of God. Then, as your soul prospers, so, too, will your health and finances.

Don't you just feel in your heart that as you draw nearer to the Lord, He will draw nearer to you? The Word says it is so in James 4:8. Don't you just know that as you put this great body of truth about giving and receiving from God to work for you, your prosperity in the financial realm is already becoming a reality?

For those who flow in His will, the Bible clearly states it is His desire that you prosper.

The two points are connected; your earthly prosperity as God's child is tied directly to your spiritual prosperity.

Remember in an earlier chapter, we discussed 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 sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."

God not only wants you to prosper, but He gives you the power to get wealth.

For so long, I thought it was godly to be poor. For so long, I thought going without things was an act of contrition on my part, and somehow believed my dedication to poverty impressed God.

But that is not what the Bible says.

He wants you to prosper, and He gives you the power to get wealth.

God has a covenant with you. If you understand God and His Word, and if your life is one that abides in His will, then the Lord has a covenant of blessing for your life.

"But Brother John, you know, money is the root of all evil," Mr. Skeptic smugly shouts.

"The Bible teaches that, you know."

Skeptic, hold on to your skeptical halo. The Word of God does not say that money is the root of all evil. In First Timothy 6:10 it reads: "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 is the root of all evil.

If the money itself were evil, God would not give you the power to obtain it.

He does promise that as His obedient child, you will receive plenty of wealth, as long as you do not develop a love for it.

The concepts in this book are so powerful that I cannot help but believe that if every child of God reading right now would believe and understand Deuteronomy 8:18 about God giving the power to get wealth, we could supply all the Christian ministry needs in the world today, and bring back the King in short order.

This is the whole purpose for God's giving us wealth; He expects us to spread His Word.

Wealth derived for the wrong purpose would never make you happy. If it did, then no one with money would ever commit suicide or go into divorce court or have a drinking problem.

Wealth not received from God will not make you happy. Many times people with the most money are also those with the most misery.

When wealth is obtained through God's Plan, it comes with the promise that it will make you happy-without sorrow. Proverbs 10:22 states: "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it."

What type of riches causes sorrow? The type we desperately try to hold on to, the riches that mean so much to us that their loss would be a major crisis in life.

God's wealth is different.

It is a wealth to be given away!

Once again we see that God's wisdom is foolishness in the world.

Givers get, to give again-to Him, for His glory.

If it were not for the greed of man, there would be more than enough abundance on earth. There is more than enough money on earth right now for every man, woman, boy and girl to live like a millionaire!

That's right, all four and a half billion people on this earth could live like millionaires were it not for the greed of man!

As you start receiving from God as you apply His laws, do not let greed get in the way of His

purpose. As you receive, turn right around and give a generous measure back into His ministries.

Give the tithe; get those windows of heaven open in your life.

Give great, generous offerings to those places God tells you to, so that a good measure will be poured out to you through the open windows of heaven.

Be careful that the abundance of your life does not start to make you greedy. Let God shine through all of your life, especially through your financial matters.

The only wealth that will not bring sorrow is the wealth that you control, the wealth that does not control you, wealth you do not love, but are willing to put back into the Gospel of God. Ecclesiastes 10:19 says ... "money answereth all things."

Is your money doing that?

Is your money building God's Kingdom or building your kingdom?

Remember 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 ye mete [measure], it shall be measured to you again."

Remember, there is more than enough for the man or woman who is a gracious giver, and by putting the principles you have just read into practice, you, too, can soon be always abounding in the good things of God.

BOOK TITLE: "MANIFESTING ABUNDANCE" by John Avanzini

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

"...they were all amazed at the mighty power of God...." [Luke 9:43]

Imagine getting back thirty dollars for giving a dollar, six thousand dollars for giving a hundred, a hundred thousand dollars or more for giving a thousand.

This rate of return sounds impossible to most folks.

Does it sound impossible to you?

Well, it didn't seem the least bit impossible to Jesus.

In fact, He actually taught these outrageous rates of increase.

I want to begin our time together in this book by making a special promise to you.

If you will read this material with an open mind and faithfully put its principles to work, you will be able to manifest these same increases in your own finances.

POWERFUL REVELATION

The information I will be sharing with you is a powerful revelation.

It is also a breakthrough truth! I say it is for two reasons. First, I say it is because of the person who speaks it. He is Jesus Christ Himself.

Secondly, I say it is because of the tremendous detail He goes into when teaching it.

TWO KEY VERSES

The great truth I am speaking of comes from the fourth chapter of Mark.

This chapter contains two key verses that should have immediately put us on notice as to their extreme importance. Even though these verses have been crying out to the Church for two thousand years, no one seems to have paid any attention to them.

After all these years of study, I can't recall a single teaching about them.

Let me be quick to take my part of the blame. In thirty years of ministry, I never placed any special emphasis on them either, that is, until now.

When you fully realize the magnitude of these verses, you cannot help but wonder why you haven't heard more about them.

## THE DOCTRINE OF JESUS

We find the first of these wondrous sayings in verse 2.

"And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine." Mark 4:2

Think of what you just read.

Verse 2 says Jesus is about to reveal His doctrine to us! I am convinced the main reason we have gone this long without emphasizing the significance of this statement is that it deals with doctrine.

So much division has taken place over doctrine that most Christians subconsciously tend to avoid it.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE

Please hear me carefully. I am not minimizing the importance of Bible doctrines. It is impossible to study the Word of God without realizing they exist.

The problem is that men have clouded the simple truth of God's Word by coming up with so many opposing doctrines.

Catholics have developed doctrines, and Baptists have done the same.

Methodists have them, as well as Lutherans.

The denominations all have their own distinctive doctrines, each one being different from the others.

## WHAT DOCTRINE IS

Let's take a moment and define what a doctrine is. Simply stated, it is what an individual or group of individuals understand about the Scripture.

To know what Presbyterians understand about God's Word, you must study Presbyterian doctrine. To know what Episcopalians believe, you must study Episcopal doctrine, and so forth throughout the denominations.

## WHAT JESUS UNDERSTOOD

With this definition of doctrine, let me once again draw your attention to verse 2.

"And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine." Mark 4:2

This portion of Scripture is of tremendous importance because it alerts us that Jesus will be

telling us about His doctrine.

If I know anything about Bible study, I know its primary purpose is to promote understanding of what Jesus (God) is teaching. We want to understand the mind of Christ.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Philippians 2:5

Well, there it is in black and white. Mark 4:2 says Jesus is about to reveal some of the things He understands.

## THE KEY PARABLE

A second verse in this chapter should also have caught our attention. It deals with parables.

"And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?" Mark 4:13

Just think about it. Here we have the key that qualifies us to understand all parables.

How is it that a verse with such tremendous promise could go virtually unnoticed for so long?

When I fully realized what these verses (2 and 13) were saying, I immediately began to study carefully the fourth chapter of Mark. I read it and reread it until I had all but memorized it. I also read everything written about it that I could find.

## BROKEN, DISJOINTED THOUGHTS

The longer I studied it, the more confusing it became. I just kept coming up with the same conclusions. The chapter appeared to be made up of broken portions of unrelated information.

Now don't misunderstand. I saw powerful streams of truth in it. However, each time a flow of truth began, it seemed to stop abruptly.

## SEEDS, BUSHEL, BEDS, AND A STORM

I found the parable of the sower. Jesus told it and retold it. Then there was a verse about a candle, a bushel, and a bed. This verse alerted me to the fact that I should be careful about what I heard.

The parable also gave me some information about the growth stages of an agricultural crop and the need for its timely harvest. It told me that a mustard seed could potentially grow into a very large tree. It could grow so big that birds could rest in its branches.

The chapter ended with the story about a storm at sea and how Jesus stopped it.

After reading Mark 4 again and again, all I could see was a mixture of unrelated thoughts. I was not able to make the chapter even vaguely resemble the doctrine of Jesus, nor did I find in it the key to all the other parables.

## CLEAR VISION ON A STORMY DAY

No matter how disjointed the chapter seemed, I kept on studying. My spirit kept telling me it contained something really big. This situation continued unchanged, until I heard another preacher make a statement about Mark 4. In the midst of his discourse, he asked us to turn to Mark 4:21. He spoke no more than a dozen words, and the answers I needed came flooding into my spirit.

With all due respect to the Brother, I didn't hear anything else he said from that point. With just a few choice words, the Holy Spirit put the key I had been waiting for into my hand. It opened up the whole chapter to me. Months of study suddenly came into focus. Not only that, but the book you now hold in your hand was born.

In closing this chapter, let me say that the fourth chapter of Mark is most surely the doctrine of Jesus Christ. In it He keeps His promise to open the parables to us.

The best part is that He shows us how to manifest abundance according to the principles of biblical economics.

## THE OVERVIEW

"...consider diligently what is before thee." Proverbs 23:1

This portion of the book is a new experience for me, for I have never written anything like it before. In it I must somehow give you a brief overview of the forty-one verses that make up Mark 4. I must write this overview without quenching your appetite for the revelation that will follow.

Let's quickly review the chapter.

Mark 4

Verse 1:

"And he began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land."

When Mark opens the chapter, Jesus is speaking to a multitude at the seaside.

Verse 2:

"And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine."

I have already alerted you to the major significance of this verse. The important thing here is that Jesus is about to give us His doctrine. He will be revealing a part of the mind of Christ.

Verses 3-8:

"Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow:  
And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.  
And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:  
But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.  
And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.  
And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred."

The parable of the sower is probably our Lord's best known discourse. He tells of four situations in which the sower places his seed. Three of these produce little or no harvest. However, one brings forth thirty, sixty, and even a hundredfold.

Verse 9:

"And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Jesus closes this portion of the teaching by instructing the hearers to hear what He says. It is obvious from the context that He wants them to do more than just hear the sound of His voice. He wants them to understand fully what He is saying.

Verses 10-12:

"And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:  
That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them."

Here Jesus identifies the ones who will be able to bring forth abundance. It will be those who understand.

Verse 13:

"And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?"

Here He reveals the key to all the parables, for He says those who understand this one will be able to understand all of them.

Verses 14-20:

"The sower soweth the word.

And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

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 becometh unfruitful.

And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive it, and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some an hundred."

Notice when He repeats the parable, Jesus makes a small but significant change. The seed He now speaks of is no longer an agricultural seed. It is the Word of God. Notice carefully that the Word-seed responds in exactly the same way the agricultural seed does.

The notable truth here is that God gives the power to reproduce to whatever He calls a seed.

Verse 21

"And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?"

This verse is the one that tends to block the flow of the whole chapter.

Traditional explanations do little to help, as the subject abruptly changes from sowing and reaping to beds, bushels, and candles. When you see what Jesus is actually saying in this verse, the roadblock immediately comes down, and all forty-one verses flow into one uninterrupted revelation.

Verse 22:

"For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad."

God wants to talk to you about the secrets of manifesting abundance.

Verse 23:

"If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."

Pay attention, for you will not understand the next two verses until you fully understand this

one.

Verses 24,25:

"And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.  
For he that hash, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath."

When you understand the implied subject, a primary principle of biblical economics becomes yours.

Verses 26-29:

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;  
And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.  
For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.  
But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

Understanding timing and seasons is necessary to manifest abundance.

Verses 30-34:

"And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:  
But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.  
And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.  
But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."

The manifestation of abundance comes only to those who strictly obey God's Kingdom principles in the distribution of their harvest.

Verses 35-39:

"And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.  
And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships.  
And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."

The Apostle Mark now does the teaching. He points out the essential part a competent pastor plays in the manifestation of abundance.

Verses 40,41:

"And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

The true pastor is not afraid to minister to the real problems of his sheep. He also never abandons the message of faith.

### A Sketchy Overview

I realize this overview has been sketchy to say the least. However, I do hope it has shown you that these forty-one verses hold a greater truth than the mixed teaching of the traditional commentators. These verses contain one, continual, unbroken teaching that instructs the believer in our Lord's doctrine of manifesting abundance.

Let's now proceed with an expanded teaching of these marvelous verses.

### THE SOWER

"...there went out a sower to sow."

Mark 4:3

Sowing usually refers to planting agricultural seed. People throughout the world know the parable of the farmer who sowed his seed.

### FOUR POSSIBILITIES

Jesus gives us four circumstances that might take place when the farmer plants agricultural seed.

First, the seed can fall by the wayside and become food for the birds (verse 4). These seeds bring no harvest for man.

Next, Jesus tells of seed that falls into stony ground. It brings forth a sprout. However, the shallow ground is unable to sustain normal growth. Where there is no depth of soil, a proper root system cannot develop. This lack of soil causes the plant to wither long before it can bring forth any kind of fruit (verses 5 and 6).

Then Jesus tells about seed the farmer sows among thorns (verse 7).

How foolish it seems to sow seed in a thorn patch. However, if you compare this account with the one in the Book of Luke, you see that thorn-infested soil can sometimes appear to be good ground.

In Luke 8:7, the writer tells us the ground already contained the seed of weeds. Upon close observation, you will find that weeds don't actually appear until a crop begins to grow.

"...and the thorns sprang up with it [the seed], and choked it."

Luke 8:7

After three failed attempts, the sower finally gets it right. He sows into good ground and receives the miracle of harvest-proportion returns.

"...other fell on good ground...and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred."

Mark 4:8

## QUESTIONS ARISE

After He gave this purely agricultural illustration, Jesus' disciples pondered the meaning of the story. Verse 10 tells us that as soon as they were alone, they asked the Lord to explain the parable.

"...when he was alone, they that were about him...asked of him the parable."

Mark 4:10

Knowing our Lord as they did, they were sure the parable contained more than just agricultural information.

At this point Jesus relates to them the importance of spiritual understanding. He tells them He uses parables to keep the mysteries of the Kingdom of God from those who are not of the Kingdom (verses 11 and 12).

Then He makes a powerful statement. He says the person who is able to understand this parable can understand all the parables.

"And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?"

Mark 4:13

## THE KEY

The key our Lord was giving His disciples is that all truth is parallel. Whatever is true in the natural realm will also be true in the spiritual.

Always look for basic truth in the natural illustration, and you will find that same truth in its spiritual counterpart. Remember, parables are nothing more than parallels.

## THE SEED CHANGES

Carefully notice that when Jesus restates the parable, the seed He speaks of in verse 14 is very different from the seed He used in verse 3.

Jesus has replaced the agricultural seed with the Word. Obviously, the Word of God is not an agricultural seed. Words and seeds are different.

Here's another difference between the two stories of the parable. In the spiritual application, the sower doesn't plant the Word into the field.

He sows it into the hearts of men. However, Jesus says the results of preaching the Word of God are parallel to the results of planting agricultural seed.

Now notice other parallels between the two stories. When the sower plants the Word of God into hearts that are like the wayside, Satan steals it (15).

When he sows into stony hearts, no root system develops. At the first sign of persecution, the new convert gives up (16,17).

When the sower plants the Word in a weed-infested heart, double, mindedness eventually causes the Word to lose its ability to bear fruit (18,19).

However, when he sows the Word into hearts having good ground, harvest-proportion increase takes place, bringing forth thirty, sixty, and even a hundredfold (20).

When a Christian sows the Word, the same results take place as when a farmer sows the agricultural seed.

## THE GIVER OF SEED POWER

Let me be very clear about this one thing. God is the only one who can give reproductive power.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so." Genesis 1:11

Evolution didn't give seed the power to reproduce, neither did the fictitious being called "Mother Nature."

Pay close attention to the hidden message of the second part of the parable.

God gives the power to reproduce to everything He calls a "seed."

With the power to reproduce also comes the potential of bringing forth thirty, sixty, and even hundredfold returns.

However, harvest can happen only if you plant your seed in good ground.

Scripture tells us God has assigned seed-power to a number of things. Let's take a moment and look at just a few of them.

### A FAITH SEED

"...If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed..."  
Matthew 17:20

Jesus gave harvest potential to faith when He called it a "seed."

Faith inside a good-ground heart responds the same way the mustard seed does when a farmer sows it into good ground. It starts out small, but it steadily grows.

The Apostle Paul tells us faith has potential for great increase.

"...your faith groweth exceedingly...." 2 Thessalonians 1:3

### A KINGDOM SEED

Jesus tells us the Kingdom of God has seed-power.

"...Whereunto shall we liken [compare] the kingdom of God?... It is like a grain of mustard seed.... But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs...." Mark 4:30-32

Think about it.

The Kingdom of God that began as a tiny mustard seed, has now grown literally to fill the whole earth (Daniel 2:35). Surely we must classify that kind of increase as a harvest proportion.

God has given to His Kingdom, the same power He has given to every agricultural seed.

Both faith and the Kingdom now have the potential for mega-increase.

Daniel tells of the expansive power of the Kingdom of God.

"...the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed..., but it shall break

in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." - Daniel 2:44

## CHRISTIAN SEEDS

"...if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed...." Galatians 3:29

The entire Christian family is the spiritual seed of Abraham. God's Word said Abraham's seed would reproduce in harvest proportions. God said it would one day be as numerous as the stars of the sky.

"...[God] said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." Genesis 15:5

The multiplication of the Church is proof positive that the seed of Abraham has come forth in harvest proportions.

## JESUS IS A SEED

When the disciples came saying certain Greeks desired to see Him, our Lord's response seemed strange. That is, unless you understand that He looked upon Himself as a seed.

He understood Himself to be the beginning of a totally new species that would one day populate the entire earth.

"...there were certain Greeks.... The same came...to Philip...saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying,.... Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." - John 12:20,21,23,24

What a strange answer Jesus gives.

Philip simply asks if some visitors from Greece might see Him. Notice that while their request has nothing to do with farming, our Lord gives them an agricultural answer.

He says unless it falls into the earth, the seed abides alone.

## JESUS WASN'T SHOWING HIMSELF

To this day, our Lord's answer remains a mystery to most folks, for they don't understand it was impossible for anyone to see Jesus at that time.

The only person He presented to the world was His Father. Keep in mind that only two chapters further, Jesus tells Philip that seeing Him is seeing His Father.

"...he that hath seen me hath seen the Father...."  
John 14:9

Our Lord's strange answer becomes clear when you understand that if they wanted to see Jesus, the Greeks would have to wait until the seed (Jesus) was planted into the earth.

After His death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus would bring forth sons and daughters who would change from glory unto glory into His image (2 Corinthians 3:18).

It would be the job of this new species (the born-again believers in Christ) to show Jesus to the world.

I hope you got it.

When He spoke of the corn of wheat falling into the ground and dying, Jesus was speaking of Himself. He was simply saying, "When I die and arise from the grave, I will bring forth many sons and daughters. They will show me [Jesus] to the world."

### MONEY GIVEN INTO THE GOSPEL

I have shown you God's ability to assign reproductive power to the things He calls "seed" to lay the groundwork for what I am about to share with you.

God has given seed-power to the money you give into the gospel.

But remember this-if you give little, you will get little.

A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.

2 Corinthians 9:6, TLB

There you have it. When you give your money into the gospel, God automatically gives it seed-power. If you use wisdom and plant it in good-ground ministries, your money-seed has the potential of bringing forth a money harvest.

In the same way that the sower who sows agricultural seed has the right to look forward to a superabundant yield, the sower of spiritual seed has the right to look forward to a superabundant yield.

The overwhelming truth of this parable is that God automatically gives reproductive power (harvest potential) to everything He calls a "seed."

This truth also pertains to your money.

When you give your hard-earned money into the gospel, God looks at it as a money-seed, thereby giving it the potential for massive multiplication.

## THOSE WITHIN AND THOSE WITHOUT

"...ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light..."  
Ephesians 5:8

In the verses between the two versions of the parable of the sower, Jesus gives us some other important information.

He tells who actually makes the request for more information about the parable. The request comes from a previously obscure group of people.

Tradition leads us to believe it was the twelve apostles who asked.

However, the language of verse 10 states something quite different.

"...they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable."  
Mark 4:10

At first it may seem as if I am splitting hairs. However, if you will allow me a brief moment, you will see there is more here than religion has taught us.

## INSIDE THE CIRCLE

The Amplified Bible brings light to what Mark tells us.

"And He said to them, To you has been entrusted the mystery of the kingdom of God [that is, the secret counsels of God which are hidden from the ungodly]; but to those outside of our circle everything becomes a parable."  
Mark 4:11, Amplified

This interpretation tells us Jesus was speaking of Himself and His disciples (the twelve apostles and the other followers) as being in a circle.

They were set apart from others.

Jesus goes on to tell us there is also a group outside the circle. He refers to them as "them that are without."

He says the mysteries of the Kingdom of God are exclusively for those with Him inside the circle. These mysteries are not public information, but private revelation.

"...Unto you [inside the circle] it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."  
Mark 4:11

A better translation of the word "know" would be "understand."

A group of people inside the circle with Jesus understands the mysteries of the Kingdom of God.

"...ye [little children of God] have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things."  
1 John 2:20

"...we [the brethren] have received...the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."  
1 Corinthians 2:12

## QUALIFYING FOR DIVINE UNDERSTANDING

Jesus tells us entering into the circle with Him is the first step to manifesting abundance through biblical principles.

To enter our Lord's circle, you must depart from darkness and enter into the light. You must exit the realm of natural thinking and enter the realm of supernatural thinking.

As a sinner, separated from God, you must come into fellowship with Him.

"...we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works....  
...being in time past Gentiles in the flesh...  
...ye were without Christ, being aliens...and strangers...having no hope, and without God...."

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

"...that he might reconcile both [Jew and Gentile] unto God in one body by the cross..."  
Ephesians 2:10-13,16

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see [understand] the kingdom of God."  
John 3:3

Salvation takes place by accepting Jesus as your Savior. There are no two ways about it.

God does not give the knowledge (understanding) of the mysteries of His Kingdom to those outside His circle. This wealth-gaining information comes only to those who are, as the Amplified Bible puts it, inside the circle. Only this group will be able to understand Kingdom principles of increase.

## THE CHURCH

Our Lord speaks of a relationship between a group of people who are assembled with a leader.

The advanced students (the twelve), or better said, the sub-leaders of the group surrounded the leader (Jesus). Another group consisting of less advanced students and relatively new followers surrounded those twelve. (This example is a good picture of the local church.)

I cannot overemphasize this truth.

The first step in manifesting abundance by Kingdom principles is the new birth and membership in a proper New Testament church. Just being born again isn't enough. You must also be part of a church that will nurture and help you grow up in Christ.

Remember, this parable opens all parables to you.

Now get this.

Sowers are farmers, and farmers are nurturers.

They nurture the tender sprouts carefully, taking care of them, feeding, watering, and protecting them until they come into full stature. In John 3:3, Jesus states that being born again allows you only to see the Kingdom of God.

Something else must take place before you can enter and enjoy its benefits.

When will the Church learn that the preaching of the gospel only saves souls?

The teaching of the Word of God establishes souls, causing them to experience the bountiful, new life God has for them.

Here's the bottom line.

Even if it falls into good ground, a seed cannot bring forth a harvest unless there is a farmer to nurture it into its full potential.

Neither can Christians bring forth the abundance God has planned for them without tender nurturing from a faithful pastor in a good local church.

There is a circle.

It's called the "local church."

Abundance by Kingdom principles comes only to those who grow to full stature by submitting to the environment and discipline of a proper local church.

Tradition has made Luke 6:38 the favorite scripture at offering time:

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together,

and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38

Please remember that tradition can make the Word of God of no effect.  
(See Mark 7:13.)

## NOT A HARVEST CONCEPT

There is a major problem with using Luke 6:38 in connection with giving money into the gospel.

This verse promises a very poor rate of increase. It doesn't even begin to reach harvest proportions.

It promises only a pressed-down, running-over bushelful in return for each bushel you give.

Granted, it will be more than you gave. Yet, it will be a far cry from thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.

Why, the literal interpretation of Luke 6:38 doesn't even touch the hem of the garment of what Jesus proposes in Mark 4! The more you think about it, the more obvious it will become.

Luke 6:38 does not speak of harvest-proportion returns.

No farmer would farm if he had to plant a bushel of corn to harvest one overflowing bushel of corn. It wouldn't be worth the effort for such a puny rate of return.

## HARVEST IS NOT NATURAL

Strange as it may seem, harvest is not a natural event. Nowhere in nature does it occur without human intervention.

Let me illustrate for you.

A grove of one hundred oak trees will yield literally thousands of acorns each year, but it won't bring forth thousands of additional oak trees each year.

However, if a farmer gathers up all the acorns and places them in potting soil, carefully watering and nurturing them, the grove will produce thousands of oak trees each year.

You see, harvest is not a natural event.

A human being has to take dominion over the natural rate of increase and force it into the wondrous dimensions we call "harvest."

## JESUS TEACHES MEGA-INCREASE

In Mark 4, Jesus clearly speaks of receiving in much greater proportions than just shaken down and running over.

He speaks of thirty bushels for one, and sixty bushels for one, and even one hundred or more bushels for one. It is obvious that this kind of return would quickly lead to abundance.

## WHAT YOU BELIEVE AND SAY

Scripture plainly teaches that you will have whatever you say and believe.

Understanding this truth should make a big difference in the proportion of increase you will receive from future offerings.

"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith."  
Mark 11:23

As long as you confess a Luke 6:38 increase over your offerings, you will receive the meager rate of increase of that verse.

Don't misunderstand. You will see an increase, but it will be no more than "...pressed down, and shaken together, and running over...."

However, if you will boldly begin to speak the thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and hundredfold return over your offerings, you will be one step closer to receiving harvest-proportion returns.

If you speak and fully believe in your heart that what you say will come to pass, you will have whatever you say (Mark 11:23)

To move forward into this breakthrough, you will have to go beyond tradition into the realm of "...rightly dividing the word of truth."

"Study to show thyself approved...rightly dividing the word of truth."  
2 Timothy 2:15

## THE PRESENT TRUTH

Look at how perfectly this fresh revelation fits with the things the Holy Spirit has been revealing to the Body of Christ during the last few years.

We have only recently begun to understand that money we give into the gospel is seed.

However, we have hindered its potential by yoking it with the snail's-pace increase of Luke 6:38. Without realizing it, we have yoked the ox with the ass (Deuteronomy 22:10).

In making this statement, I do not intend dishonor to the truth of Luke 6:38. I am merely showing how incompatible the slow growth rate of Luke 6:38 is, compared to the explosive potential existing in every seed.

Just imagine how much closer the Church would be to its goal of evangelizing the world if we had harnessed the truth of seed-faith giving with the high-powered potential of harvest.

### PULL OUT ALL THE STOPS

Why not just step out on the water of faith and go boldly where precious few have gone before?

I challenge you to press on into the high ground that lies beyond the scant increase of Luke 6:38. Go all the way into harvest, where thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold are commonplace. Enter the land of superabundance.

### PRINCIPLE AND PROPORTION

I am not suggesting you scrap Luke 6:38, for it plays an important part in every offering. It establishes the principle of increase: Whatever you give, God will return to you increased.

However, Luke 6:38 does not begin to approach the full potential of return you can receive from your giving.

The proportion of increase always depends upon the quality of the ground and the degree of human intervention.

If you plant in good ground and properly apply the laws of the harvest, your rate of increase can quickly grow into harvest proportions. It can easily reach thirtyfold, sixtyfold, or even a hundredfold.

### THE MEASURE OF YOUR RETURN

The second thing Luke 6:38 establishes is that your measure of return will be in proportion with the measure of your giving.

If you plant an acre of wheat, you will not reap hundreds of acres of wheat. You will reap only the wheat your one acre brings forth.

Paul reaffirms this truth when telling us the farmer who plants little will reap little, and if he plants much, he will reap much (2 Corinthians 9:6).

Scant giving will never produce mega-returns.

If you give with a thimble, you will restrict God to giving back to you in thimblefuls.

If you give with a teaspoon, you can receive only teaspoonfuls multiplied back to you.

However, if you give by the truckload, God will give back to you in truckloads.

"...For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."  
Luke 6:38

## WHAT HUNDREDFOLD MEANS

"...abundantly above all that we ask or think..."  
Ephesians 3:20

For many years, my ministry has focused on the hundredfold return. This special anointing came to me during a very personal experience with God.

During that encounter, He gave me specific instructions about speaking the hundredfold return over the offerings of His people. To the best of my ability, I have been faithful in doing as He said.

During these years, many people have asked, "What does hundredfold really mean? Is it one hundred times? Is it 100 percent? Is it double? What does it really mean?"

For a long time the only answer I could give was that I didn't know exactly what it meant. I had to answer this way, because at the time, I had no specific revelation from the Lord about the numerical value of a hundredfold.

## BEST POSSIBLE

Recently God has increased His revelation to me in this area. Let's take a look at what He has shown me.

It is easy to understand what thirtyfold and sixtyfold mean.

Thirtyfold means thirty times, and sixtyfold means sixty times.

However, a hundredfold is much different.

Notice that in telling the story of the sower, Jesus breaks the mathematical progression He uses after reaching sixtyfold.

He progressed by thirty numbers at a time, until He went beyond sixtyfold.

Then instead of adding another thirty to His count and coming to ninetyfold, He jumps forty numbers and ends with a hundredfold.

To understand what Jesus is doing, we must realize that one hundred is a unique number. It is the only one that can represent an indefinite amount of numbers. It can also mean complete, or the best possible.

In the classroom, one hundred represents the best possible score.

If you were to take a test with one hundred questions, the best possible score would be one hundred. If the test had twenty-five questions, the best possible grade would not be twenty-five.

It would still be one hundred.

Let's go one step further.

If a test had two hundred questions on it, the best possible grade would not be two hundred.

It would still be one hundred.

## MORE THAN ONE HUNDRED TIMES

When it is planted in good ground, a little apple seed increases far more than one hundred times. One apple seed produces one apple tree.

To determine the yield of the seed properly, you must count all the apple seeds the tree brings forth in its lifetime.

It could be tens of thousands of seeds.

The average apple has about five seeds in it. We could safely conclude that if hundredfold meant only one hundred times, a hundredfold apple seed could bring forth only about twenty apples.

The mathematics are as follows.

Twenty apples times five apple seeds in each apple, equals one hundred apple seeds.

However, we know that an apple tree can live many years, and it can produce thousands of apples.

That information would mean that in the case of apple seeds, a hundredfold could easily

equal tens of thousands of seeds.

This information tells us that a hundredfold return can mean much more than just one hundred times.

#### LESS THAN ONE HUNDRED TIMES

If hundredfold had to mean exactly one hundred times, a cattle rancher could never experience the hundredfold return from a cow.

The average cow produces only one calf per year.

Therefore, to bring forth one hundred calves would take one hundred years. That's longer than a cow's natural life span.

As I understand it, a good breeder cow will bring forth about nine calves during her productive years. More than nine is considered exceptional.

The best possible yield from a cow would be nine to thirteen calves.

Therefore, hundredfold in the livestock industry (considering just the animals) would mean much less than one hundred times.

From these two illustrations, you can see that hundredfold can represent differing amounts of increase.

God has shown me through these examples that hundredfold would have to mean the best possible yield.

#### A REALTOR TEACHES BIBLICAL ECONOMICS

Before you can consider something as the best possible yield, you must take circumstances into account.

I personally came to understand this matter in a dramatic way.

In 1981 my wife and I were moving away from Southern California.

You can imagine our disappointment when we had to move before we sold our house. We left it in the hands of a capable realtor.

No sooner had we moved than housing sales came to an abrupt halt.

After ten long months, the house finally sold. By then we had dropped our price a considerable amount.

This loss had a real impact on me, because we had expected a fast, full-price sale.

I remember rehearsing my disappointment to the Father. Little did I know how ungrateful my whining must have sounded to Him.

It was more than two years before my eyes opened to my ingratitude.

Our California realtor and I were talking.

He began to tell me what a miracle the sale of our house had been. It had been the only house in the area to sell during a two-year period.

The local realtors were referring to the house we had sold as "the miracle house." They said it was the house God had sold for the preacher, when no other house was selling!

As soon as I was alone, I asked God to forgive me for being so ungrateful. I had murmured and complained while God was giving me the best possible return.

I now realize we had experienced the hundredfold return. God had truly blessed us exceedingly, abundantly above anything the heathen had experienced under those same circumstances.

I have learned never to judge God's performance in my harvest until I have checked how the heathen come out with theirs.

My God is the God of thirtyfold and sixtyfold, and no matter what the circumstances, He always gives me the best possible return!

He always makes it a hundredfold!

## LUKE'S ACCOUNT

When you read the parable of the sower in Luke 8, the true meaning of a hundredfold becomes even clearer, for Luke doesn't even mention thirtyfold and sixtyfold.

"And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold...."  
Luke 8:8

When you compare Luke 8:8 with Mark 4:8, there is no question they are describing the same event.

Mark's account says thirtyfold, sixtyfold, then a hundredfold.

Luke says only hundredfold.

This shows that hundredfold can mean any amount of increase.

My dear friend, I hope you can see that with the hundredfold return, it is possible for you to manifest the superabundance Jesus teaches in Mark 4.

If you keep yourself in a position to receive the best God has, it won't take long for every promise of blessing and abundance in God's Word to become yours.

It will be as the Scripture says:

"...exceeding abundantly beyond all we ask or think..."

Ephesians 3:20

#### THE CANDLE REPRESENTING THE SPIRIT OF MAN

"...walk in the spirit...."

Galatians 5:16

To understand the revelation of Mark 4 properly, you must know exactly what Jesus meant in verse 21 when He spoke of the candle.

"And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?"

Mark 4:21

#### THE BRICK WALL

Not fully understanding this verse will block the flow of the whole fourth chapter for you.

Remember that in the traditional interpretation, the candle presents a new subject that ends the teaching about receiving thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and a hundredfold.

In my early studies of this chapter, I kept thinking some evil conspirator must have committed the horrible sin of removing part of Mark's precious revelation.

My spirit kept telling me our Lord had more to say about the wonderful realm of the hundredfold return. Why would He bring us to the threshold of mega-harvest (verses 8 and 20), and then without finishing the thought, just stop and begin a new discourse about beds, bushels, and candlesticks?

#### HARVEST PROPORTIONS WOULD CHANGE EVERYTHING

I just knew that if God's children could learn how to operate in the harvest principles of Mark 4, everything would quickly change for the Church. We would easily fund world missions. No

longer would it be necessary to mortgage the gospel to build desperately needed church facilities.

With a full explanation of how to manifest abundance, no Christian would ever have to say no to funding the end-time harvest.

All we needed was a step-by-step plan. Only a few more words, and the mega-return of Mark 4 would be ours.

However, as I understood it, the chapter seemed to contain no practical, step-by-step instructions. Unless I was missing something, superabundant increase would have to go on existing only in parable form.

## DIVINE REVELATION CHANGES THINGS

How quickly things change when divine revelation comes! This is exactly what happened as I listened to another preacher one cold January morning. He had just asked us to turn to Mark 4:21.

No sooner had we turned than I realized he was about to comment on the brick-wall statement about the candle, bushel, and bed. I immediately focused all my attention on what he was saying.

I must say his next words were not the most profound I have ever heard.

The preacher simply stated that the candle spoken of in this verse was meant to have a figurative application. Jesus was using the candle to represent the spirit of man.

To prove this point, he turned our attention to a verse in the Book of Proverbs.

"The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord..."  
Proverbs 20:27

## THE BRICK WALL CAME DOWN

Those were the last words of the sermon I heard that day.

Suddenly it all became clear to me.

When He spoke of placing the candle on the candle stand, Jesus was not beginning a new thought. Verse 21 was not the brick wall I had thought. It is one of the most important steps a person must take to manifest harvest-proportion returns.

Mega-harvest will be available only to those who will let their spirit control their life!

## REVELATION STIRS REVELATION

By this time, the thoughts were coming so fast I barely had time to write them down. The spirit of revelation became so strong that most of what you find written in this book came to me in the next few minutes of that meeting.

Thank God, Mark 4 is no longer a series of disjointed thoughts! It is a complete revelation of how the believer is to manifest harvest-size increase.

We all know good ground is necessary for an abundant harvest in the natural realm; good ground is also necessary in the spiritual realm. To receive harvest-size returns, you must live a spirit-ruled life. The spirit-dominated life turns the natural heart (soul) into good ground.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT

When He speaks of walking in the spirit in Mark 4 (putting the candle on the candlestick), our Lord is not instructing us to walk in the flesh.

The biblical meaning of walking in the spirit is the process of conducting the affairs of your life under the direction and control of your own, reborn, reliable, higher spirit.

Jesus is saying that if you want mega-harvest, you must let your spirit control your life. Spiritual harvest principles will not function in the life of a Christian whose flesh dominates him. Harvest-proportion returns come only to Christians whose spirit-man rules.

## SOWING IS NATURAL, HARVEST IS SUPERNATURAL

Keep in mind that the sowing of seed is a natural process.

However, the manifestation of increase from a seed is a spiritual process.

Farmers are not all religious people. However, the Word of God declares that every time a farmer (saved or lost) has a harvest, two things take place.

First, he sows a natural seed.

Then supernatural intervention has to take place.

"...So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;  
...and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how."  
Mark 4:26,27

This verse tells us a miracle happens every time reproduction takes place.

Notice the farmer plants the seed. However, the actual process causing the increase is beyond his ability to understand. It's supernatural!

The Word of God says: "...he knoweth not how."

God must activate the life-multiplying power in every seed if there is to be an increase.

As smart as he considers himself, man still cannot manufacture a seed that will reproduce.

Only God gives life.

### A THREE-PART BEING

Scripture says you are made up of spirit, soul, and body:

"...I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Thessalonians 5:23

These three parts of your being are constantly striving for the leadership of your life.

When the soulish portion of your being rules, your life becomes a process of manipulation that accomplishes only selfish goals.

When your body rules, it will strive to accomplish only those things that please it.

It is impossible, under the leadership of either the body or the soul, to live a Christ-centered life. The reason is that "God is a Spirit..." (John 4:24), and He chooses to communicate primarily with man's spirit.

It is as the Psalmist says:

"Deep calleth unto deep...."

Psalm 42:7

The Apostle John tells us that a person who will communicate with God must do so through his spirit:

"...the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him."

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:23,24

For God to lead you into the understanding that brings forth abundance, you must be

constantly communicating with Him. To communicate with God, your spirit must dominate your life.

Elihu, Job's friend, made an interesting statement about this communication. He pointed out that the spirit in man receives revelation from God:

"...there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration [breath] of the Almighty giveth them understanding."

Job 32:8

Elihu is saying that the Spirit of God breathes understanding into the spirit of man. The reason is that the spirit of man corresponds to the substance of God:

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship [communicate with] him in spirit and in truth."

John 4:24

## GOD WANTS TO TALK TO YOU

In Mark 4:21,22, Jesus tells of the need for the dominance of the spirit man (candle) and why He wants our spirits to dominate. Let me paraphrase these verses to clarify further what they are saying: The spirit of a man should not be hidden. It must be in the position of leadership over the man, because nothing is hidden that will not be manifest. Neither will anything be kept secret (Luke 8:17).

So only the spiritually attuned ear will receive the wise counsel of God in manifesting abundance.

The breakthrough truth in these two verses quickly comes forth when we fully understand the candle.

Placing your spirit man in control opens wide the door to understanding the whole chapter. All forty-one verses can now speak to us about the doctrine of Jesus, which is the miracle of seedtime and harvest.

## UNDERSTANDING AND RECEIVING

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

John 8:32

The longer I am saved, the more I realize the need to understand the exact meanings of words. Nowhere is this understanding more important than in studying the Word of God.

The English language, as spoken by Americans, tends to change even more quickly than fashions in clothing do. It goes through an unending evolution that takes from, adds to, and

even gives new meanings to its words.

## EARS TO UNDERSTAND

The breakthrough truth I want to bring to you in this chapter deals with a word we find in Mark 4:9,23. The King James Version interprets it as hear. The Greek dictionary proves that translation of the word to be incomplete. Let's see how these two verses use it.

"...he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."  
Mark 4:9

"If any man have ears to hear, let him hear."  
Mark 4:23

The original word is #191 in the Greek dictionary of Strong's concordance. It is the word akouo. The English word that accurately describes the intended meaning of this word in these verses is understand, meaning "to understand the thing you are hearing."

In Matthew's account of the parable of the sower, the translators did translate it as "understand":

"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart...."  
Matthew 13:19

Verse 23 says that the saint who understands what he hears will receive in harvest proportions:

"But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."  
Matthew 13:23

When you apply this interpretation to the word in Mark 4:23, you see that our Lord is going on with His instructions about receiving the thirty, sixty, and hundredfold increase.

See how clear it becomes when you use the word 'understand' where the translators used the weaker 'hear':

"If any man have ears to [understand], let him [understand]."  
Mark 4:23

## UNDERSTANDING REGULATES RECEIVING

Now we can understand the intended meaning of verses 24 and 25. Our Lord warns us to be very careful with what we understand.

"...Take heed what ye hear [understand]: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you...."  
Mark 4:24

The traditional interpretation of this verse has clouded the reason Jesus gave this warning. We have always compared the measure in verse 24 to the measure in Luke 6:38:

"...For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."  
Luke 6:38

Jesus is not speaking of the measure of Luke 6:38 in Mark 4:24.

Keep in mind that He has been talking about understanding, so when the Lord says, "...with what measure ye mete [or give],..." He is not referring to the amount a person gives.

The subject Jesus has been discussing establishes the measure of Mark 4:24. See a true revelation of verse 24 as I now show you the proper context:

"...with what measure [of understanding] ye [give], it shall be measured to you...."  
Mark 4:24

Paraphrased, it would be as follows: "If any man has ears to understand, let him understand. He said again to them, be careful what you understand, because with whatever measure of understanding you do your giving, whatever you give will be measured back to you. Unto you who properly understand shall more be given."

Clearly our Lord is telling us that with this new insight, the more you understand about Him and His Word when you give, the greater your rate of return will be.

## IT'S A BIBLICAL CONCEPT

The concept that your receiving will increase as your understanding increases is not new.

Think for a moment, and you will realize that receiving according to your understanding pertains to all scriptural truth.

Understanding applies to the baptism in the Holy Ghost and speaking with other tongues. If you understand that God no longer gives the gift of tongues, you will find it difficult to receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost and your prayer language.

Your understanding also applies to divine healing.

As long as you limit your understanding, and believe divine healing ended with the death of the twelve apostles, it will be extremely difficult for you to receive divine healing. Your lack of understanding God's ongoing plan of healing His children, will limit your ability to receive.

On the other hand, you can increase your understanding through studying God's Word, and recognize that God is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Hebrews 13:8). This increase in your understanding will enable you to believe that if He ever healed anyone, God is still healing people today.

You can go even further and increase your understanding to know that when the Roman soldiers laid stripes on the back of Jesus, those stripes purchased healing for everyone. This simple growth in understanding will immediately allow you to receive healing.

Not only that, but it will also qualify you for delivering God's healing power to others by the laying on of your own hands:

"...they [the saved] shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."  
Mark 16:18

#### JOHN THE BELOVED TAUGHT IT

What you just learned about increased understanding also brings increased prosperity. To see this truth, you must look with me at the prayer of the Apostle John:

"Beloved, I wish [pray] above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."  
3 John 2

Remember that your soul is your mind (intellect), will, and emotions.  
The word that best sums up these three parts of the soul is 'understanding.'

The main point of the Apostle John's prayer is not that you prosper, but that you prosper in direct ratio to your increase of understanding about prosperity.

Hear the condition he lays down for prospering and being in health:

"...as thy soul [understanding] prospereth [increases]."  
3 John 2

#### DON'T GIVE UP

When the promises of God seem difficult to receive, it is not the time to give up on them. It's time to turn to the Word of God and increase your understanding about the promise that is eluding you.

Don't allow yourself to pass up even one promise from God. He wants you to have all of them.

He makes this fact crystal clear by saying He doesn't tease us by offering promises He won't deliver. ...He isn't one to say "yes" when he means "no." He always does exactly what he says. He carries out and fulfills all of God's promises, no matter how many of them there are.... [2 Corinthians 1:19,20, TLB]

When receiving becomes difficult, don't give up. Just remember the instructions our Lord gives in Mark 4:24 where He says that with the same measure of understanding you do your giving, He will give back to you.

Not only that, but keep in mind what the Apostle John said in 3 John 2. His top prayer was that your prosperity and health would increase as your understanding increases.

## TWENTY-SIX YEARS OF OBSERVATION

Twenty-six years of being a pastor have made me a student of human behavior.

Time and again, I have seen two separate families in a church begin to tithe. They would both faithfully give their 10 percent each week.

Sometimes one family would experience an increase in their income, while the other family would see no change. After a while, the family who had seen no results would begin to complain and question the Word of God. They would eventually begin to accuse God of not prospering them as He did other tithers.

The truth is, there is nothing wrong with God. He is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).

His heart's desire is to prosper both families as much as they will allow.

Upon closer observation of such families, I have always found that one family prospered because they had a solid understanding of God's Word and what He expected from them.

The solution for the other family was always simple. They had to get into God's Word and increase their understanding of His qualifications for receiving through the heaven their tithe had opened (Malachi 3:10).

Most people wouldn't fully understand what I just said, but at least twenty-five things can immediately block the flow from heaven to a tither.

It is imperative that you remember the words of our Lord. If you wish to increase your receiving, you must increase your understanding.

Remember: If any man has ears to understand, let him understand. He said again to them,

be careful what you understand, because with whatever measure of understanding you do your giving, God will measure whatever you give, back to you.

God will give more to you who properly understand (Mark 4:23,24 paraphrased).

## FARMER JOHN

I want to close this chapter with a simple illustration.

Just suppose I decided to move to a farm and make my living there for ten years.

On this farm would be everything a farmer needed: tools, seed, fertilizer, books about farming, and information on the time and location of weekly classes on proper farming.

If I were to pay close attention to the lectures and totally believe what the textbook on farming said, I might have a harvest in the first year. Yet, if I did, it would no doubt be a limited one.

If I were to continue to study and attend the lectures, faithfully applying every new thing I understood about farming, surely my harvest size would increase each year.

Why would this increase occur?

It wouldn't be because attending lectures on farming would make me lucky. No, but the more I would study farming, the more my understanding of what to do would increase.

The more I understood and followed good advice, the more harvest the good ground of that farm would be able to yield to me.

This same principle applies to your giving to God.

With each bit of scriptural understanding you gain, you will automatically increase your ability to receive.

## JESUS AND THE WEALTH OF THE WICKED

"...the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just..."  
Proverbs 13:22

Every material possession God ever gave His children, came from the wicked.

Even the wonderful Promised Land He gave Abraham was the bona fide possession of someone else.

When Sarah died, Abraham buried her on the land God had given him. However, he had to

pay cash for the burial site. While there is no question God had given him the land, Abraham had not yet taken possession of it.

God also took the wealth of the wicked Egyptians and gave it to His children when He brought them out of captivity.

This same thing happened time after time throughout the Old Testament.

You don't have to go far in studying the Bible before you realize that God continually strips the wicked of their wealth and gives it to His children.

"A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just."  
Proverbs 13:22

"He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor."  
Proverbs 28:8

"For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God...."  
Ecclesiastes 2:26

"This is the portion of a wicked man with God, and the heritage of oppressors, which they shall receive of the Almighty. Though he heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay; He may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver."  
Job 27:13,16-17

These scriptures are crystal clear.

They declare God's intention to give the wealth of the sinner to His righteous children.

While everyone agrees the Old Testament teaches this truth, is it for us today?  
It's for Today

With all respect to those who differ, Jesus does speak of transferring the wealth from the wicked to the just. One of the strongest instances is right here in Mark 4.

"For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath."  
Mark 4:25

Here Jesus is speaking of two groups, those who have and those who have not.

To understand what the haves have and the have nots don't have, you must strictly adhere to the biblical context of this verse. Upon close examination, you will find that from verse 23 through 25, the subject never changes. Be careful, though, for Mark sometimes states the subject and sometimes implies it. However, it does not change. The subject remains understanding

The most effective way to show you what our Lord is actually saying in verse 25 is to paraphrase once again, Mark 4:23-25:

"If any man has ears to understand, let him understand. He went on to say, Be careful what you understand, for with the same measure of understanding you do your giving, God will measure your return back to you. The more understanding you have, the greater your return will be, for he who has understanding will receive, and he who doesn't have understanding, even the wealth he has will be taken from him."

When these verses are written out in this way, it is easy to see that our Lord is speaking of removing the possessions of one group, and giving them to the other. He identifies one group as having understanding, and the other as not having it.

In Mark 4:10-12, our Lord makes it clear who understands and who doesn't.

When He is alone with the disciples, they ask about the meaning of the parable of the sower.

He tells them they (the children of God) can know (understand) the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but outsiders (the children of darkness) can't know (understand) them.

The twelfth verse puts it plainly:

"That seeing they may see, and not perceive [understand the things they see]; and hearing they may hear, and not understand...."

Mark 4:12

Jesus simply says He will give the possessions of those who don't understand the Kingdom of God (the wicked) to those who do understand it (those who are righteous in His sight).

In Mark 4:25, Jesus is actually repeating the second part of Proverbs 13:22.

"...the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just."

Proverbs 13:22

How clear these words become when we understand Mark 4:23-25 in its scriptural context!

Jesus is simply telling us where God is temporarily storing the abundance He wants to give us. It is now in the hands of the wicked.

They have it stacked up together and rusting, awaiting the end of time when God will

redistribute it to His children.

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days."

James 5:1-3

God plans to give us the wealth the wicked now possess.

## TWO OTHER PLACES

Jesus plainly states in two other places that God will give the wealth of the wicked to the just.

One is in the sixth chapter of Matthew where He tells us of the benefits of seeking first His Kingdom.

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

Matthew 6:33

With close examination of the context of this verse, you will find that Jesus promises to add to those who seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, the very same things the Gentiles (sinners) are seeking to stack up.

"(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:)..."

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

Matthew 6:32,33

Jesus is saying: Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all the things the sinners are stacking up, God will subtract from them and add to you.

Jesus also declares that God will give the wealth of the wicked to the just in Matthew 25, in the parable about the talents.

If you remember, the master gave five talents to one servant, two talents to another, and one to the last.

Two of these servants were faithful to obey the master and increase their talents.

However, the third one hid his talent in the ground. When he came to reckon with this disobedient servant, the master said:

"...thou wicked and slothful servant...."

Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents."

Matthew 25:26,28

Take the money from the wicked servant, and give it to the obedient servant!

Thank God, the mega-wealth the wicked now possess is once again ready to change hands.

No longer will it stagnate in their treasure houses.

It is even now ready for redistribution among the informed children of God.

## WEALTH NEVER LIES IN THE STREETS

These words from the lips of our Lord bring much credibility to the message of manifesting superabundance, for everyone knows that wealth never lies in the streets. It's always in someone's possession.

God will simply take it from the wicked as He has done in times past, and give it to His children.

Remember, if He has done it before, you can depend upon His doing it again (Hebrews 13:8).

This situation becomes clear, especially when we see our Lord's words in the true context of Mark 4.

There is more wealth in the world today than ever before. It's out there right now, waiting for that special end-time group of Christians who will understand enough about biblical economics to acquire and use it.

## A PROCESS, NOT AN EVENT

"To every thing there is a season, and a time...."  
Ecclesiastes 3:1

In Mark 4:26-28 notice how smoothly our Lord changes the subject from transferring the wealth from the wicked to the just, to the timing involved in manifesting the wealth transfer.

Jesus tells us that abundance by biblical principles comes in the same way the farmer's harvest does.

We all know that bringing a seed to harvest is never an instantaneous event. It always comes through a time-consuming process.

God's abundant supply comes from a lifestyle of sowing that steadily progresses from stage to stage.

Each time of sowing brings more abundance, until the final phase, which is exceedingly abundant, above all you can ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

## THE PROCESS

Notice Jesus again uses a parable to illustrate the time needed for manifesting abundance.

"And He said, The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seed upon the ground, And then continues sleeping and rising night and day while the seed sprouts and grows and increases-he knows not how. The earth produces [acting] by itself-first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."

Mark 4:26-28, Amplified

It is evident from these verses that Jesus is not speaking of the timing associated with the world's method of accumulating abundance. In the uncertain system of this world, everyone tries to make it as fast as he can.

Words such as windfalls, rip-offs, and killings are common in the financial realm of darkness. However, we are in the world, but not of the world (John 17:16).

Our Lord is not inviting us to participate in the flawed process of natural wealth accumulation. Instead, He is showing us His unfailing principles of supernatural wealth accumulation.

"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest...shall not cease."  
Genesis 8:22

## THE TIMING

In Mark 4:26-28, Jesus is describing the time needed for manifesting harvest-proportion increases.

Hear it again.

You must not only sow your seed into the good ground of the gospel, but you must also allow time to pass.

The farmer sleeps and rises a number of times before his seed progresses to the next stage. During this time, the sprouts appear, grow, and increase. It is a process, not an event. It takes time, for many nights and days pass as the seed develops.

## THREE DEFINITE PERIODS

Three distinct time periods divide the process leading to harvest. Our Lord calls them "the blade," "the ear," and "the full corn in the ear."

It is important to understand these three stages of growth, for they prepare you for the definite changes that must take place in the seed as it moves toward harvest.

Without clear understanding, the first two stages could cause you to become discouraged, and you could miss the harvest. However, when you understand them, these stages assure you that the seed is properly progressing.

Once again, it depends on your understanding.

## THE BLADE

After the farmer sows it, his seed is completely out of his control. For a while it seems as if nothing is going to happen. The field looks empty for many days. During this barren season, patience is necessary.

"...be...followers [imitators] of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."  
Hebrews 6:12

For those who have patience, by and by a change takes place. The blade breaks through the soil, and everything takes on a new perspective. The process is working and harvest is coming.

However, blade time can be detrimental to harvest, for it brings the temptation to end the whole process by consuming the sprouts.

## THE SPIRITUAL REALM

In the spiritual application of blade time, this same danger exists. As soon as you experience the first increase from giving, you may be tempted to spend it all on your personal needs and desires.

No doubt the disciples faced this same kind of temptation during the miracle feedings our Lord performed.

Just think of the temptation when they saw fish and loaves rapidly multiplying in their hands. How tempting it must have been to set aside a few choice fish and some nice, fresh loaves for their own personal use.

Thank God, they didn't give in to their basic instincts, for when the fish and loaves stopped multiplying in their hands, our Lord had not forgotten them.

There were twelve large basketfuls left over (Mark 6:35-44).

Their patience brought them more than they could have hidden away while distributing the loaves and fishes.

Now here it is in a nutshell. When the first signs of financial increase show up, don't stop giving. Just keep on planting and replanting.

Make sure each successive time of sowing contains a greater portion of each new harvest.

The blade stage is to be a time of hope, not a season of foolishly eating up the sprouts. Let each sprout grow into a full harvest.

Remember, harvesting sprouts brings nothing more than a Luke 6:38 return. It will be only a little bit more than you planted.

However, if your faith, hope, and patience can prevail, allowing your seed to reach its full potential, God's Word says it can yield thirtyfold, sixtyfold, and even a hundredfold.

Don't be like Judas who didn't have the faith and patience to wait for the manifestation of the Kingdom of God. His desire for immediate gratification caused him to sell our Lord for a mere thirty pieces of silver, which were nothing more than sprouts compared to the value of everlasting life.

Instead, you should be like Father Abraham who patiently waited for God to deliver the full measure of everything He had promised him.

"And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise."  
Hebrews 6:15

Blade time is the wrong time to put in the sickle and reap.

## STALK TIME

The King James Version translates our Lord's words as "...then the ear..." (Mark 4:28).

I'd like to call it "stalk time." It is after the tender sprout becomes a rough, rigid stalk.

This phase of development seems the longest to the farmer. Not only does it take a long time, but the crop starts looking as if it has died.

## WE LOOKED LIKE FOOLS

I can personally testify to the difficulty that goes with this waiting time, for my wife and I have been through it.

Waiting caused us to look like fools to our family. It was as if we were standing still financially. Everyone seemed to be doing better than we were. We gave and gave, and then just gave some more.

However, no matter how much we gave, we just didn't seem to be getting ahead, as the others in our family were. All we could see were stalks.

Oh, yes! God met our needs, but we didn't seem to be accumulating anything.

During this period of time, we learned what Christians mean when they say, "We know that we know that we know."

We just wouldn't give up, because God's Word kept telling us our God would come through.

Stalk time separates believers who know God's Word is true from those who only hope His Word is true. Most Christians who give up and go back to the economic system of the world, do so during stalk time.

I wish it were possible to go immediately from blade time to harvest time.

However, God in His infinite wisdom has not chosen to make it that way.

Every Christian who will walk in the full manifestation of harvest will have to go patiently through the dry season of stalk time.

## HARVEST TIME

How wonderful it is when the farmer thrusts in the sickle and takes the harvest! The exhilaration of reaping is so totally satisfying that the farmer sows again and again toward even bigger harvests.

It is an experience beyond description. This glorious feeling is especially wonderful when it comes in the financial realm.

You have unspeakable joy when the fear of insufficiency is gone from your life.

You can give freely again and again, knowing your Father's Word is true, and it will never fail you.

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

You have great comfort when you know that shortage can no longer come near your dwelling. Your supply no longer depends on the flawed system of the world. It depends on the unfailing promise of God that says, "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and

harvest...shall not cease" (Genesis 8:22).

Even as I write this book, my wife and I are experiencing the harvest season.

While the world stands at the edge of recession and economic meltdown, we are full of hope, expecting the ongoing increase of God's abundant supply.

#### NOT AN EVENT

Remember, the manifesting of superabundance in the economy of God is never an instantaneous event.

It is a time-consuming process.

However, rest assured that the manifestation of thirty, sixty, and even a hundredfold will be worth the time it takes. When it comes to full maturity, your heaven-sent harvest will be as the Scripture says, exceeding abundantly, above all you can ask or think (Ephesians 3:20).

#### TRUE CHRISTIANITY IS EXPENSIVE

When you properly operate it, your Christianity quickly becomes the most expensive lifestyle a human being can undertake. I say this because in its purest form, the gospel instructs us to feed the hungry (Matthew 25:35-45).

Notice it doesn't talk about just a few hungry people, but all the hungry. Now that's expensive business.

The gospel also instructs us to clothe the naked. That doesn't mean just a few of the naked, but all of them.

Once again, we are talking about big money.

To demonstrate true Christianity, we must literally go into all the world and preach the good news to every creature. Every creature means every last one of them (Mark 16:15).

It doesn't take a genius to understand that if we feed all the hungry, clothe all the naked, and evangelize the lost, the cost of doing it correctly will make it the most expensive venture we have ever undertaken.

#### DIVINE ENABLING

When He placed the tremendous responsibility of world evangelism upon His Church, the Lord made Himself responsible for supplying the resources we would need to accomplish the

task. Hear the angel Gabriel as he reassures us of this fact.

"...no word from God shall be without power or impossible of fulfillment."  
Luke 1:37, Amplified

The Bible tells us God has already approved and set aside all the supply we need to fulfill godliness. Hear the apostle as he reaffirms the availability of this exceeding abundance.

"According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge [understanding] of him that hath called us to glory and virtue."  
2 Peter 1:3

Thank God, the Church doesn't have to depend on the worldly methods of increasing wealth.

God has chosen the unfailing principles of seedtime and harvest to provide the wealth we need to fulfill the Great Commission.

"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest...shall not cease."  
Genesis 8:22

## THE LORD OF THE HARVEST

"...the seed sprouts and grows and increases-he knows not how."  
Mark 4:27, Amplified

Our Lord makes a very important statement when He says the farmer does not know how the seed becomes a plant. He isn't saying the farmer has no knowledge of the processes that take place in transforming a seed into a plant.

He is simply saying the farmer does not have the ability to duplicate the process. If they had ten billion dollars to spend, the professors of the most advanced agricultural university in the world could not design, engineer, or produce a seed that could bring forth a living plant.

Man just cannot make a seed. He can enhance it so that it produces more. He can genetically alter a seed, bringing forth a mutation. However, he cannot start with raw materials and produce a seed from scratch, for a seed contains life, and only God can give life.

"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life."  
John 1:3,4

When you fully understand it, this truth will become perfectly reasonable to you: God should

share in your harvests, for there is never a harvest unless God does His part.

He gives the power of reproduction to the seeds you plant.

Yes, the farmer must work hard if he expects an abundant harvest. He must also plant in good soil. However, unless God does His part, there will never, under any circumstances, be a harvest.

"...it was God, not we, who made the garden grow...."  
1 Corinthians 3:6, TLB

Scripture clearly teaches that man is to reward the ox for plowing, and that the laborer is worthy of his hire (pay). Just as the farmer deserves his portion of the increase, God is entitled to His share of everything that increases upon the earth, for He is the main contributor in all increase.

Thank God we don't have to guess how much His efforts are worth!

He has already established the value of His contribution to every increase. He says His part will be 10 percent (the tithe).

"Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all shine increase."  
Proverbs 3:9

"Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year."  
Deuteronomy 14:22

"...all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord."  
Leviticus 27:30

The Scripture is clear that God believes 10 percent of all the increase of the earth is His.

Ten percent is not a gift to Him. Neither is it a tax.

Rather, it is His appointed portion for His part in bringing forth increase.

No matter what the endeavor, if there is increase, God has a part in it.

Whether it be the woodsman who sells a tree he has cut down, or the security guard who draws wages for forty hours of work, Jehovah God plays a part in every person's increase.

The woodsman owes God the tithe because he sold God's tree. The security guard owes 10 percent of his wages because God allowed him the forty hours he spent earning his wage.

When He said the farmer did not know how the seed grew into a plant, our Lord was actually stating that Jehovah God makes an invaluable contribution to everything that increases.

Therefore, God must receive His tithe.

Hear it, and hear it well. There will be no manifestation of abundance by biblical principles unless you pay the tithe that keeps heaven open over your seed (finances).

## GROWING UPWARD

"...as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper."  
2 Chronicles 26:5

The requirement Jesus speaks of next is single-mindedness.

The person successful in harvest will keep his finances involved in the business of the Kingdom of God.

Our Lord tells us the seed growing into harvest proportions must continually grow upward:

"...when it is sown, it groweth up...."  
Mark 4:32

## DISTRACTION BRINGS DISASTER

How often I have seen people in a desperate season of their lives, call upon the mercy of God for help! I am primarily speaking of those who said they would either receive a financial miracle or perish.

When people reach this point, their giving to God usually comes as a last resort, but they pledge and pay.

Then when the promised abundance starts coming, they foolishly turn their finances away from funding the gospel and begin, once again, looking to worldly schemes for their increase.

Others hear their pastor speak from the Word of God about giving and receiving. Out of simple obedience, they begin to follow his instructions which soon lead them to experience God's promised increase. Everything goes well until their financial assets become substantial.

Then, all of a sudden, they begin to feel that their wealth has become too great to trust to the advice of a mere pastor. Now they need tax consultants and financial planners.

Step by step, they leave off tithing and giving until they do little more than tip God.

How subtly the devil works when he redirects a person's financial affairs!

If your finances ever lose their upward focus, they will also lose their divine empowerment.

Tax consultants and financial planners have their place in the lives of God's children. Nevertheless, before they can properly help you, these experts must understand that your source is the God of heaven.

You must inform them it is absolutely necessary for you to have an open heaven, meaning that tithes and offerings are not optional in your portfolio. You must let them know that no investment can ever come before your tithe and generous offerings.

Make it plain. Even if it means passing up the deal of the century, you will not go one week without tithing.

### CAUGHT IN THE TRAP

So many times I have seen the children of God drawn away from the manifestation of abundance because someone suddenly came up with a great deal.

It always sounds so simple. All they have to do is give up tithing and giving offerings for six short months.

I can still hear them saying, "Trust me, Pastor. When this deal comes through, I will single-handedly fund the vision for the whole church."

After twenty-six years as a pastor, I can say without hesitation that I have never seen one of these God-robbing deals work out.

That's not all. Not only did the deals go bad, but the embarrassment these folks suffered drove most of them out of the Church and away from their God.

Even if you can buy the Empire State Building for 20 percent of its appraised value, if making the deal involves having to say no to God in one offering, pass up the deal!

Remember, the financial plan that grows into full harvest proportions is one that continually grows upward. It never gets out of focus with God's purpose.

"...thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to act wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."

Deuteronomy 8:18

Don't worry about missing out on the good life. As long as you fulfill God's purpose in your giving, God will loose abundance into your hands.

### FAITHFUL STEWARDS ARE BLESSED

In Matthew 25:14-46, Jesus tells us how He will bless His trustworthy stewards. Their faithfulness in financial matters will cause Him to increase their belongings.

He says the Kingdom of God is as a man who is going to travel into a far country who first calls his own servants (stewards) to him.

He doesn't call someone else's servants, but his own.

Then Jesus says this man delivers to these stewards various amounts of his money. (A talent is a measure of money.) He gives one five talents; another, two, and the third, one.

Notice carefully that the master gives money to his stewards.

Then they redistribute the wealth of their master as he directs them.

In the parable, the steward with five talents goes about his master's business and gains five more talents. Verses 19-21 tell us that when he reckons with him, the master generously rewards his steward for his faithfulness.

He says to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have faithfully kept your focus on my business. Because you have diligently promoted and expanded that which is mine, I am now going to expand that which is yours by making you ruler over many things" (Matthew 25:21 paraphrased).

I believe with all my heart that faithful stewards who constantly focus their attention on funding the end-time harvest will come into superabundance.

This plan of seedtime and harvest will not let you down if you don't let it down.

From personal experience, I can now bear witness to the fact that great abundance comes to those who constantly give into the gospel of Jesus Christ.

## THE SOCIALLY CORRECT MISTAKE

I have seen one more disturbing trend among many who attempt to prosper by biblical principles. It is a subtle thing that happens almost without notice.

Because of the evangelical emphasis of most faith churches, many of their converts come from the lower economic levels of society. As they begin to prosper, these folks are cast in with a part of society unfamiliar to them.

As they progress up the corporate ladder, they begin to associate with the crowd the world calls "the right people," "the movers and the shakers," if you please.

This part of society wants to be with the people who can make things happen for them. They are very conscious of projecting the right image.

All too often when they move up into higher social circles, these good, common, down-to-earth people begin to feel that the wrong social crowd attends their faith church. They feel pressure to get into the church where the right people go, people who can help them the most in their careers.

I am reminded of the story about the corporate executive who faithfully attended an evangelical church. He was always witnessing and bringing visitors to church.

One day he brought the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of his Fortune 500 corporation. As they were leaving, he asked him how he had enjoyed the pastor's sermon.

The boss ignored his question, so he asked again. "Tell me, how did you like my pastor's sermon?" The visiting executive finally answered, "It was interesting, but his grammar was far from perfect. How in the world can you, a man in top management in the largest corporation in this city, stand to hear a man you call 'pastor' say he 'seed' something?"

The church member swallowed and replied, "I don't particularly enjoy listening to incorrect grammar. But, I would rather have a pastor who says he 'seed' something when he actually saw it, than have a polished pastor who says he saw something when he didn't really see anything."

Please note I am not defending poor grammar. However, if you have to choose between a real man of God who lacks polish and a hireling who speaks the king's English, always choose the man of God.

How terrible this attitude is, for most of the time these so-called "right" churches, or socially acceptable churches, lack the power of the Holy Ghost. They also lack the good faith teaching so necessary to those who wish to continue prospering in the economy of God.

Sad to say, but these elite churches are usually not good ground. Hear me, and hear me well.

When a Christian stops giving into good ground, his seed will stop bringing forth harvest proportions.

Time after time these misguided folks move their membership from the churches that won them to Christ, to the socially acceptable churches in their community.

They find a place where the pastor is a bit more polished, and where the primary spiritual statement is rich woods, stained glass, and unique architecture.

These misguided folks take their focus off the upward growth of their seed, and as always, the power of God departs.

Whatever you do, when you start on the road of biblical economics, keep your money involved in a live church dedicated to evangelism. Be vigilant, and see to it that tithing and giving offerings to God are the main uses for your money.

Always keep in mind that you are a steward of God, and as a steward, God requires you to be faithful:

"...it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."  
1 Corinthians 4:2

## THE CONCLUSION

I hope you can now see that Mark 4 is not the chopped up, disjointed array of unrelated thoughts tradition portrays. Instead it is a single revelation that continues uninterrupted, for forty-one verses. It is our Lord's magnificent teaching on the process of manifesting abundance.

Mark 4 begins with the bold statement that Jesus is going to declare His doctrine. This chapter simply illustrates a sower planting his seed. The full spiritual meaning of the chapter is that God gives potential for harvest-proportion increase to anything He calls "a seed."

Our Lord then teaches that all truth is parallel. Whatever is true in the natural world is also true in the spiritual world. He shows us that parables are nothing more than parallels.

Verse 21 seemed to be a barrier, switching the subject to candles, bushels, and beds. However, it actually turns out to be the criterion for participating in the exceeding abundance above all we can ask or think (Ephesians 3:20). Yes, you must place your spirit-man on the candlestick. Your spirit must rule, or God will not make the secrets of Kingdom increase known to you.

Then Mark reveals that we must understand God's principles of increase before we can take over the wealth of this world (Proverbs 13:22). Warning lights go on, and we find that God's way of abundance is not a get-rich-quick scheme. In God's way, growth comes slowly. It comes first as a blade, then the stalk, then the harvest.

Warning lights come on again as Jesus instructs us to keep our focus ever upward. If we take our eyes off Kingdom principles, we soon lose God's "...power to get wealth..." (Deuteronomy 8:18).

Finally comes the clear teaching of the pastor and the church in the matter of the storm. It is impossible to maximize harvest increase without the guidance of a true pastor.

When you put all these lessons together with other things our Lord will reveal to you from Mark 4, life will begin to progress, as the prophet said it would.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed...."

Amos 9:13

You will have a firm hold on what Jesus taught about manifesting abundance, and victories will begin to multiply.

BOOK NAME: "POWERFUL PRINCIPLES OF INCREASE" by John Avanzini

## POVERTY OR PROSPERITY - THE CHOICE IS YOURS

For too long we have believed the devil's lie.

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

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

### 1. IT IS A LIE BECAUSE GOD IS NOT A RESPECTER OF PERSONS.

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34

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

### 2. IT IS A LIE BECAUSE GOD'S DESIRE IS THAT YOU PROSPER. This truth is plainly stated in Scripture:

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3 John 2

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

### 3. IT IS A LIE BECAUSE GOD HAS GIVEN YOU THE POWER TO GET WEALTH.

"But thou shalt remember the lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day." Deuteronomy 8:18

God would not give you the power to get wealth if He did not intend for you to use that power and become wealthy! The decision to live in poverty or prosperity is yours.

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

Remember:

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

## THE GOD-GIVEN LAWS OF POVERTY AND PROSPERITY

God has created spiritual laws that determine who has wealth, and who will remain poor.

The laws of poverty and the laws of prosperity were created by the same God who created the law of gravity. All of His laws work every time.

An apple will always fall to the ground. That's God's law of gravity. A person will become rich or poor by following God's laws.

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

"I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down." Proverbs 24:30,31

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

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest." Proverbs 6:6-8

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

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

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

## GOD'S LAW OF REWARD

Think about the word reward. God's spiritual law of reward simply states:

"...for the laborer is worthy of his hire reward...." Luke 10:7

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

You have earned them. They are not a gift.

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

"He that tilleth [works hard] his land shall have plenty of bread...." Proverbs 28:19

If you are working hard, expect to receive your just reward. Now the other side of this law of reward is that if you don't work, you get no reward. God's Word is emphatic about it.

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." 1 Timothy 5:8

"...if any would not work, neither should he eat." 2 Thessalonians 3:10

Plant this law firmly in your mind.

Like all of God's spiritual laws, it is an absolute! Those who till the land will have plenty of bread.

If your hard work is not bringing plenty of bread into your life, then some spiritual law of poverty is working to stop God's desire for you.

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

\* The laborer is worthy of his hire (Luke 10:7).

\* If you work hard, you will have plenty of bread (Proverbs 28:19).

\* Any person who won't provide for his own family is worse than an infidel [non-believer] (1 Timothy 5:8).

\* The Bible says if you won't work, you shouldn't eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10).

**GOD'S LAW OF RELEASE:**

**POVERTY IS NOT AN ACCIDENT, AND NEITHER IS PROSPERITY.**

Strict spiritual laws govern both.

The spiritual law of release says be willing to release for increase:

"There is [he] that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is [he] that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Proverbs 11:24,25

God makes it clear. If you scatter your money, it will increase and you will be prosperous. If you hoard too much of it, more than is proper, you will be poor.

God's spiritual law will not change, no matter how uncomfortable it makes you feel.

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

You're right. In the eyes of the world, it doesn't make sense.

God's spiritual laws do not always make worldly sense, but they are His truths and will always work. God's spiritual laws will not change.

Release and increase (prosper); retain and decrease (tend to poverty).

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38

Remember:

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

## GOD'S LAW OF RECEIVING

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

Jesus must have walked by the man many times as he lay crippled at the gate. He had never received before, because he never expected to receive anything.

However, when Peter and John came by, the man was "...expecting to receive something of them," and he was healed.

The only difference was his anticipation.

Those who are expecting to receive something are the ones who will receive.

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

Jesus, our role model, was willing to receive.

Once when He visited the home of a Pharisee, He allowed a woman to wash His feet with expensive ointment. When His host criticized the woman, Jesus said:

"...thou gavest me no water for my feet...but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment" (Luke 7:44,46).

Jesus was a good receiver.

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

When you are not willing to be a good receiver, you stop the abundant blessings God wants to flow into your life.

Many times pride keeps us from receiving, but the Word gives us a strong warning about pride:

"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." Proverbs 16:18

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

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

Remember:

- \* FARMERS ALWAYS EXPECT A HARVEST.
- \* JESUS WAS A GOOD RECEIVER.
- \* PRIDE AND A HARDENED MIND WILL RESTRICT THE FLOW OF GOD'S PROSPERITY INTO YOUR LIFE.

#### GOD'S LAW OF SOWING

When a farmer puts a corn seed into the ground, he doesn't get back just one corn seed.

When he puts that seed into the earth, a divinely ordered process begins. The seed produces a stalk of corn, the stalk produces several ears of corn, and each ear produces many new seeds—all from the one seed the farmer planted.

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

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

Every one must make up his own mind as to how much he should give....

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

2 Corinthians 9:6,7,10 TLB

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

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

"He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap."  
Ecclesiastes 11:4

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

"In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."  
Ecclesiastes 11:6

Remember:

- \* SOW SEED AND YOU WILL HARVEST (2 Corinthians 9:6).
- \* WHEN YOU SOW, DO NOT LOOK TO YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES (Ecclesiastes 11:4).
- \* SOW REGULARLY TO EVERY GOOD WORK (Ecclesiastes 11:6).

**GOD'S LAW OF REAPING**

If most of the saints understood the following statement, more of them would be enjoying

God's prosperity in their lives:

"If you sow, you will reap."

Repeat that statement out loud several times. Let it sink into your spirit. Say "IF I SOW, I WILL REAP !"

It is God's law, and it cannot fail. God warns us not to be fooled:

"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto [share with] him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Galatians 6:6-9

God's Spiritual Law of Prosperity says:

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

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

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

Here is the final, vital point. You will reap what you sow:

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

If you sow apples, you will reap apples. If you sow corn, you will reap corn. If you sow love, you will reap love. If you sow money, you will reap money. Don't sow love and expect God to return finances to you. God's spiritual law says if you sow love, you will reap love, not finances.

If you desire more wealth and more money to meet your needs, put more money into God's Kingdom. To reap a harvest of money, you must first sow money. Farmers know this principle.

Remember:

- \* FARMERS KNOW IF THEY SOW, THEY WILL REAP.
- \* FARMERS KNOW THEY CAN REAP ONLY THE KIND OF HARVEST THEY SOW.
- \* FARMERS KNOW THEY CANNOT REAP IN THE SAME SEASON THEY SOW.

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

## HOW YOU CAN REAP IN A RECESSION

Recession, inflation, and economic hard times have been with mankind almost since the beginning of time. They are not new problems.

The biblical answers to these conditions first appear early in the Book of Genesis:

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

Genesis 26:1

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

1. Stay faithful to God's commands. Don't let circumstances ruin your good, Christian habits. Many saints become inconsistent in times of economic pressure.

Fluctuation from your Christian principles will only weaken you further:

"The Lord blessed Isaac because of obedience" (Isaiah 1:19).

2. Don't follow the world's philosophy. Because of the famine, everyone was leaving to go to Egypt, but the Lord had a different program for Isaac: "

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

Genesis 26:2,3.

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

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

Deuteronomy 28:3

3. Sow generously during the famine:

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

(Genesis 26:12).

God intended for Isaac to conquer the famine and gave him the prosperity principles to emerge victorious from it. These same biblical principles apply for you today.

Begin to use them now in your own life.

Remember:

- \* STAY FAITHFUL TO GOD'S COMMANDS.
- \* DON'T FOLLOW THE WORLD'S PHILOSOPHY.
- \* SOW GENEROUSLY DURING THE FAMINE.

“THE ABUNDANCE OF GOD”

Creation in Abundance

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

The Word of God agrees:

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

[Ephesians 3:20,21]

These scriptures contain three critical points.

First, God not only wants to give us more than we can ask. He clearly states that He wants to give us more than we can even think!

It is difficult enough to understand God giving us more than we can ask; but according to this verse, we can stretch our imagination as far as it will go, and we will still come short of God's desire for us.

Second, God wants to give us this unlimited blessing "...according to the power that worketh in us." His promises will operate through us only to the degree that we allow His power to operate in us.

Our relationship with God is critical. We must be totally submissive to His will in our lives if

we are to break into the wonderful realm of above all we can ask or think.

Third, we see the true purpose of this abundance. Contrary to the beliefs of many Christians, God intends abundance for us so that we will not be hindered from bringing glory to Him.

Remember, this realm of more than we can ask or think belongs to those who seek His glory, not their own. You cannot effectively penetrate your community for God from a position of poverty.

However, when you walk in the abundance of God and go beyond simply meeting your own needs, you can do some powerful and wonderful things for the Kingdom of God. You can more easily further God's plan when you don't have to worry about such basic needs as rent, groceries, utilities, and car payments.

In the realm of all you can ask or think, you will have enough resources available for all the ministries God lays on your heart.

God wants to give you more than you can ask, more than you can think, because His plan for you is infinitely greater than you can ask or imagine!

Most Christians can't think in this realm, for the devil has crippled their divine imagination with thoughts of impossibility and insufficiency. By faith, you can now break out of insufficiency thinking, and God will open new visions of abundance that exceed anything you can imagine.

He wants you to flourish in His abundance so that you will have more than enough to finance the end-time harvest.

### Walking in Abundance

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

Once you know God desires abundance for you, you are ready to take the second step.

Right now, form an effective giving and receiving covenant with God. Pray this prayer out loud to the Lord:

Dear Lord, I sincerely desire to give an ever-increasing portion of wealth to you for the financing of your great end-time harvest. Today, I solemnly pledge to become more involved in the spreading of the gospel by sowing money into the Kingdom of God. I will begin by giving \$\_\_\_\_\_ (weekly, monthly) into your work, in addition to the tithe. Beginning today, by faith, I am planting these money-seeds to start your flow of abundance in my life. I promise that as you multiply a money harvest back to me, I will always reinvest a generous portion into the gospel. Thank you, Lord, for revealing these principles of biblical economics to me. I am now determined to unleash these bold, new principles into my own

life. I thank you now for your abundance which this positive action on my part will bring to pass soon. Amen.

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

Begin giving today, and God will begin blessing and returning to you larger and larger amounts of wealth to liberally reinvest into the gospel ministry. "Give, and it shall be given unto you...." Luke 6:38

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

### Prosperity in Abundance

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

However, that's not God's plan for the greatest increase in wealth.

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

Paul wrote about this principle:

"Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit [finances] that may abound to your account."

[Philippians 4:15-17]

To have prosperity in abundance, you must first begin to give, creating a new, life-giving flow to your finances. Stagnant finances cannot draw new money to you.

Remember, Paul said giving and receiving are interrelated and interdependent upon each other. By now you are beginning to realize the true meaning of the following passage:

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

[Isaiah 55:8,9]

Unfortunately, even with this clear disclosure of God's viewpoint, most Christians are not thinking the thoughts of God about money.

For so long we have heard it is wrong to seek prosperity. But those ideas did not come from God.

In Scripture, He plainly declares: "But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day."

[Deuteronomy 8:18]

If God did not desire for you to have abundance, He would not have given you the power to get wealth.

If God did not want you to prosper, the Apostle John would not have prayed this prayer:

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

[3 John 2]

## ABOUND IN FAITHFULNESS

"A faithful man shall abound with blessings.... "

Proverbs 28:20

If you want to become faithful, you must first promise to be faithful to something.

You see, not until you make a promise and keep it have you proved yourself to be faithful.

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

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

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

Proverbs 28:19

There is no question that God wants us to have spiritual blessings.

But He also desires that we have plenty of bread, a symbol of our material needs.

He is not just interested in spiritual blessings.

He also talks about basic needs and desires.

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

Notice that those who are not faithful, who follow after vain persons, or operate a futile plan, shall be poor. However, if you are faithful in keeping your promises to God, He will be faithful in keeping His promises to you.

Remember, in Luke 6:38 He said if you give, it will be given back to you in greater abundance.

That is God's promise for the faithful man or woman.

Be faithful in your pledges to God. Give as much as you promised, and even more, and give it when you said you would.

As you obey this principle of biblical economics, God will be faithful to His promises and abundantly bless you.

“Poverty Is Not Godly”

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

I don't want to hurt you with this message, and neither does God. He wants you to abound.

So let's look at a situation of deep poverty that was changed forever by the same truths I have been teaching you in this book.

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

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

2 Corinthians 8:4 TLB

Because the Macedonians understood the principles of biblical economics, they prospered so much that their testimony was used to encourage other churches to give.

This pattern takes place throughout God's Word.

Remember the example of the widow of Zarephath in 1 Kings 17. She was in deep poverty until she cast off fear and gave to God's prophet.

When she gave of her food, she became a prosperous woman, with more than enough to meet her own needs.

If poverty were God's will for His children, He would not bring them out of their circumstances.

If it were godly to be poor, God would not have given the widow of Zarephath so much that she and her household "...did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not [was not used up], neither did the cruse of oil fail..." (1 Kings 17:15,16).

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

"The liberal soul shall be made fat and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."  
Proverbs 11:25

Remember, God can change your poverty to prosperity, even when you are down to your last few crumbs. He did it in Bible days, and He is willing to do it for you today.

## GIVING IN ABUNDANCE

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

Now I want you to enter a whole new dimension of giving and receiving.

I want you to experience a bold, new realm, far beyond what now seems substantial to you.

Your giving horizon the highest, greatest, most blessed experience of giving and receiving you can imagine is merely the starting point.

A whole new giving experience is beginning to take form in your spirit today.

Satan is trying to keep you from rising above your current level of giving. He wants to keep you in a low level of awareness, far short of what God intends for you, and far short of what you desire to attain.

Now is the strategic time to make up your mind you are going to think some bold, new thoughts and make some financial breakthroughs.

When I was going to Bible college, once a month I went down to the government welfare office in Springfield, Missouri, and got my box of surplus commodity cheese, canned meat, and rolled oats.

The first thing I ate was the cheese. Then I ate the canned meat. Finally, for the last twenty-eight days of the month, I ate rolled oats.

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

Then I realized that I could live on a higher level too.

Once you fully realize the new level of abundance God has planned for you, you can rise out of your current dimension and reach a far more prosperous level.

No matter where you are now, it is time to move into a new dimension of giving. God has a divine plan for your life, and you can be sure it isn't a cheap, second-class plan.

Begin now to prayerfully elevate your thoughts and finances to a new dimension, asking God to guide you into a new level of plenty.

God wants you to go from glory to glory (level to level) in your finances, so you can consistently increase the amount you give to preach His gospel throughout the world.

## THE COST OF LIVING IN HEAVEN

How much do you think it will cost to live in heaven for one year?

Will you have to buy food? Is rent expensive there? Will there be any doctor bills?

Of course not!

Everyone knows there will be no need for money in heaven. Money will have no purpose in heaven.

Obviously, material blessings will become completely worthless once we enter the pearly gates.

Let me ask you a more serious question. Why does the Bible speak of an increase in our money and material wealth?

Why does the Bible talk about prosperity at all?

Surely God knows money, wealth, and prosperity have to do with activity going on right now

on this earth.

Prosperity, money, and wealth are for this realm.

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

“...There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands...and in the world to come eternal life.”

Mark 10:29-30

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

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

## GOD IS THE AUTHOR OF ABUNDANCE

God wants you to abound, and it is His blessings that enable you to accumulate wealth.

Here is a key principle in biblical economics:

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

Proverbs 10:22

God is the author of your abundance. In the Scripture, He has laid down a firm foundational plan to teach you how to become rich without sorrows.

Keep in mind that these are God's words, not mine.

Why has God given us this clear plan for increasing in wealth?

Surely it is not just so we can buy a nice home or drive a new car, although God is not opposed to these things.

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

The Book of Romans tells us that giving is a spiritual gift.

Giving liberally to finance the end-time harvest will bless people in precisely the same way as prophecy, teaching, exhortation, or even speaking in tongues.

“Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; ...he that giveth, let him do it with [liberality]....”

Romans 12:6,8

We continually hear about the gift of prophecy, the gift of teaching, the gift of exhortation. When was the last time you heard a sermon on the gift of giving?

But there it is, in black and white, in the twelfth chapter of Romans.

Virtually every great work of God has to have a faithful group of supporters behind it, people who minister with their finances. You will need more than enough if you are going to have a ministry of giving.

That is why God is the author of abundance.

His blessing can make you rich without sorrow.

Remember, the only way out of poverty, want, shortage, and insufficiency is generous giving.

Whatever you give to God, He will always give back to you.

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

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

WHO IS BEHIND POVERTY?

The Source of Poverty . . .

Many people believe poverty and prosperity are both matters of birth or luck.

They believe some people are meant to be poor and others are meant to be rich.

By now you know that is not what the Word of God says.

God has established certain principles of economics that govern who will be rich and who will be poor, and He will not violate His own laws.

If we follow the principles that lead to poverty, we will be poor.

We all play an important part in determining our own financial situations.

Satan does his part, too. He will lie to us in every imaginable way to keep us poor.

He will tell us myths about money. He will say that money is evil or that money will corrupt you.

He might even suggest that it is godly to be poor or that you will become even poorer if you give to God.

You see, poverty is a partnership. The devil wants us to be poor, and he will lie to us to keep us from following the biblical principles that will result in wealth.

Poverty is a joint venture between us, Satan, and our ignorance of God's Word.

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

“There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.”

Proverbs 11:24,25

The God-kind of prosperity is based upon giving.

When you operate God's law in your life, you will begin to experience ever-increasing abundance.

Satan Exposed and Deposed

Satan is a thief.

He is a deceptive, calculating plunderer.

If left unchecked, he will move in and out of your life at his own discretion, trying to find ways to rob and defraud you.

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

His lies have kept us crippled, ineffective, and impotent long enough!

Satan has stolen from many Christians the quality of life God intended for all His saints.

Establish this principle dearly in your mind. God wants you to be prosperous, and the devil wants you to be poor.

God has given you the biblical principles of economics to achieve prosperity, and Satan tells lies to keep you poor.

Prosperity is a material state, but it is attained through a spiritual battle! . . .

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”  
Ephesians 6:12

Please realize that this lesson covers a very important issue.

You see, if you do not learn how to stop the devil's robberies in your life, no matter how much you seek to prosper, you will make no real progress toward abundance.

It is time we expose the devil for the father of lies that he is (John 8:44)!

It is time we depose him from his position as ruler of the darkness of this world.

The devil has used his lies about money to destroy good relationships, break up families, and even split churches.

But, the money wasn't evil. It was Satan's lies about money that were evil!

It is time to serve notice on the devil!

He has deceived us long enough.

For too long he has "ripped off" our possessions and indiscriminately robbed the saints of God, literally diminishing our quality of life.

It is time to take a stand.

"RECOGNIZING YOUR PROSPERITY HERITAGE"

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

You have the ability to take back what the devil has stolen.

You can claim a significant portion of the riches of this world and use them to finance the final, end-time harvest before the return of Jesus!

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

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

Luke 10:19

God has given us power over the enemy, and by now you know that poverty is clearly one of the tools the enemy has used to keep us weak and ineffective.

But we have the power to overcome poverty.

It is part of our prosperity heritage as sons and daughters of the Most High God:

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

Hebrews 2:14

Look at that carefully: the devil had the power, but today he is defeated.

Jesus wiped out the devil's power. He can no longer keep you poor.

Now God is calling you to be a great giver and to participate in every aspect of the end-time harvest.

As strange as it may seem, you are now beginning to see that this wonderful truth about abundance is not just an impossible dream; it is a reality that is happening to you.

You are possessing a new prosperity mentality.

You are walking out of the door of financial impossibilities and crossing the threshold of unlimited financial possibilities through the power of God!

God has given you authority over the enemy.

Your Heavenly Father wants you to abound in all good things.

## "RECLAIMING YOUR LOST TREASURES"

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

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

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

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

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

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

God, in His loving concern for you, and as part of the prosperity process, has provided you with a spiritual way to reclaim those lost treasures.

God demands double restitution! . . .

"If a man shall deliver unto his neighbor money or stuff to keep, and it be stolen out of the man's house, if the thief be found, let him pay double."

Exodus 22:7

Now I know you are probably thinking: "Brother John, that's all well and good, but I have no idea where that crooked attorney is anymore. He has left the state, and no one knows where he went."

Don't worry.

You must focus on the true culprit behind these robberies, no matter what you lost.

The thief is not the dishonest lawyer, the divorce, the liquor, or the drugs.

The engineer of the robbery is Satan himself.

He works in and through the children of disobedience, unsaved men and women:

"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

Ephesians 2:2

The devil is the true thief; he is the one who takes what belongs to us, whether it is our health, our wealth, our happiness, our job, or any other of our possessions.

But the Bible says if we find the thief, and accuse him, he must repay double what he has stolen!

My friend, you and I have found the thief Satan himself. We are not wrestling with flesh and blood lawyers, bankers, real estate agents, or any other person or group of people; we are wrestling with Satan and his host of demon forces.

The next move is up to us.

God is waiting for His people to take up the arms He has already provided us, the weapons of our spiritual warfare, and take back everything the devil has stolen from us.

"Take the Thief to Court"

Behind every evil activity on this earth there is a single mastermind, Satan. He is behind all

the troubles, riots, wars, crimes, murders and thefts that have taken place in the past, and all the evil things which are still happening today!

When you name the true villain in your spiritual warfare, and take him to God's heavenly court, you can begin to benefit from God's system of retribution and restoration in your life.

Peter knew how to see past flesh and blood and go right to the source of the problem.

In Acts 5:1-11, we have the example of Ananias and his wife, Sapphira.

Together, they secretly devised a plot to gain prestige among their Christian brothers and sisters.

They decided they could get the same recognition Barnabas received when he gave the total selling price of a piece of land to the work of God.

However, they thought they could deceive Peter and keep a portion of the money for themselves.

Peter saw through this lying deception and "laid the ax to the root of the tree" by confronting the real liar.

"But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie...?"

Acts 5:3

Peter knew the real culprit was Satan.

He boldly took him to the heavenly courtroom of God.

As a result, both Ananias and Sapphira received immediate judgment for allowing the enemy of God to operate through them.

Remember, the devil is the root of all sin (lies, theft, hatred, deception, etc.), but Jesus is the root of all righteousness.

Your environment is not able to keep you from prospering when you follow God's laws of biblical economics.

If you are in poverty, it is not because of some chance of birth, education, ethnic origin, or whatever you may think is holding you back.

Your battle and problems are with the devil and with yourself.

If God has given you the power to get wealth, then it logically follows that Satan will try to bring you to poverty.

To begin now to live a prosperous life, start challenging the real thief, the devil.

Accuse him in God's heavenly court.

Demand your goods back.

Rebuke Satan.

Expel him from your thinking patterns; think only on the things God says in His Word concerning you and your prosperity.

Be strong-handed when dealing with the devil.

Poverty cannot live in you when you destroy its root causes.

### “SEVEN IMPORTANT STEPS TO PROSPERITY”

#### Step 1 Give Expecting to Receive

God gave His greatest gift with full expectation of receiving something in return.

He gave His precious Son, because He knew He would receive sons and daughters:

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

John 3:16

By now you understand that giving is the first step toward God's abundance in your life.

You cannot achieve prosperity just by knowing you must give.

You must actually do some giving, and expect to receive something in return.

I hope you have already planted a liberal field of money seed in the name of Jesus.

Now expect to reap a money harvest from each and every seed you planted.

Remember, you reap what you sow.

If you sow peach seeds, you will reap peaches.

If you sow (give) money, you will reap a money harvest:

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

Galatians 6:7

If you have believed God's Word and planted money seed, keep on believing God's Word. The Bible clearly states you will reap if you don't give up:

“And let us not be weary in well doing for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”  
Galatians 6:9

Isn't that wonderful?

You can give, expecting a harvest.

While you are waiting for your first harvest, you can be planting even more money seed toward your second harvest.

Think of it!

You can have a perpetual harvest if you have faith for perpetual planting!

Remember, God's Word guarantees that you will reap what you sow.

So give, expecting a return.

## STEP 2 -- BANK ON GOD'S PROMISES

Every day we hear various commercial banks waging economic war with their competitors. They try to offer us something that will convince us to deposit our money in their bank.

Some offer higher interest rates on savings accounts. Others offer checking accounts with no service charges. They sometimes even offer free gifts, just to lure us into investing our funds in their institution.

But God offers us the best banking program ever. Read the generous return He gives for your investments.

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

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

It is as the Scriptures say: "The godly man gives generously to the poor. His good deeds will be an honor to him forever."

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

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

[2 Corinthians 9:6,8-11 TLB]

Now that you are putting your money in God's bank, you can expect to receive God's promises which assure you of the provision of everything you need and more.

You literally cannot give away too much money when you give in the name of the Lord.

Each time you give an offering, God will return it to you multiplied.

Just as an earthly banker knows the world's secrets of abundance, you can literally bank on God and His promises. He will see that you have abundant treasures in heaven and on the earth, even more than enough!

### STEP 3 -- CHOOSE FAITH OVER FEAR

The only way the devil can stop you from receiving your God-ordained portion of wealth is by getting you to accept his lies about your ability to break through into abundance.

He will try to make you so afraid of failure, you will give up your newfound liberty in giving.

Satan will desperately attempt to convince you that giving is foolish.

Don't be confused about the origin of fear; it does not come from God.

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

(2 Timothy 1:7)

God does not want you to operate in fear, but in power. Remember, God gives you power to get wealth!

“But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth....”

(Deuteronomy 8:18)

God's way to counteract Satan's lies about your finances is to have you walk in faith.

Faith and fear cannot operate together.

Neither can faith and doubt.

They work against each other and bring about instability and failure.

James tells us: "A doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways" (James 1:8).

Reject fear. Reject doubt.

Use each step of faith as a way of destroying Satan's attempts to bring poverty into your life.

Faith will always conquer fear.

Remember, as you become faithful in your finances, you begin to draw a double reward to yourself:

1. You begin to prosper in the financial realm.
2. You position yourself to receive the true riches of God (spiritual power and authority).

"If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"

(Luke 16:11)

You can now see that through your faith in God's promises, and your faithful stewardship walk, you will become like the workers in the temple who could be trusted with finances:

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

(2 Kings 22:7)

"TITHE AND GIVE OFFERINGS"

Surely by now you are faithfully tithing and giving offerings, because you know God expects it.

You are tithing to open the windows of heaven.

You are giving offerings so that God will pour out a blessing through the open windows, a blessing God will measure back to you with the same measure you have used in giving to Him.

Tithing and giving offerings are necessary before you will make the major spiritual breakthrough you desire in your finances.

Both of these actions trigger different sets of promises from God.

Those promises come to you with God's strong desire to see them accomplished:

“For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”  
2 Corinthians 1:20

If you meet His conditions, God will deliver everything He has promised for your life.

His promises, combined with your faithful giving, will become the basis for your financial prosperity.

Your tithes and offerings will release God's abundance into your life from His heavenly storehouse.

So continue faithfully to tithe and give offerings to the Lord.

Stand in faith, confidently expecting God's promises to be fulfilled in your life.

If you don't see a sudden increase in your income, don't let it change your plans.

Even if you have to stay on a tight budget for awhile, don't let your circumstances make a difference in your giving.

In time you will no longer live in a financial wilderness. Your desert will bloom like a beautiful garden.

It won't happen because I say so.

It will happen because the Word of God says so.

## "PLANT YOUR SEED TO GLORIFY GOD"

The principles of biblical economics are now firmly rooted in your mind and hopefully in your actions.

The Lord's method of sowing comes against most of the world's thinking.

The world teaches:

1. Get all you can. (Get every penny you can.)
2. Can all you get. (Save every penny you get.)
3. Sit on the can. (Never spend any of your money.)

In other words, the world leads you to get all the money you can and hold onto it.

However, God has a different way:

“There is [he] that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is [he] that withholdeth more than

is meet [fitting], but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.”

Proverbs 11:24,25

You have planted your seeds with a cheerful attitude and a good heart in order to glorify God.

Now you can expect an abundant harvest.

Because you have been generous in your seed planting, God guarantees that you will prosper (be made fat with goods, watered and blessed).

That is His promise to you.

When the devil starts to feed you his lies of fear and pending shortage, remember to cast down the evil imaginations.

Stand on the promises of God.

You have seen them repeated again and again in this book.

Repetition is good for you, because God created your mind to learn things precept upon precept, line upon line.

We live in a constant barrage of false precepts every day of our lives.

While we might not clearly recognize them as lies, their effect on our subconscious minds is strong.

In this book, I have given time to God's truth:

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”  
Galatians 6:7

If you will now begin to sow your financial crop, you will soon be reaping an ever-increasing harvest.

Then you will have everything you need, with plenty left over to finance God's end-time harvest.

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

2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

"REAP YOUR HARVEST"

The circumstances in your life may not show any sudden improvement.

Your finances may still be short. Your bills may still be difficult to pay.

You may not yet have such abundance that your every need and desire is fulfilled, but keep standing on God's Word.

The devil will probably tell you some lies about your promised harvest.

He may say something like, "You gave that big offering last week, and you still don't have anything. All this giving stuff is just a big rip-off."

Stop thinking that way!

Learn to recognize the devil's lies and cast them out of your mind.

Don't give attention to anything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God.

These fear tactics are the only thing the devil can use to stop your pending financial harvest.

If you gave according to God's Word, you will reap a harvest.

As surely as God's Word is the truth, your harvest is already beginning to grow.

Remember, the Word of God guarantees your harvest. You can trust God, knowing He will provide the harvest He has promised you.

Sow your seed in faith, and trust the God of Faith to deliver to you an abundant harvest.

"ALWAYS REPLANT FROM EVERY HARVEST"

As your financial harvest begins to manifest itself, be sure you identify it.

Don't begin to think that your job or your material investments are your source.

Keep your eyes open. Watch for God's blessings.

Suddenly your business may start doing great, or your boss may give you an unexpected raise, or your investments may begin to make more money.

Part of your continuing success depends upon your recognition that God is your source.

God is the one who supplies everything you need.

With every upward advance in your finances, learn to thank the Lord.

Recognize your increase as part of the blessing you are receiving for giving.

Give honor to God for the abundant harvest you are beginning to receive.

When you recognize the source of your every blessing, you will see your need to take the next step.

Now you must replant some of your increase into the Kingdom of God toward the next harvest.

As long as you remember who your source is, you will never forget to plant more seed from your abundance.

Continue to tithe and give offerings from all the income you receive.

Keep planting from every harvest.

Remember, if you want to harvest regularly, you must plant regularly.

#### GOD CAME INTO MY ROOM

"[I came] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

1 Corinthians 2:4

God wants to reveal Himself to you in the miracle of the hundredfold financial increase.

This is probably the boldest statement I have ever made in print. With it I am declaring God's desire to manifest Himself in your finances. Because of the extraordinary way in which He revealed Himself to me, I know the manifestation will be big and powerful.

The events I am about to share with you came to me during my most personal experience with God to date. To reveal these things in print is the last thing I ever thought I would do.

If you are to fully understand the signs and wonders God has been performing since the encounter I had with Him, I must share something very personal that took place the first time I ever visited the African continent.

I have experienced several manifestations of God's presence during my life. However, I must say none has been as dramatic as the visitation I had in the nation of Nigeria.

My spirit is always stirred when I travel back there, for it was in Nigeria that God appeared to me in a supernatural way.

I was there at the invitation of an international evangelist. He had asked me to help trim with

the teaching in a great school of ministry he was conducting.

Getting my visa caused me to arrive at the meeting a day late. It was a Tuesday, and the day's teaching session was already in progress. The building was so full that many people had to stand.

As I entered the side door, I was immediately impacted by the overwhelming presence of God. It was as if a great heat was emanating from the room.

When I felt it, I immediately stepped back outside.

As I considered what this strange feeling was, I realized it was the warm glow of the Holy Spirit. His presence was everywhere. The entire building was filled with the anticipation of the people.

Not long after I arrived, a second speaker was introduced. As he spoke, the same presence once again filled the room. With each word, the people's faith grew. Suddenly I realized that in an atmosphere like that, nothing would be impossible.

When this speaker closed his dynamic teaching, I was called to the pulpit and introduced to the people. At this time I was told I had been allocated two hours to speak. This would be the first of four, two-hour sessions I would be teaching in that meeting.

No sooner had I begun to speak than the presence of the Holy Spirit lifted from the room. All I could hear was my own voice, laboriously speaking.

The words of my neatly prepared lesson notes were hollow sounding to say the least.

Now don't misunderstand me. I was delivering powerful information to the people.

But there was no real power in the way I was delivering it.

The faces of the congregation were noticeably changed. The look of anticipation they had worn a few moments earlier was now a look of disappointment.

Where had the powerful presence of God gone? Where was the spirit of deliverance that had been so evident just a few moments earlier?

I spoke for what seemed to me to have been at least two hours. However, when I looked at my watch, only fifteen minutes had passed! Worse than that, the second hand was still moving. The watch had not stopped running.

I still had an unbelievable one hour and forty-five minutes left to speak.

Every cell in my body knew I would never be able to last that long. And even worse, I knew that under no circumstances could my audience last that long.

Finally, when half an hour had passed, I excused myself from the pulpit.

I explained that my long journey had left me totally exhausted. I promised I would be back the next day, filled with new energy and the abundant power of the Holy Spirit. When I left the platform, the only sigh of relief that was louder than my own came from the congregation.

Now I had to face the ugly facts. I was out of place among the speakers on the program. They each possessed a power from God that I had never experienced.

Throughout my previous eighteen years of ministry, I had never before been confronted with anything like this. I had always preached and taught with a strong oratory style. I had never before in my life bombed out, but bomb out I did. My teaching was a complete bust.

As I went to my room, the words of my host rang in my ears. I vividly remembered the conversation that had taken place between us just two years earlier. It was at that time that I had asked him to allow me to accompany him to the foreign field to assist with the teaching. His reply had seemed very strange to me.

"John, anyone who goes with me to the foreign field, must have a breakthrough ministry."

I immediately asked, "What is a breakthrough ministry?"

He asked one of his associates to explain it to me. This kind brother began to tell me of the absolute necessity for the presence of the Holy Spirit when teaching in third-world nations.

He explained that in most of these countries, our sessions would be the only formal training our students would ever receive.

Because of this, it would be essential for the Holy Spirit to confirm the things that were taught with signs and wonders. If this didn't happen, my teaching would be of no value to them.

I must confess, at the time I believed both the evangelist and his associate were trying to impress me with their spirituality. I was confident that my great preaching and teaching skills would be just as effective as theirs.

Two years earlier, their words had seemed like an exaggeration. That night as I sat in my dirty room, in a less-than-fine hotel, I understood perfectly what they were trying to tell me.

Here I was in Nigeria with my request answered. I was on the teaching staff with this great evangelist, but I was powerless. We had all preached the gospel that day. They had preached with the power and demonstration of the Holy Spirit, while I had only given out Bible information. They had shaken the place with their words. The only thing I had shaken was my confidence.

Needless to say, my first night in Africa was a living hell. Try as I might, I could not fall

asleep.

I was in a land that was ten time zones earlier than my hometown, but it was not jet lag that was keeping me awake. I could not sleep because my spirit was out of its comfort zone. I knew exactly what the problem was. It was my preaching. It was void of God's power.

That night I repented, I prayed, I tossed and turned, but nothing helped relieve my heart's pain. I prayed for God's power. I prayed I would be miraculously released from the responsibility of teaching the next day. I prayed to go home. I prayed I would disappear. I even foolishly prayed that I would get sick and die.

As the sun began to rise that Wednesday morning, I was aware of my spiritual bankruptcy as never before.

Without exaggeration, I can say the only teaching I have ever done that was worse than my teaching on my first day in Africa was my teaching on the second day. To say it stank would be a compliment.

Although I bombed out a second time, I was aware that something inside of me had changed. I did not leave the platform in despair that second day.

I left it with renewed determination. I had an inner conviction that I would have power with God the next time I stepped into that pulpit.

At the close of the session, I went directly from the auditorium to my room. I immediately fell to the dirty floor and began praying with all my might. Again and again I approached God's throne.

"Oh, God! Give me a breakthrough ministry! I must have signs and wonders following the words you have given me."

I will always remember the name of that hotel in Abba, Nigeria. The Crystal Park Hotel is forever branded in my memory. It was neither grand nor prestigious, but it was the place where God visited me. It was the place where He electrified my message of biblical economics with power.

As I prayed, suddenly something outside the scope of my experience began to happen.

God visibly manifested Himself to me.

Out of a bright, concentrated light He began to speak audibly to me.

He said He had heard my prayer. He told me He was going to give me the breakthrough ministry I had asked for. However, this promise would be conditional. The condition was that I would have to strictly obey Him in the operation of this gift.

I quickly answered, "Yes, Lord. I will do whatever you tell me to do."

Immediately He told me He had set me apart for the purpose of bringing the end-time message of biblical economics to the Church. He promised He would be giving me many other startling revelations. From that day on, I would teach a very special end-time message.

He also said that at the end of my teaching session the next day was to take an offering. He promised He would miraculously reveal Himself through this offering with unmistakable signs and wonders.

The next words I heard came out of my own mouth. They totally shocked me. I said, "But, God, my host said there would be no offering taken until the day after tomorrow!"

What a strange thing for me to say to God, especially after I had just promised to explicitly obey Him. Now here I was arguing with Him.

I was greatly impressed with the fact that He did not become angry with me. He simply repeated His previous instructions.

"John, if you want to have a breakthrough ministry with signs and wonders following, you must obey me!"

I said, "Oh, God, please forgive me. I will do exactly as you say."

Immediately, He totally and completely forgave me. It was as if I had never even protested. I knew in my heart that not only had He forgiven me, but He had forgotten I had ever argued with Him.

He went on to reveal a truth to me that was almost unknown in the earth.

At first it sounded unscriptural to me. He said, "I usually am not able to multiply back to my children the money they give to me."

I asked, "Why not? Throughout your Word you say you will."

"John, I know my Word says I will, but I can do so only when my people give correctly. I cannot multiply anything back to them that they have given improperly.

"My people usually make two great mistakes when they give to me. First, they seldom give the exact amount I tell them to give. John, tell my people I cannot multiply back to them that which they give to me in disobedience. If I did that, my action would sanction disobedience."

Then He said something I was not ready for.

He said, "My people often give more than I tell them to give. After I tell them how much to give, sometimes the person taking the offering will put undue pressure on them. This

sometimes causes them to disobey me and give more than I told them. When I tell my children how much to give, they should never increase that amount because of pressure. Raising the amount of their offerings because of pressure is an act of disobedience to my Word. It is giving preference to the words of the man who is putting them under pressure instead of giving preference to the words I have spoken."

He went on to explain that His people can give more than He instructs them to give if they do so out of love for Him. He is always greatly blessed by people who give this way.

"They are the people He referred to when He said He loves cheerful givers."  
(2 Corinthians 9:7).

"There is a second thing my people do when they give that stops me from giving back to them. Most of the time they give to me without desiring a specific result from me. They are not really expecting anything back from their gift. John, the multiplication of money back to the giver is always accomplished by a miracle. All miracles operate by faith. When my people give without a desired result in mind, they do not give in faith."

He then spoke to me from Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for...." It is impossible to give to me in faith unless you are expecting to receive something from me in return.

"Tell my people they must always follow these two important steps when they give. First, they must always give the amount I tell them to give. Second, they must give it with full expectation of receiving it back from me multiplied. Every offering must be given in obedience and faith."

The next thing God said to me has proven to be the most phenomenal thing in my ministry. It is greater than I can even comprehend. I literally stand humbled before God by the immense power of it. Each time it happens, I always give Him all the glory, for it is totally beyond my own abilities.

He said, "I am going to attach signs and wonders to your ministry. I will do this as long as you preach my Word and strictly obey me. These great signs and wonders will begin tomorrow. When you teach the people these two principles, you will also allow everyone who will obey them to give in the special offering I have instructed you to receive. Clearly direct anyone who cannot be obedient not to give anything.

"Those who feel they qualify for this special offering must agree to one more thing. They must believe with you, that when you lay your hands on the offering, I will multiply it back to them one hundredfold.

"The prayer you will speak when you lay your hands on the offering must not be a long prayer. Just speak that the offering before you will be multiplied one hundredfold. Speak this prayer in the name of Jesus. That is your only part in the miracle. My part will be to miraculously multiply back a hundredfold increase to those who obey.

"When you have prayed, do not be discouraged by those who say they did not receive the hundredfold increase. Only I know who has given in obedience and in faith. Carefully look and listen, for there will be many who will receive the hundredfold. It will be the obedient ones who will encourage you."

With that said, the presence of God began to leave the room.

Once again I cried out uncontrollably, "God! can't we wait to do this at a time when I am in front of a smaller crowd of people?"

Without arguing, He answered, "John, I will be multiplying the money, not you. I can save one or one million with the same word. My words are creative. Just go and do as I said. I will do the rest."

As the light of His presence left the room, I could see that dawn had once again come to the city. It was Thursday, my third day in Africa, but it was a significantly different day. This was the first day of God's new breakthrough miracle anointing on my ministry.

On my way to the teaching session, I was nervous, to say the least. My host had clearly said there was to be no offering taken that day. But my God had said there would be one taken. He had made it clear that it would not be just another offering. It would be a very special one.

These thoughts of the offering were not my only source of anxiety as I rode to the meeting. I had to face the continuing pressure that awaited me at every intersection along the route.

The car assigned to drive me back and forth was on its last leg. Nothing on it seemed to work, not even the brakes.

Each time we came to a stop sign, my driver would have to rebuke the oncoming traffic. Miraculously, we had arrived safely each day. Now on this special day, there seemed to be a close encounter at every intersection.

By the grace of God, we made it to the meeting without incident.

I entered the building and stepped up to the pulpit. My appearance before the crowd brought no great anticipation to their faces. However, as I began to speak, they quickly changed. It was immediately evident that there was a new anointing upon me. Each word of my message was filled with power.

The air began to fill with the presence of God. It was absolutely wonderful.

In that moment, I promised myself I would never again stand before any congregation without this power. I had taken a drink from the cup of God, and the new wine was wonderful!

As I began to conclude my message, the high praises of God were upon everyone's lips.

Then I made the announcement. I simply said, "God has instructed me to take a special offering this morning."

Immediately a hush fell over the audience. All eyes turned to the host evangelist. Everyone was waiting to see his reaction! He stood to his feet and said, "John, if God told you to take a special offering, go ahead and take the offering'."

There it was! God had clearly born witness to the man of God! With his approval given, I quickly told them who would be allowed to give in this offering.

I explained the two great hindrances that were keeping the Lord from multiplying their previous offerings back to them.

When I was sure everyone understood the two requirements for proper giving, I told them there would be a miraculous manifestation of the one hundredfold increase to everyone who would join their faith with mine. I rehearsed to them that I would lay my hands on the offering and speak the few words God had instructed. I clearly told them this miracle would come to everyone who would give in obedience and faith.

The ushers had barely started collecting the offering when the little salad bowls they were using were filled to capacity. This caused a brief moment of confusion among the ushers. What a miracle! Ninety percent of the congregation had not yet given, and the offering plates were full and overflowing.

Then an enterprising young African man solved the problem by going to the dormitory and getting two pillow cases. Enthusiasm began to grow.

Row after row of excited donors placed their money into the offering. After what seemed too long, the ushers finally came forward with the two pillow cases almost full to the top. I couldn't believe what I was seeing!

They were used to filling only salad bowl sized offering plates, but under the anointed teaching, they had filled two pillow cases!

I asked everyone to rise and extend their hands toward the offering. As I opened my mouth and began to pray, a loud voice cried, "Wait! Don't pray!"

You can't imagine the thoughts that ran through my mind. I just knew a terrible thing was about to happen. To my left I saw a man moving quickly toward me.

I thought, "Oh, no. He must want his money back!" But instead of asking me to return his money, he wanted to put more money into the bag. He began to empty his pockets saying, "I almost did not give the amount God told me to give."

Why, I had never in all my life seen anything like this. Someone actually stopped the offering so he could put in more money!

Once again we bowed our heads to pray. As soon as my eyes were closed, I heard another voice cry out. "Wait! Don't pray!"

Each time I tried to pray, more and more people came forward crying, Don't pray! I haven't given what God told me to give!"

Finally, the evangelist rose to his feet and extended both hands toward the congregation.

He said, "Stop the giving!" In all the years of my ministry, I had never heard anyone give the order to stop an offering. I had only read of it in the Bible.

I glanced at my watch and noticed that over an hour had passed since I first started to pray. Both pillow cases were now jammed full. Watches, rings, money, and articles of clothing were ankle deep on the floor around me.

I closed my eyes and said, "Be multiplied one hundredfold in the name of Jesus."

As I walked away, the joy of the previous moment was instantly snatched away from me. The presence of the Holy Spirit lifted just as quickly as it had come. All I could feel was the horrible presence of evil all around me.

My ride back to the hotel was a half-conscious experience. Brakes failed, accidents almost happened, but I was unaware of the events of our journey.

The devil had come to sift me. He was lashing out foul accusations. He told me I was a failure, and the evangelist would never again invite me to go anywhere with him.

He said I had tricked the people into giving more than they should. He told me many of them would have to go without food, lodging, or transportation.

He repeatedly accused me of being a charlatan and an exploiter of the innocent. He convinced me I had given them nothing more than false hope.

I was defeated. All I could pray was that God would quickly take me out of Africa.

The morning light found me still awake, wishing I was home.

I answered the knock on my door that Friday morning with dread. I did not want to face that congregation again. Reluctantly I opened the door expecting the worst.

Instead I saw my driver standing there with a broad smile on his face. His only words to me were, "Come see!"

As I followed him down to the front door of the hotel, I must honestly say I did not want to see anything else in Nigeria. All I really wanted to see was my home back in the United States.

When we came to the parking area, my driver led me to a brand new car. I looked at it and immediately said, "Thank God they finally got us a decent car to ride in!"

Then my driver said, "Brother John. You don't understand. God gave me this car last night. It is mine! It is my hundredfold return! It happened just as you prayed it would."

My faith immediately skyrocketed! The miracle of the hundredfold blessing had actually happened to this man in less than twenty-four hours!

On the way to the meeting, he eagerly told me of the previous night's visit to his lost uncle's house. The uncle was a very rich man. Before that visit, he had never shown any interest in his nephew. However, that night things were different.

After a wonderful evening of fellowship, his uncle totally surprised him by giving him the new car we were in. It was an absolute gift, with no strings attached.

The wealth of that lost uncle was miraculously transferred into the hands of that child of God. It had happened just as God had told me it would.

Before that year was over, my Nigerian driver and his family came to the U.S.A.

He stood before the church I pastored and gave personal testimony of his hundredfold increase. He also brought with him a list of the names of many other Nigerians who had received the miracle of the hundredfold increase from that meeting.

Since that great day in Africa, I have ministered this miracle increase offering in churches across America. It has also been demonstrated in Canada, England, Europe, South Africa, Nairobi, Brazil, Asia. It has been witnessed by thousands through national television.

Every time this message is spoken, the results are the same. Many are miraculously blessed with the hundredfold increase. The churches I speak this increase in always invite me back to speak again. I meet people in airports, at conventions, and on the street who say they have received the hundredfold increase.

Everywhere the report is the same. Praise the Lord, it works!

It is always interesting to see the different amounts God tells people to give. One person in Florida was told to give \$20,000. A man from Los Angeles gave \$10,000. A businessman from the Philippines gave \$100,000.

Many give \$1,000. This seems to be a very common amount. Some folks give five or ten

dollars. The amounts vary greatly, but from person to person, I hear the same thing again and again. "It works. We received the one hundredfold increase."

As I said earlier, I was hesitant to write this chapter. Even as I started, I felt it was too personal to put into print. I felt it would be too easily misunderstood.

Then, halfway through writing it, I received a phone call. I couldn't believe my ears when I heard who was on the other end of the line.

It was my driver from Nigeria. He was the first man who ever experienced the hundredfold increase when I laid my hands on his offering. He said he was on a short visit to the U.S.A. and felt impressed to call and say hello.

While he was on the phone, we talked about the miracle automobile he had received.

When I hung up the phone, I knew God was telling me the time was right to put the miracle of the hundredfold increase in writing.

I must say again that these great miracles, signs, and wonders do not come forth by my own power. I give God all the glory each time they happen. I simply obey Him, laying my hands on the offering and speaking the few words He has instructed me to say.

As always, I stress to the giver not to feel any pressure to give more or less than God says to give.

This is very important. Some people have told me that they gave less than the amount God told them to give, and absolutely nothing happened.

The people who report they have received the hundredfold increase always confirm they did two things. First, they gave the amount God told them to give. Second, they stood in faith, without wavering, believing God for an increase.

Since writing this chapter, I have instructed my staff that every letter that comes to my office asking for the miracle prayer of the hundredfold increase must come to my desk so that I can personally lay my hands on it. I have stressed to them that I must personally speak the hundredfold increase over each and every one of these letters that I receive.

Now that you know the testimony behind this revelation, I do hope the contents of this book will be of great help to you. In the closing chapter you will find an invitation for you to participate in the hundredfold return. Read the book carefully, follow God's instruction in giving, and I will faithfully pray the hundredfold increase for you.

"THE LAWS OF THE HARVEST":

1. You must plant your seed.

...Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground...it abideth alone....  
John 12:24

2. You must render your seed useless.

...Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone....  
John 12:24

3. You must plant what you expect to harvest.

...herb yielding seed after his kind....  
Genesis 1:12

4. You establish your harvest size when you sow your seed.

...A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.  
2 Corinthians 9:6 TLB

5. You must plant your seed in good ground.

...other [seed] fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.  
Matthew 13:8

6. You must always wait a period of time between planting and harvesting.

...a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up....  
Mark 4:26,27

7. You must maintain your crops for a proper harvest.

...and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.  
Matthew 13:7

8. You must always sow to your harvest size, not from your harvest size.

...Isaac sowed in that land, and received...an hundredfold....  
Genesis 26:12

9. Your expense is always highest at harvest time.

...a man that is an householder...went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.  
Matthew 20:1

10. A part of your harvest is for sowing again.

For God, who gives seed to the farmer to plant, and later on, good crops to harvest and eat, will give you more and more seed to plant....  
2 Corinthians 9:10 TLB

11. A part of your harvest is for you to keep.

...who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?  
1 Corinthians 9:7

12. Your harvest is a miracle.

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.  
1 Corinthians 3:6

"ALL TRUTH IS PARALLEL"

God multiplies your money in the same way He multiplies the farmer's seed.

The hundredfold, sixtyfold or thirtyfold increase is not limited to the agricultural harvest.

The tremendous multiplication principle of the harvest pertains to the Christian's money in the same way it pertains to the farmer's seed. These are not the words of man; they are the words of God.

The Apostle Paul clearly makes this parallel.

"But remember this -- if you give little, you will get little. A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much."  
2 Corinthians 9:6 TLB

With this statement, Paul points out that the amount of seed you plant directly affects the size of the harvest.

No one questions that this works on the farm.

However, in reading further it becomes evident that Paul's primary purpose is not to teach the Corinthians how to multiply their agricultural seed.

His purpose is to teach them how to multiply their money seed.

He is showing them that the same thing that happens when the farmer plants his seed will happen when they give their money.

They will experience a harvest!

By this we know there is a parallel between giving money into the gospel and planting seed into the ground.

**“GIVING BRINGS FORTH MULTIPLICATION”**

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

2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

The traditional church teaches it is wrong to give finances to God expecting to receive finances back from God.

Even the most uninformed reader of the above scripture will have to conclude that the traditional church has misunderstood God's Word on this subject.

Notice this verse is not teaching that if you give a certain amount of money, you will receive back the same amount you gave.

It speaks of giving an amount of money, and then receiving back more money than you originally gave. It says you will receive everything you need and much more.

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

Luke 6:38

There will not be just one single seed of money harvested for each seed of money you plant. You will harvest multiplied money seeds for each money seed you sow.

“...it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over....”

Luke 6:38

If you sow a hundred dollars into the gospel, you will reap many hundreds of dollars back in a money harvest.

There is no question about it; God offers the most liberal of terms.

Some of His accounts pay a hundredfold increase, others pay a sixtyfold increase, and yet others pay a thirtyfold increase.

"...[seed] fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold."

Matthew 13:8

"IT'S GOD'S RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE UP WHAT YOU GIVE"

If someone makes something up to you, it stands to reason that he owed it to you.

Pay attention to this next statement, for I am about to reveal a great truth.

When you give your finances to God, He personally takes the responsibility of making them up to you!

"God is able to make it up to you...."

2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

That fact in itself is wonderful, but there is more.

God always replaces the amount you have given, plus a liberal increase! He not only gives you back enough to meet your own need, but abundantly more than you need.

The greatest benefit of giving to God is that each time you give, you reposition yourself for another harvest.

There is no limit to the number of times you are allowed to repeat this process.

With each planting of seed, you are promised "...everything you need and more so that [the reason for the surplus] there will not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over [not to hoard and stack up, but] to give joyfully to others" (2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB).

With each cycle of this process, you accomplish the three-fold purpose of the financial harvest:

1. You fund the preaching of the gospel.
2. Your needs are abundantly met.

3. You have plenty left over to give joyfully to others.

“YOUR NAME IS ETERNALLY ESTABLISHED”

It is as the Scriptures say: "The godly man gives generously to the poor. His good deeds will be an honor to him forever."

2 Corinthians 9:9 TLB

According to this verse, your giving establishes you as a good man or woman. If you sow your finances properly, it will bring you honor forever.

Many men and women have awards and plaques adorning their walls.

These honors are the good words of man about man. I appreciate the importance of these mementos. The Word of God encourages us to have a good report among men.

However, it is much more valuable to have the Scripture give us honor.

Your understanding of the contents of this book will instruct you in qualifying for this honor. Your proper performance of the laws of the harvest will bring it to pass.

"YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO GIVE"

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

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

2 Corinthians 9:10,11 TLB

In almost every church where I speak, in the seminars I conduct, and in letters I receive, I hear the same statement again and again: "Brother John, God has not provided me with any money to give."

Please believe me. I do not want to incur anyone's wrath.

However, I must be faithful to the Word of God. I am duty bound to challenge this scandalous accusation against our God.

God provides seed to every Christian who is willing to give into the gospel. Look at the Word of God again:

“For God, who gives seed to the farmer [sower] to plant...will give you more and more seed to plant....”

2 Corinthians 9:10 TLB

I am aware that when the offering plate comes around, there are many Christians who do not have any money to put into it.

Please understand, this lack of money does not occur because God is not willing to provide these folks with something to give.

The real reason this happens is that they are not sowers.

He does not promise to give seed to the Christian. God promises to give seed to the sower.

"THERE IS A REMEDY"

The next time you do not have anything to put into the offering plate, try this.

Confess to God that you have not been a sower (giver) in the past, but you want to become one.

After confessing this, ask God to forgive you; then ask Him to give you an opportunity to give.

If you will do this from a sincere heart, God will surely let you make it up to Him.

Remember, He is open to this kind of an agreement, for He promises to make up what you give to Him.

"God is able to make it up to you...."

2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

Write on your offering envelope that you are going to give a certain amount as soon as you have it. When you receive those funds from God, be careful to fulfill your commitment by giving them into the gospel as you promised.

This remedy may seem embarrassing, but it is totally effective. Try it.

You may not like it, but I guarantee you it will work!

SEED FAITH IS NOT NEW

Throughout Christian circles we are constantly confronted with the subject of planting seed.

I have not written this book to present the seed-faith principle as a new concept. I have written it to bring added illumination to the operation of this truth. Each chapter will help establish the proper operation of the seed-faith principle in your life.

Seed-faith giving is not only a New Testament doctrine; it finds its roots in the Book of Genesis where every significant Bible teaching begins.

Seed-faith (faith that a seed will multiply) is the system God depends on to assure the propagation of every life form He created on earth.

Everyone knows plant life continues to exist by the seed-faith principle. Likewise, all animal life is propagated by the seed-faith principle.

Even human beings reproduce and multiply according to this same principle.

God made the first recorded promise of a savior to Adam and Eve by the seed-faith principle:

"...I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Genesis 3:15

God made this first promise of Jesus, the Messiah, in the form of a seed-faith promise. It would be the seed of the woman who would deliver mankind from the curse.

## THE CHURCH EXISTS TODAY THROUGH THE SEED-FAITH PRINCIPLE

"...I will make of thee [Abraham] a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Genesis 12:2,3

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

Galatians 3:29

From this early promise to Abraham came the glorious Church with its ultimate commission to bless all the families of the earth. The promise of the Church has existed through thousands of years by way of the seed-faith principle.

Planting financial seed is the God-ordained way to multiply your money.

With this said, I can hear someone saying, "Brother John, that is not the way my ultra-modern, hi-tech bank multiplies money. That seed-faith business is old fashioned and out of date."

Rather than arguing about this, just read the newspapers. Banks, I mean, ultra-modern, hi-tech banks, fail almost daily.

Keep in mind that this modern banking system has brought the nations of the world to the

brink of economic collapse.

## GOD'S HARVEST PRINCIPLE IS A HIGHER PRINCIPLE

Before you dismiss God's method as being impractical, please realize He does not think like we do:

“...my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

Isaiah 55:8,9

If you are so foolish as to consider man's monetary system superior to God's, just remember God's system has never failed.

Man's systems fail daily.

God's ways are superior for they come to us from His ultimately superior mind.

Seeding to a financial harvest is totally God's idea, not man's.

He is the only One who promises that when you give to Him, He will give back to you some a hundredfold, some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold.

The farmer cannot multiply his seed by the use of inside information or manipulation.

If you are to experience a harvest, God must perform the miracle of increase inside each seed.

God alone is able to multiply your seed into a harvest.

## "UNDERSTANDING FARMING IS IMPORTANT TO YOUR FINANCIAL HARVEST"

It is important for believers to have a basic understanding of farming.

When I first came into the Bible revelation of multiplying money, I knew almost nothing about farming.

I had grown up in the city. My lack of farm knowledge was a continual hindrance to me.

I found it very difficult to bring forth a successful financial harvest without some basic farming knowledge.

You may face this same problem.

You live in the age of astronauts, computer whizzes, and advanced technology, yet the Holy Bible is a book that was originally written in the language of farmers, using illustrations common to farmers. With this book, you must discern God's will for your life.

Do not misunderstand. Your Bible is not obsolete. It can still answer your every need.

People in the hi-tech age still eat food that comes from the farm.

They continue to be born in the same way the first farmer, Cain, was born.

They still face the same basic problems and challenges that past cultures and civilizations have faced.

Your Bible contains the answers to all your needs in every realm. It matters not whether it be salvation, child-rearing, or basic living.

There is a parallel between the problems of the farmer in ancient Israel, the pioneer on the early frontier, and the astronaut in space.

The dilemma is not that the Word of God does not contain the answers to life's most important questions.

The problem is that many of us do not have command of enough farm knowledge to fully understand what it says.

#### "GOD'S PRINCIPLES DO NOT CHANGE"

Just because we do not fully understand God's laws of the harvest does not mean they are not still in operation.

Not one of God's laws is dependent upon your understanding of it for it to work.

God's laws operate, not because of your knowledge of them, but in spite of your knowledge of them.

Just because I do not fully understand the law of gravity does not mean it will not operate on my body. I won't just float off the planet because I don't happen to know all there is to know about it.

The laws of the harvest operate whether you understand them or not.

If you understand and obey them, they will bless you with a harvest.

If you are ignorant of them, they will operate against you, leaving you in shortage instead of

abundance.

## "THE TRUTH WILL SET YOU FREE"

The following verse of Scripture is one of the most important verses in the Bible.

In spite of its importance, it remains almost universally misunderstood:

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

John 8:32

This verse does not say what most Christians think it says.

It does not say the truth will set you free.

It says the truth you KNOW will set you free.

You cannot enjoy the freedom that any truth in God's Word promises unless you KNOW about it.

Every Christian who wants to be set free in finances must know the truth of God's financial principles.

When I realized how ignorant I was about basic farming principles, I made up my mind to learn something about them.

As I did, I learned God's laws of the agricultural harvest are the same as His laws of the financial harvest.

I gained this knowledge primarily in two ways by studying the Word of God and by discussing what I learned from it with farmers.

This combination gave me the valuable insight I needed to greatly increase my finances.

Ironically, every farmer with whom I discussed the parallel between farming and finances asked for a copy of this book.

That made me realize I was not just writing a book for the city dweller, but I was writing a book for Christians everywhere.

We all need to KNOW how to operate the laws of the harvest so that God can multiply our finances.

THE FIRST LAW OF THE HARVEST: "YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED"

"...[There is] a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted."  
Ecclesiastes 3:2

Solomon does not say there is only a time for plucking up, but he says there is a time for plucking up that which has been planted.

The writer of Genesis quotes God as saying,

"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest...shall not cease."  
Genesis 8:22

Once again, it is not just harvest time, but seedtime and harvest time.

Without seedtime, it is impossible to have harvest time.

Jesus reinforced this truth when He said that if a grain of wheat doesn't fall into the ground (seedtime), it abides alone (never multiplies into a harvest).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground...it abideth alone..."  
John 12:24

This is a truth you must understand if you expect to receive money from God.

Many well-meaning Christians live their entire lives without ever learning that giving money is essential to reaping a money harvest.

No matter how fertile the ground, no matter how strong the seed, if that seed does not get planted, it cannot multiply. It will abide alone.

"UNPLANTED SEED DOES HAVE BENEFITS"

There are many uses for seed other than planting it. They vary from food to costume jewelry.

Seed can be ground into meal, and from that meal, delicious hot breads, desserts, and even dressings, can be made. These delicacies can stimulate the taste buds of the most discriminating eater.

Cattle and livestock can be fed with seed bringing forth healthy, full-grown animals. Even the wild game of the fields enjoy a benefit from seed.

But not one seed that is eaten or fed to a cow will ever multiply itself into hundreds of other seeds.

It must follow the procedure ordained by Jesus.

That is, it must fall into the earth. You must plant your seed before it will multiply.

## “SEED NECKLACES DO NOT MULTIPLY”

I am reminded of a very special vacation my wife and I took several years ago. The church we were pastoring at the time graciously sent us to the beautiful Hawaiian Islands for a much needed rest.

As was our custom on this type of journey, we looked for a suitable souvenir to bring back-to our church members. Our congregation had more than one thousand members at that time, so we needed a nice gift, priced to fit our budget.

We found just the right thing beautiful, handmade, necklaces made of various tropical seeds. As you can imagine, there was a great stir at the church on our return and subsequent gift giving.

Much to our surprise and delight, we met one of our former members from that church a few years ago. We were so very glad to see her and renew our acquaintance with this dear saint.

As we spoke, she said she had something special to show us. Well, you can imagine our surprise when she brought forth the necklace we had given her those many years ago.

It was still in like-new condition, shiny and bright. I couldn't help but notice that even though many years had passed, not one of the seeds on her necklace had multiplied.

They were exactly as they had been on the day we gave them to her.

Why?

Because Jesus, the Creator of seed, said if the seed doesn't fall into the ground, it cannot multiply. It will abide alone.

Seed can fall into the hands of the artist, and with it he can make beautiful jewelry.

However, polishing and crafting a seed cannot multiply it.

Seed can fall into the kettle of some fine cook, and it can bring forth a meal fit for a king, but cooking a seed cannot multiply it.

There is only one way to multiply a seed. It has to be planted. This is a law of the harvest that cannot be altered.

The first law of the financial harvest is parallel with the first law of the agricultural harvest.

God cannot bring forth a financial harvest for you unless you plant a part of your finances into the gospel.

“IT'S NOT WORKING, BROTHER JOHN !”

I am continually confronted by Christians who have financial needs.

They come to me complaining that their giving has not produced a harvest.

When they speak to me of the hard times and failures they are experiencing, it appears as if they want me to say, "You do not have to give anymore."

Dear friend, I do not have the authority to say that. It is true that I have an anointing, and I do have a ministry that is seen daily across America on television; but even with the few seemingly impressive things that can be said about me, I do not have the authority to change God's laws of the harvest.

God has said, unless your financial seed falls into the ground (gets planted in the gospel), it abides alone.

If you are sowing but not reaping, the problem is not with God's laws of the harvest.

It has to be something else, for the laws of the harvest work.

Usually when I question these people who are having trouble harvesting finances, I find they have failed to tell me some very important things about their Christian lives.

Maybe they have just started giving, not allowing time for the harvest to grow.

Maybe they do not tithe regularly, blocking their harvest because the windows of heaven are not open to them.

For one reason or another, they are not properly getting their financial seed into the good ground of the gospel.

It doesn't matter how sincere you may be.

It doesn't matter how great your need is.

It doesn't matter how religious you are.

If you want to experience a harvest in your finances, you must comply with God's laws of the harvest.

This is the first law.

You cannot have a harvest until you have planted a seed.

GOD CANNOT INCREASE YOUR FINANCES UNTIL YOU HAVE GIVEN SOME FINANCES TO HIM.

“THE MOST POPULAR VERSE ABOUT GIVING AND RECEIVING”

The most popular New Testament verse of Scripture dealing with receiving begins with this simple condition you must first give something.

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

Luke 6:38

Notice the word give (or sow). There cannot be full baskets of grain, running over, pressed down, until some grain has been given. Neither can there be full baskets of money pressed down and running over until some money has been given into the gospel.

Scripture abounds with this premise of seeding to a harvest. When Solomon tells us bread will come to us on the water, he predicates this on a specific action. He says we must give (sow) some bread on the water first.

“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.”

Ecclesiastes 11:1

How nice it would be if there were an eternal incoming tide of bread.

Why, all we would have to do is daily gather up the staff of life, living the good life without ever having to sow.

As nice as this would be, it just will not happen that way. God says a seed must fall into the ground, or it abides alone.

The truth is, the appearance of bread in our lives depends upon the distribution of bread into the lives of others.

Every aspect of increase operates in parallel with this principle. For instance, if you want people to be friendly, first plant a seed of friendliness.

Even the universally respected golden rule operates on this premise.

“...all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them....”

Matthew 7:12

Whatever you wish to receive from others, you must first plant into their lives.

You must plant a seed before you can reap a harvest.

## "PLANTED SEED ALWAYS BRINGS FORTH FRUIT"

My wife and I have planted seeds of service, love, loyalty, and finance many times. Each time we have sown these seeds, they have come up multiplied in our lives.

In the realm of service, we sowed into the lives of many elderly and sick folks in our past years of ministry. There were so many, we cannot even remember them all.

Now, many years later, we have a great harvest of service going on in our lives.

Everywhere we go, people open doors for us and carry our baggage. As we travel, we are literally waited on hand and foot.

I must admit that sometimes it is embarrassing how folks fuss over us.

I now realize we created this atmosphere by sowing this atmosphere into the lives of others.

This same thing has happened from the seeds of love we have sown in the lives of church members, ministers, and missionaries. In times past, people from all over the world have stayed in our home, driven our cars, found open arms and loving, sympathetic hearts.

The two primary churches we pastored were always identified, above everything else, as churches full of love.

Now as Pat and I travel worldwide, we find such fervent love everywhere we go that it overwhelms us. From Alaska to South America, from the Caribbean to the Hawaiian Islands, from Asia to Africa, letters and tokens of love come to us almost daily.

We are reaping a great harvest of love and loyalty from seeds we have sown in the past. In almost every city in America, and in many nations of the world, pastors and laymen stand with our ministry. They recommend us to others and encourage us to come back again and again. Loyal, loving brothers and sisters are on every hand.

My wife and I are constantly speaking to each other of the wonderful lives that God allows us to live. I do not want to take away from the power and goodness of God by what I am saying. However, I am convinced that if Pat and I had not sown the seeds of service, love, and loyalty, our present lives would be very different.

It would have been easier for us not to have sown the seeds of service.

We could have just been polite and not gotten involved in the lives of others. How easy it would have been to just isolate ourselves from others.

But God's Word warned us that without love, we would be nothing. Our lives would be as the

unplanted seed. We would abide alone!

How glad I am for every seed of love and service we ever planted! For now, in our fifties, when many husbands and wives begin what are called the lonely years, Pat and I begin the most active part of our lives, with a rich harvest of love from both new and old friends.

Thank God that we planted to harvest.

“YOU MUST MAKE AN INVESTMENT TO DRAW AN INCREASE”

This same sowing and reaping process has also brought us a bountiful financial harvest. Throughout our lives we have sown our finances liberally.

I cannot help but remember when, as young Christians at Bible college in Springfield, Missouri, Pastor Fred Needy of Southside Baptist Church taught us to give beyond our tithe to world missions. We began with three dollars per week. Our total weekly income then was barely forty dollars.

How hard it was, but faithfully, each week we gave our four dollars tithe and three dollars mission offering.

In time, both our tithe and our mission offering grew substantially.

We have sowed for years, and today the harvest is evident as our ministry receives funds daily from around the world.

This would never have happened if we had not been taught to plant our seed in the good ground of the gospel.

There came a time when our church was in a position to purchase a new car for us. I remember what we did with that new car.

We gave it to a missionary to drive.

It was brand new, right out of the showroom. He kept it for a full year before he brought it back to us.

It then had 80,000 miles on it, but instead of driving it, we sent it with another missionary for another year.

My wife inherited it with more than 100,000 miles on it. She then drove it for another two years before we gave it away again.

Again the church bought a new car for us, and instead of driving it, another missionary drove it for a year and a half, returning it with more than 90,000 miles on the odometer. I drove it after that for two more years before we gave it away

again.

Many people might say, "How foolish! Why not drive the new car first yourself, then let the missionary drive it when it is old?"

Dear friend, wake up! If we had sown old cars, we would now be reaping old cars.

We knew the laws of the harvest, so we sowed new cars.

Now my wife and I both drive new cars. If we chose to, we could drive a new one every year.

But we could not reap a harvest of cars until we had been faithful in planting cars, for you must plant a seed, or it abides alone.

#### "FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS FOLLOW THIS SAME LAW"

Without making an investment, not one financial institution will give you an increase.

Every commercial bank account bears interest only on the amount of money invested into that account.

No matter how high the interest rate at a lending institution may be, that institution will pay no increase unless there has been a deposit made.

The financial increase from your bank is much different from the harvest that comes from God.

Compared to God, the world's banking system is very stingy in its rate of increase. Most bank saving plans barely creep above 4 percent interest per year. Their more generous accounts allow a meager 6 to 8 percent, and with these there are always many strings attached.

They have such restrictions as minimum deposits, lengthy time of deposit, and substantial penalties for any deviation.

Do not think God is a fool just because He is generous.

He still demands that you make a deposit before He gives you an increase.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."  
Galatians 6:7

Just as the increase of the agricultural harvest demands that the farmer plant a seed, so the increase of your finances demands that you plant some finances.

Allow this first universal law of the harvest to sink deep into your spirit, and let it become a basic premise in your life.

As you do, you will find its benefits will keep you in abundance in your later years.

Law #1 = YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED!

THE SECOND LAW OF THE HARVEST:

“YOU MUST RENDER YOUR SEED USELESS”

“...Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone....”  
John 12:24

The people of God often give in such a way that their seed gives them some personal benefit.

King David was once faced with an opportunity to do this. He went to a certain place to make a very special sacrifice to God.

Chapter 24 of the Book of 2 Samuel tells the story of this event.

Because the place was far from his home, it was necessary for him to buy the sacrificial animals from a local landowner. The owner of the property very graciously offered to supply King David with all the animals for the sacrifice completely free of charge.

Now this was a very kind gesture on the part of the landowner; however, David quickly rejected it.

He wisely refused to sacrifice to His God that which had cost him nothing.

Hear the scriptural account as he boldly answered the man who so generously tried to bless him.

“...neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which cloth cost me nothing....”  
2 Samuel 24:24

David knew that an offering that cost him nothing would bring him absolutely no benefit from God.

The offering had to cost David something so that he could show God his love for Him.

Throughout the Church I am constantly meeting people who seem to be ignorant of this biblical principle.

They are giving if it does not cost them anything.

They are giving with some secondary benefit to themselves.

This cannot bring a financial harvest.

Before I list some of these ineffective forms of giving, look again at the words of Jesus on this matter.

They clearly teach that our seed gift must become of no use to us before He can multiply it back to us.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

John 12:24

When our Lord said the seed must die before it can accomplish the miracle of multiplication, He meant it must enter a stage of uselessness to the planter.

When a planted seed enters the stage of death, the farmer can no longer eat it.

He cannot sell it.

He cannot feed it to his livestock.

For all intents and purposes it has become totally useless to him; it has died.

This same thing must happen to our financial seed when it is sown into the work of the Lord.

It must leave our control and cease to benefit us.

“THE KIND OF GIVING THAT BRINGS NO HARVEST”

Let me be quick to say that I am not making the following statements to hurt or bring condemnation to anyone. I am making them to bring illumination.

I am believing that by illumination, conviction will come.

Then conviction will lead the violators into a more effective and productive form of giving.

Consider the person who is helping one or more of his children through some difficult financial times.

Maybe it is a daughter who has suffered the misfortune of a divorce.

Many times in this unfortunate circumstance, there are minor children she is responsible for

supporting.

In a situation like this I often hear parents say they are giving a part of their tithes and offerings to help their daughter and her children. These well-meaning folks almost always add that they are sure God approves.

They may even quote a scripture to me, saying,

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

1 Timothy 5:8

Now do not misunderstand. There is nothing wrong with caring for your own. In fact, according to the scripture just quoted, it is not optional.

This and other scriptures clearly teach us it is our responsibility to do so.

However, using our tithes and offerings to do this is not based on any teaching I have found in the Word of God.

In the Bible we are given explicit instructions as to where we are to give the tithe:

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house....”

Malachi 3:10

It does not say to bring a portion of your tithe to your daughter's house that there may be food in her house. Instead, it clearly says to bring all the tithe into God's house that there may be meat in His house.

Yes, we are to provide for our own. But we are to do so after we have given God the tithe (10 percent) and the offering (an optional amount).

If we use the tithe and the offering to meet our personal obligations, we are not letting that seed die. We are not letting it become useless to us.

If your seed is to be multiplied, it must, as our Lord said, fall into the ground and die, or it will abide alone. It cannot multiply unless it becomes useless to you.

Let me emphasize it again. I am not telling anyone not to help their children in their hour of need.

However, I am saying do not use the money God has designated for His purposes to accomplish your own purposes.

Give God that which is His, and trust Him to supply you with the extra finances needed to meet the additional expenses you face.

## "MY WIFE AND I OVERCAME THIS PROBLEM"

My wife and I faced the crisis of divorce with both of our precious daughters at the same time.

Try as we might, there was no averting the tragedy as both of our daughters' marriages ended.

This happened just as we thought we were about to have some time to ourselves.

We had just seen our youngest of five children married.

Then, without notice, we were confronted with both daughters and their five children, without husbands and without adequate means of support.

While both daughters did have jobs, a good portion of their support became our responsibility.

Now I must be honest. This all happened at a most inconvenient time for us financially.

It would have been very easy for us to dip into the tithe and redirect it from the house of God into the hands of our two daughters.

Knowing my girls, I am sure they would have used it ever so carefully and only for the best of purposes. What a financial relief it would have been to us if we would have done this.

But we could not do it because the Scripture clearly says that all the tithe is the Lord's. It is holy unto Him"

"...all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord."  
Leviticus 27:30

We had no options when it came to the Lord's money, so we continued to give our tithe and generous offerings into the house of God.

We understood we had to strictly obey the second law of the harvest. The seed we planted had to die (become of no use to us).

If we would have used the Lord's tithe and offering money to supplement our daughters' living, no doubt it would have been a blessing to them.

However, the money we would have given them would never have been multiplied back to us.

Before a seed can grow into a harvest, it must become useless to the sower. Or as Jesus said,

“...Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone....”  
John 12:24

As my wife and I reached out to help our daughters, we were financially stretching ourselves to the limit.

Fortunately, we knew God's plan for the multiplication of money we sowed into His gospel.

Because of this, we began giving special offerings (planting extra seed), reaching out to God for an even greater harvest to help us with our new responsibilities.

We stayed faithful in tithing and increased our offerings whenever possible.

God proved Himself and His Word to be faithful by reaching back to us and actually increasing our income.

I am happy to report that God did what He promised in 2 Corinthians 9:8-9. He made it up to us by giving us everything we needed and more, so that there was not only enough for our own needs, but plenty left over to give joyfully toward the needs of our daughters and their five children.

Because of God's unending harvest plan, we never once had to feel bitter over the added expense.

As the Scripture said, we could truly give joyfully to our daughters.

**“TITHES AND OFFERINGS ARE NOT FOR EDUCATING YOUR CHILDREN”**

Another common misuse people make of their tithe and offering money is to educate their children.

I am often confronted by well-meaning people who tell me they are tithers, and they give offerings, but for some strange reason they are not seeing a harvest from their seed.

Upon closer examination they reveal that because of a special tuition benefit, they are presently sending their tithe money to the Bible college their child attends.

This type of so-called "giving" is not letting your seed fall into the ground and die. This is making God pay for your child's education.

Whenever your tithe is diverted to educate your child, God cannot multiply it back to you in a harvest.

Now I realize every one of those dollars will be a benefit to you and your child, but not one of them will ever multiply into a harvest.

For Jesus, the Lord, the One who rules over the harvest, says if a seed does not fall into the good ground and die (become of no value to you), it abides alone.

I do not want to stir up any confusion in church-owned schools, but using the membership's tithe as tuition is a very dangerous practice, for it renders the seed impotent and incapable of multiplication.

I suggest that if you are involved in any such practice, you immediately meet with your pastor and discuss the scriptural aspects of this arrangement.

"OH, PASTOR, YOU CAN HAVE IT ALL WHEN I DIE!"

Another common practice that spoils the harvest is a person holding back all assets from God until death.

I know people who do not tithe or give offerings believing they are entitled to all of the benefits of a bountiful harvest.

These mistaken folks base that notion on the fact that at their death, they have designated a large sum of money to be left to gospel outreaches.

These folks rationalize that since they will be leaving the ministry a large amount of money at death, surely God is pleased.

However, this is not their only motivation.

They think this is a smart way to enjoy what they have while they are alive.

Please notice some interesting things about this kind of giving evasion.

First of all, the person who releases his tithes and offerings into the ministry at his death does not give anything to the Lord.

He simply leaves everything.

I am not saying we should not leave something substantial to the work of God when we die. This is a wonderful thing to do and can be of immeasurable benefit to the gospel.

However, this is not planting a seed.

It is not a form of giving.

It is a form of controlled leaving.

There is a second reason this is not a proper way to pay tithes or plant seed.

Seed that is planted brings forth a harvest.

However, everyone knows there will not be any use for money in heaven.

The saint of God who defers giving his tithes and offerings, leaving them at his death, cannot receive a harvest from them. He is no longer in the land of the living where harvests can occur.

When Jesus spoke to the rich young ruler He said,

"...There is no man that hath left house...Or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses...and lands...."

Mark 10:29,30

Harvest takes place now, in this time. Harvest is unique to the land of the living.

You do not harvest money, houses, or lands after death.

Holding the tithe until death is not a biblical way of giving.

**"DO IT ACCORDING TO THE BOOK"**

If it is your desire to reap a financial harvest, you are going to have to obey God's simple laws of the harvest.

You will have to plant your seed without any secondary benefits to you.

It will have to fall into the ground and die.

Remember the two laws we have studied.

Law #1: You must plant your seed.

Law #2: You must render your seed useless.

**THE THIRD LAW OF THE HARVEST:  
YOU MUST PLANT WHAT YOU EXPECT TO HARVEST**

"...the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind...."

Genesis 1:12

Someone wisely said that the biggest fool in town is the one who fools himself. Believe it or not, people do fool themselves. It happens all the time.

God warns us of the potential of this folly in the realm of sowing and reaping.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”  
Galatians 6:7

It is amazing that God would have to warn His people of such an obvious error!

Yet He felt it necessary to tell those who sow not to fool themselves.

This is such a simple truth that it seems as if it should not even have to be said.

Everyone knows apple seeds will always bring forth a harvest of apples, and peach seeds will always bring forth a harvest of peaches.

Every seed always produces a harvest after its own kind.

It has always been that way. It is that way today.

The people Paul wrote to in his epistle knew this agricultural information.

Nevertheless, precious space is taken in the Holy Writ to warn the reader.

From this we must assume there is a potential to make this mistake.

“YOU CANNOT FOOL GOD”

Not only does Paul warn us not to deceive ourselves, but he emphasizes that we should not attempt to fool God! Hear his words:

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked” (made a fool of or deceived).

You cannot fool the God of the harvest, for He is the one who established the foolproof laws of the harvest. They are unchanging.

This law is set in time and eternity.

It is irreversible.

The kind of seed you sow always determines the kind of harvest you will reap.

By some ingenious method, you may disguise an apple seed to look like a peach seed. But

when it grows to full stature, it will bring forth an apple tree that bears apples, not peaches.

If you put a hundred-dollar bill in an envelope and mail it to your favorite ministry, the one hundred dollars is the seed, not the envelope that conceals it.

God will not be fooled and send you a harvest of envelopes.

He will send you a harvest of hundred-dollar bills.

“THEY SAY GIVING TO GOD DOES NOT WORK”

Every so often I hear uninformed people say that giving to God does not work.

Many of them are very good people who really love God. Their problem is not a lack of sincerity but a lack of knowledge.

They are ignorant of some, or all of His laws of the harvest.

God says if you plant a seed and it germinates, it will bring forth in kind.

To think otherwise is to make a fool of yourself.

There are various reasons that people are not satisfied with the harvest their seed brings forth.

Some even feel that after they have sown, there has been no harvest at all.

Please remember, it is not the kind of harvest you need that determines the kind of harvest you will receive.

It is the kind of seed you plant that determines the kind of harvest you will reap.

Let me give you an illustration from my own experience.

Some years ago, a precious person came to me in a very respectful manner.

He asked me to help him understand why the principle of seed giving had not worked in his dear mother's life.

This person related to me in much detail how precious his mother was and her unswerving devotion to God.

She had visited the sick.

She had cooked delicious meals for shut-ins.

She had also made many beautiful afghans for her friends and relatives.

These afghans were painstakingly hand-woven and delivered to twenty-five or more people over the course of the dear woman's active years.

However, now in her last years, no great financial harvest had manifested because of her giving.

Actually, just the opposite had occurred. She was now penniless and had to be cared for in a welfare nursing home.

Then came the painful part.

With tears in his eyes, this precious son asked, "Why wasn't my mother's generous giving honored by God? She gave unselfishly, but now she is on welfare like a common pauper?"

I must say I was careful in my answer to this dear person, for he was convinced that Jehovah God had not kept His promise to his dear mother.

"Give, and it shall be given unto you...."  
Luke 6:38

Many times when folks approach me to question God's Word, they are less than sincere.

This man, however, was refreshingly different. I believed every word he had spoken of his dear mother's godly, caring life.

I believed him when he said his mother had been a consistent giver.

I believed him when he told me she was a good woman who loved God and loved her fellow man.

When I answered his question, I began with the Word of God.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."  
Galatians 6:7

Remember, this dear person's mother had sown visits to the sick, meals to the shut-ins, and afghans to friends and relatives.

I carefully questioned him about his mother's present status.

"Does your mother ever have any visitors at the nursing home?"

There was a pause before the answer came.

Then he said, "Yes, there is usually a major traffic jam at her door both during and after visiting hours."

He answered my next question more quickly and with a new look of understanding.

I asked, "Do folks ever bring your mother meals or desserts to the nursing home?"

"Why, the doctors and nurses have a terrible time keeping her on a proper diet. People smuggle all sorts of goodies to her every day."

The next words out of his mouth were, "I know your next question! Does she ever receive any afghans? Yes, Brother John! Her room and her closet are full of afghans! They come to her, not only from local folks, but sometimes afghans even come to her from other countries!"

In closing this story you will quickly see what this woman's problem was.

When I asked this person if his mother had been faithful in giving tithes and offerings, he quickly stated that neither he nor his mother believed in tithing.

They believed it was Old Testament and no longer necessary for our day.

They also believed that today's ministers were taking excessive offerings. They had made it a practice not to give to any ministry that asked for money.

Our conversation ended abruptly.

His mind was closed on the subject.

## 'IT' IS A BIG WORD

Carefully read our Lord's words from Luke 6:38 again:

"Give, and it shall be given unto you.... Notice the word 'IT'. 'It' represents whatever you have given.

Let me paraphrase:

"Give apples, and it (apples) will be given unto you.

Give peaches, and it (peaches) will be given unto you. Give afghans, and it (afghans) will be given unto you. Give meals, and it (meals) will be given unto you."

Now read this very carefully: "Give MONEY, and it (MONEY) will be given unto you, good

measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men pour money into your bosom. For with the same measure that you give money, it (MONEY) will be given back to you!"

Get it into your spirit. God will not be mocked. You cannot fool Him.

Whatever you sow (give) is exactly what you will reap.

God never gets things mixed up in the harvest. You cannot sow afghans and reap retirement income.

To reap retirement income, you must plant a part of your present income into the gospel.

Even our mixed-up government retirement system will not give you Social Security benefits unless you have previously sown money into the Social Security system.

A good understanding of this third law of the harvest will keep you in comfort, far from the clutches of poverty and insufficiency, all the way through the last days of your life.

#### "SATANIC INTERFERENCE OBSCURES THE LAWS OF THE HARVEST"

Notice that Paul intimates satanic interference when he says be not deceived. Deception is one of the devil's primary powers:

"...the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world...."

Revelation 12:9

This is the same kind of deception that caused the fall of mankind in the garden of Eden.

Adam and Eve were deceived. They thought they could fool God. They made clothes of leaves, and they hid in the garden supposing God would not notice they were naked (Genesis 3:7-10.)

Don't let Satan deceive you. Adam and Eve could not fool God then, and you will not be able to fool Him now.

God is not mocked. Whatever you sow, that is what you will reap!

#### "PUTTING GALATIANS 6:6-10 IN ITS PROPER CONTEXT"

If you take a close look at Galatians 6:6-10, you will find it is set in a financial context:

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

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

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

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

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”

This passage of Scripture teaches us of God's requirement to give a portion of our finances (good things) to those who teach us the Word of God.

It goes on to promise a harvest to those who do not grow weary in well doing (giving to their teachers).

It makes a very definite promise that the person who sows finances into the lives of his Bible instructors will reap finances if he does not grow impatient while waiting for the harvest.

Notice that the laws of the harvest become clearer each time we learn a new one. They have a logical pattern.

When you know and practice all of them, your finances will begin to multiply in the same way the farmer's seed multiplies.

The THREE LAWS we have learned to this point are:

LAW #1: YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED.

LAW #2: YOU MUST RENDER YOUR SEED USELESS.

LAW #3: YOU MUST PLANT WHAT YOU EXPECT TO HARVEST.

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”  
Galatians 6:7

Sow tomato seeds, and God's law of the harvest guarantees you will reap tomatoes.

Sow bean seeds, and God's law of the harvest guarantees you will reap beans.

SOW MONEY SEEDS, and God's law of the harvest guarantees YOU WILL REAP MONEY.

No fooling! You have God's Word on it!

THE FOURTH LAW OF THE HARVEST:

## “YOU ESTABLISH YOUR HARVEST SIZE WHEN YOU SOW YOUR SEED”

“...A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.”

2 Corinthians 9:6 TLB

In the ninth chapter of the Book of 2 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul makes a distinct parallel between planting seed and giving money to the ministry.

In this statement he confirms the fourth law of the harvest:

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

2 Corinthians 9:6 TLB

No matter how convenient it would be, you cannot wait until the day of harvest to decide the size of your harvest.

If that were possible, the farmer would never face shortage. Just prior to harvest time, he would determine how much harvest he needed, then sow accordingly.

If his needs were great, he would plant much. If his needs were small, he would have to plant only a few seeds.

How nice it would be if it were so.

Unfortunately, that is not the way the law of the harvest operates.

There is always a season (a reasonable period of time) between the time of sowing and the time of harvesting.

The farmer must determine the size harvest he will need months before the actual time of harvest arrives. If he plants too little in the spring (sowing time), he will be disappointed in the fall (harvest time).

## "ABUNDANCE IS PREFERABLE TO SHORTAGE"

I have made an interesting observation during my adult years.

It is much easier to adjust to the problem of having more than enough than it is to adjust to the problem of having too little.

Shortage always calls for unpleasant actions.

While I was conducting revival services in my early ministry, I began to see evidence of this

truth of abundance and shortage.

I was preaching in a small community in the heart of the nation's wheat belt. The area had been blessed with successive bumper crops of wheat.

That particular year, the harvest was the largest ever recorded. All the grain storage bins across that part of the country were already full.

Wheat was everywhere. Even an abandoned school gymnasium was stacked full.

Every possible means of storage was filled to capacity.

Out of desperation, the grain was being heaped up in the fields on large tarpaulins.

I saw that abundance brings with it some real problems and aggravation.

Some years later I visited rural parts of Africa in a time when crops had failed for several years. There I witnessed just the opposite condition famine.

All the garnerers were empty. Stomachs were empty.

No money came in to pay the farmers' debts.

Not a bag of wheat could be found anywhere.

Men had to borrow, and even beg.

That is when I realized there is no comparison between the gravity of the problems caused by shortage and those caused by abundance.

Wise farmers know they must always plant more than they might need, for it is much easier to adjust to the problem of having more than enough than it is to adjust to the problem of having too little.

"CHRISTIANS SOMETIMES MISS THIS PRINCIPLE"

As unbelievable as it may sound, I have heard Christian people say they did not need to give much to God because they did not need much to be happy.

By some misguided piety, they reasoned it was spiritual not to desire more than enough.

I am convinced this attitude is nothing more than an attempt to cover up their lack of faith to believe God for more than enough.

Ignorance of God's purpose, coupled with insufficient faith in His power to give an increase, brings men to this unscriptural conclusion.

How narrow our vision has become!

How shortsighted we are when we lose the scriptural purpose of abundance.

Most Christians I meet are happy to have only enough. They would never dare to boldly pray for more than enough.

Their conservative position sounds very spiritual. "Oh, God. Just give me enough to meet my needs, and I will be satisfied."

It is this mentality that has spawned songs like, "Just give me a little cabin in the corner of Glory," and "...hardly a comfort can afford."

"YOU NEED MORE THAN ENOUGH TO BE A GOOD CHRISTIAN"

Dear friend, you cannot be the Christian God is calling you to be if you have only enough!

When you have only enough, you are assured of not having enough to do God's will.

When you have only enough, you do not have the ability to fulfill the covenant God made with Abraham.

Remember, you are the seed of Abraham.

"...if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."  
Galatians 3:29

What did God promise the world that you, the seed of Abraham would be?

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee:

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

"And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

Genesis 12:1-3

As the seed of Abraham, you are to be a blessing to all the world.

When God says all the families of the earth, He literally means you will be a blessing to every family on Planet Earth.

This means you have been promised to the lost of this world promised to be a blessing to every one of them.

### You Cannot Be a Blessing if You Have Not Been Blessed

It is an impossibility for you to be a blessing to anyone, much less all the families of the earth, unless you have been blessed.

I mean, you must be blessed beyond that which meets your own needs.

“God expects you to fulfill His promise of blessing the world. He told you to feed the hungry and clothe the naked”  
(James 2:15-17).

How can you possibly feed others if you receive only enough to feed yourself?

How will you clothe the naked if you receive only enough money to buy your own clothing?

The reason God wants you to have more than enough is not to selfishly hide it away.

God wants abundance in your life so that you can cheerfully meet the needs of others.

The Scripture actually says He wants you to have plenty left over after meeting your own needs to give joyfully to others.

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

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

[2 Corinthians 9:8,11 TLB]

Thoughts like this are not the thoughts of the natural man. Sad to say, they are not the thoughts of the average Christian either.

Remember how this relates to the fourth law of the harvest?

The sower establishes the size of his harvest on the day he plants his seed.

The Bible compares this principle to two farmers, one who plants much and one who plants little.

The one who plants just a small amount of seed reaps only a small harvest.

But the one who plants a large amount of seed reaps a very large harvest.

Paul hereby emphasizes that the farmer who sows much seed positions himself for greater abundance than the one who plants little.

With this information, it is simple to conclude that the more you give to God, the more your return from God will be.

If you give the amount God tells you to give, the tithe and generous offerings above the tithe, in time you will have much MORE than you need.

From that surplus you will be able to bless all the families of the earth. You will be able to feed them, clothe them, and above all, see to it that the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached to them.

How much easier it is to be a blessing when you have planted much than when you have planted too little.

Scant planting will bring about scant harvests.

Shortsightedness in the time of sowing will place you in the uncomfortable position of short supply in the time of harvest.

In shortage you will have to do without; you will have to borrow. You will not be able to be a blessing.

However, if your giving has been generous, your harvest will far exceed your needs.

It is in abundance that your options are plentiful and pleasant.

You can give some of the surplus to preach the gospel to the lost; you can use some of the surplus to do the things you desire take a vacation or attend that special conference.

In abundance you have choices.

In shortage, you have misery.

If you plant much, you can become one of those fortunate saints who has the problem of budgeting your giving. By this I mean determining what to do for God with your surplus money each month.

If you plant little, you will become one of those unfortunate saints who has the problem of budgeting your living. That is, having to decide how to turn less than enough into barely enough.

I caution you, please do not let the devil deceive you into believing God does not want you to

have surplus.

God says just the opposite. He receives pleasure when you prosper:

“...Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.”  
Psalm 35:27

It is obviously easier to expand your activities to handle more than enough than it is to scale down your lifestyle to compensate for less than enough.

My wife and I have lived in both of these conditions.

I can remember Christmases when we did not have nearly enough.

How hard it was to stretch our few pennies to have at least a minimum number of inexpensive gifts for our five children.

A few days before Christmas, we would bring out the meager gifts we had been able to purchase.

I can remember us asking each other, "How will we ever make this be enough?" What heart pain parents feel when there is not enough for their precious children!

"THERE IS A SOLUTION"

Now that we have learned God's simple law of the harvest, we sow (give) much so that we can reap (receive) much.

How different Christmas gift giving is now. There is more than enough for everyone.

When I say everyone, I mean a very large crowd of people my wife, our five children, their spouses, their nine children, Pat's parents, my parents and even enough for me to have nice gifts too!

There has always been a surplus since we learned how to plant much and often.

The Scripture is true.

It works!

God is not mocked.

“Whatsoever we sow, we reap” (Galatians 6:7).

The illustration of the Christmas gifts represents only a small part of the great blessing we

have received from planting much.

## "THE SPIRITUAL APPLICATION"

There is a spiritual application to this truth that is more devastating than not having enough Christmas gifts.

When Christians position themselves in the torment of the insufficient harvest, they find themselves continually having to say no to the Holy Spirit.

So many times in the early years of our marriage, my wife and I would sit in mission conferences listening to anointed speakers tell of the work of God in some distant land!

How sorry we would be when we felt impressed to give some large sum of money to that missionary, only to realize that our funds (harvest) were too scarce to comply.

This same painful thing happened each time our church would have a building program. How we wanted to give some special abundant gift to help!

Again and again we had to say no because our harvest was too small.

I can remember the early years of Trinity Broadcasting Network when we had to helplessly stand by and watch Paul and Jan Crouch struggling to make ends meet.

I remember when their two boys were very young. The station was meagerly equipped.

How our hearts burned to help them with some large cash gift just to lift some of the burden from their shoulders but our harvest was too small.

I clearly remember the automobile they drove. It was an old gray, gasoline guzzling sedan that had long since seen its best days.

How I wished I could buy them a nice new car, but I could only wish, because our harvest was too small.

My wife and I lived many years with the dissatisfaction of financial inability.

Then God showed us from His Word that we could not wait until the time of need to decide how much seed to plant. We always had to plant our seed well in advance of our harvest.

We had to plant as much as we could, even more than seemed reasonable to our natural minds.

Only after doing this could we expect our harvest to meet all of our personal needs.

Only then could we experience the surplus we needed to meet all the opportunities for giving that God presented.

"FINALLY WE PLANTED ENOUGH SEED FOR A PROPER HARVEST"

During those days of insufficiency, the church I was pastoring was entering a very large building program.

At that time we were also selling our house to move closer to the new church location.

I was very excited about selling the old house and purchasing a new one.

Our old home had appreciated tremendously. With its sale, we would have almost \$40,000 for a down payment. This would mean we would have to borrow only half the cost of the new home.

Unexpectedly, God's Spirit spoke to me, "John, give me \$10,000 from the house sale money. I want you to give it toward the building of the new church."

I was so shocked, I almost cried. I must be honest. I had never before imagined being able to give this great an amount to God.

We had always been good givers. We wanted to give to God. We wanted to see the new church built.

But we also wanted very much to own a house debt free.

How close we would be to our goal with the full \$40,000 down payment. Why, with double payments, it would be paid off in less than ten years.

But God's will in the matter was overwhelming.

He was revealing the fourth law of the harvest to us.

Throughout the endless ages my wife and I will thank God that we obeyed Him.

As we planted that \$10,000 seed into our church, it was deemed to be a foolish move by the world's financial planners.

But remember, they operate in the natural realm, for they do not recognize God's spiritual laws.

Their knowledge of financial increase operates in a technological mentality.

The Christian's financial increase comes by way of an agricultural mentality.

Time and space do not allow for the entire story, but from that \$10,000 seed has come a greater money harvest than I could have ever expected from the worldly financial system.

Since that day, each of our harvests has been larger, and with each one, we have realized more surplus.

This abundant planting continues to bring forth greater and greater harvests.

It is of the utmost importance that you realize your harvest size is established when you sow your seed into the gospel.

#### "FAITH PROMISE: A BIBLICAL WAY TO A GREATER HARVEST"

As you read the account of my house sale and subsequent gift of \$10,000, you may be saying, "Well, that is well and good for you, Brother John, but I don't have a \$40,000 equity from which to seed."

Dear friend, I did not have that kind of money to start with either. My wife and I started with three dollars per week above our tithe of four dollars.

This seems an insignificant amount according to today's standards, but I can remember when we made our faith promise payments each week.

Our needs were so great that the temptation not to give the extra money to missions was tremendous.

Stubbornly, though, we just kept on making those three dollar mission payments throughout the year. Then the next year, we increased that amount to five dollars per week.

Now think about it. A couple with four children living on forty dollars a week, was raising their mission offering from three to five dollars per week.

Why, at the end of fifty-two weeks, we had given \$260 to world missions.

That equaled over five of our weekly paychecks.

The \$40,000 equity in our house was part of our harvest from seed we had planted previously.

#### "YOU CAN PLANT A GREAT SEED"

You can start planting more by using the time-tested method of faith promise giving.

You do not have to wait until you have a financial windfall to give a substantial gift to God.

Just set an amount that you can believe God for each week.

Let us suppose that you start with ten dollars.

Now that does not sound like much by itself, but when you multiply it times fifty-two weeks it equals \$520 a year ( $\$10 \times 52 \text{ weeks} = \$520$ ). Why, that's more than half of \$1,000.

If you give fifteen dollars per week, it equals \$780 a year.

If you give twenty dollars per week, it equals \$1,040 each year, and so on.

With this in mind, contact your pastor, your Christian television network, or an evangelist God lays on your heart.

Tell the ministry you are going to give \$520, and you will be paying it in fifty-two installments of ten dollars.

Believe me, they will be pleased to hear this.

Please do not be motivated to give only ten dollars per week because of this illustration. You may be able to give forty, sixty, or a hundred dollars.

Do not limit God.

Multiply these amounts by fifty-two weeks, and you will be giving \$2,080, \$3,120, or \$5,200 in a year.

A faith promise will allow you to plant much more than you imagined possible.

“HAVE EYES TO SEE YOUR HARVEST”

You must learn to look about you to identify God's increase. The harvest takes many forms.

It could come in the form of automobile tires that last longer, utility bills that suddenly begin to decrease, better gas mileage on your car, or children's shoes that last longer.

All of these are part of your potential harvest.

There are more obvious ways to spot the signs of your increased harvest.

A bit more overtime may come your way, or you might be offered a substantial price for some item that you thought to be of little value.

Keep an eye on the equity in your house. Many times people do not consider this as part of their harvest.

Remember, the \$10,000 I gave to God from the equity of my home was the result of years of appreciation.

Sometimes the increase takes the form of a notable miracle.

When we sold our house, the realtor said he felt we received about \$10,000 more than the house was worth.

“PLANT YOUR SEEDS ABUNDANTLY FOR A BOUNTIFUL HARVEST”

Make a quality decision. You must decide you will plant much so that you can reap much (2 Corinthians 9:6). If you have some cash, get it together.

If you do not have any cash, consider an alternative. Sell something a boat, a camper, a second automobile. Have a garage sale.

If these solutions do not fit your circumstances, make a faith promise to God.

Determine an amount you will give faithfully each week. Do not make it an impossible amount, but be careful not to make it an insignificant amount either.

Remember, a faith promise is designed to stretch your faith to believe God for more seed.

Always keep in mind that there is a thin line between faith and foolishness.

If you have not been faithful in fifty dollars per week, do not start with \$200 per week.

Always ask the ministry you support to be in agreement with you not just agreement that you will be able to give the promised money (seedtime), but also in agreement that you will have an increased return (harvest).

This was the standard operating procedure between the Apostle Paul and his donors.

He clearly states the Philippians were not only in a giving (sowing) covenant with him, but they were also in a receiving (harvest) covenant with him:

“Now ye Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel...no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.”

Philippians 4:15

Notice the next verse. The Philippians also seemed to have established a faith promise offering of some kind with Paul, for they were giving to him regularly.

“...even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.”  
Philippians 4:16

This verse denotes systematic, segmented giving.

“YOUR BIG HARVEST WILL BRING OTHER BIG HARVESTS”

Whether the seed you sow comes from savings, the sale of some asset, from equity, or from the use of faith-promise giving, God's Word guarantees your harvest.

“God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more....”  
2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

Now that we have learned the fourth law of the harvest, we can confidently add it to our growing list.

Law #1: You must plant your seed.

Law #2: You must render your seed useless.

Law #3: You must plant what you expect to harvest.

Law #4: You establish your harvest size when you sow your seed.

THE FIFTH LAW OF THE HARVEST:  
“YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED IN GOOD GROUND”

“But other [seed] fell into good ground, and brought forth...some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.”  
Matthew 13:8

The story of the sower planting his seed in four different kinds of ground is well known.

This parable has multiple applications.

The agricultural application is probably the easiest to understand.

Seed spilled along the wayside and not covered over with earth will be quickly eaten by birds.

Seed sown into stony places without much depth of soil will spring up but soon wither from the hot sunshine.

Seed sown among the thorns will eventually be choked and become unfruitful.

However, seed sown into good ground brings forth a miracle process of multiplication called "harvest."

In harvest there will be some hundredfold increase, some sixtyfold increase, some thirtyfold increase.

#### "BEYOND THE AGRICULTURAL APPLICATION"

Jesus tells us there is much more to this parable than a mere lesson in agricultural increase.

"Hear ye [understand] therefore the parable of the sower."  
Matthew 13:18

Jesus now opens the hidden wisdom of the parable to His disciples.

He says its primary application is planting His gospel into the hearts of the lost world.

Jesus parallels each illustration from the agricultural harvest with its counterpart in the spiritual harvest.

The parallel lessons we can draw from this parable are endless.

However, let us go quickly to the application that shows us how to reap the hundredfold, sixtyfold, and thirtyfold financial harvest.

Only when we sow our seed into the good ground does it produce the optimum harvest.

From this parable we can conclude that bad or mediocre ground will not bring forth any harvest at all.

If, as Jesus said, only the good ground produces the abundant agricultural harvest, and if only the good ground produces an abundant spiritual harvest, it is obvious that only the good ground will produce the abundant financial harvest.

#### "THE GOOD GROUND FOR FINANCES"

In the Book of Mark, we are told that by giving our offerings into the Kingdom of God (the good ground), we have the potential of a hundredfold financial increase.

Be careful to note that Jesus does not say we will collect this hundredfold increase after death.

He emphasizes that it takes place now in this present world.

“...There is no man that hath left house...or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses...and lands....”

Mark 10:29,30

The spiritual benefit of planting your seed in good ground is everlasting life.

We all understand that our greatest spiritual harvest comes after physical death.

“...and in the world to come eternal life.”

Mark 10:30

Every person knows we will have no use for money in heaven. There will be no rent on our dwelling places. There will be no utility bills.

What is not so universally understood is if there is ever to be a financial increase from God, we must receive it here on Planet Earth. Money is of use to us only while we are still alive.

Jesus said we will receive a hundredfold increase of houses and lands now in this time.

“PARALLEL HARVEST PRINCIPLES ABOUND IN SCRIPTURE”

Notice how Jesus parallels the one who gives houses and lands, things that can be measured in a dollar value (Mark 10:29,30), with the one who sows seed into the good ground (Matthew 13:8).

He promises the hundredfold increase to both.

The law of the harvest operates in both realms, the agricultural as well as the financial.

Multiplication of both harvests appears throughout the Bible:

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom....”

Luke 6:38

“...Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house...or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses...and lands....”

Mark 10:29,30

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

John 12:24

“He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves [the harvest] with him.”

Psalm 126:6

Each of these verses clearly states the eternal purpose of God to multiply the seed we sow into good ground by bringing forth a harvest.

See how our list of God's laws of the harvest is increasing with each chapter. Let us quickly review those we have already covered, and add this new one.

Law #1: You must plant your seed.

Law #2: You must render your seed useless.

Law #3: You must plant what you expect to harvest.

Law #4: You establish your harvest size when you plant your seed.

Law #5: You must plant your seed in good ground.

THE SIXTH LAW OF THE HARVEST:

“YOU MUST ALWAYS WAIT A PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN PLANTING AND HARVESTING”

“...a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up....”

Mark 4:26,27

Thank God for the ministry of the faith teachers in recent years. How far forward these anointed men of God have brought the Church since the mid-1960s!

Those of you who can remember the prevailing theology before that time will recall it was common to blame God for every misfortune that befell the Church or its members.

The error of that day caused us to believe cancer was one of God's ways of calling His precious saints home. We even believed God would cause the death of a child to get the attention of an erring parent.

How nice it is to now know God is always on our side. He is not the author of our tragedies.

The children of God have learned a great deal from the faith teachers. But we must extend the faith message to emphasize patience.

Realize that I am not saying we need a message to replace the faith message, but a message to complete it.

The expanded message of patience is the scriptural succession to the faith message. In the

Bible we read it is not through faith alone that we receive the promise, but it is through faith and through patience.

"...be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."  
Hebrews 6:12

To My Knowledge, Only One Harvest Comes Without Patience

Let me clarify this statement. In the regular course of preaching the above text, I used to say there was nothing under the sun that produced an instantaneous harvest.

I felt very safe in this statement and emphasized it with several illustrationscorn, wheat, apples, acorns, and so on.

After one particular service, I was at the altar shaking hands with some of the church members when a precious saint came to me.

She said if I would not take it as a rebuke, she would like to correct a statement I had made.

I responded that if she would just be gentle, I believed I would be able to stand correcting without letting it ruin the rest of my day.

With this said, she gave me a big smile. I smiled back at her and said, "Well, let's have it. I'm ready. What did I say wrong this morning?"

She smiled again, a sweet and loving smile. I smiled back even broader and said, "Okay, what is it? What did I get wrong?"

She said, "There is one thing you can give away and receive from it an instantaneous harvest."

I asked her to please tell me what it was, because for the life of me, I could not think of one, single thing.

She smiled even broader this time and just held the smile on her face.

I must say, I was growing a bit impatient. People were standing behind her waiting to shake hands with me.

No matter, she just stood there.

As I looked into her friendly, smiling face, I couldn't help but forget my impatience with her, and I just smiled back at her, bigger than ever.

I took her by the hands and said, "All right. Now tell me. What is it that you can plant that immediately comes back to you in a harvest?"

She answered, "A nice, big smile! As soon as you give it away, it comes right back to you."

She had just planted three great, big smiles on me, and even in my impatience, I had immediately given a harvest of smiles back to her.

Since that day I have used this illustration throughout the world.

I have had people of many nations look about the room and quickly give a smile to someone nearby.

Well, I must report that the dear woman was right.

It works in Africa.

It works in America.

It works in England.

It works in Asia.

It works in Mexico.

It works in South America.

It works in Italy.

In fact, I have never seen it operate differently than she said it would.

“THERE IS A TIME OF WAITING”

There is a very popular scripture that is used in secular realms. It is usually quoted in this way: "Cast your bread upon the water, and it will come back to you again."

While this rendition of the verse gives the essence of the truth in giving and receiving, it leaves out one of the essentials of the harvest.

As just quoted, it does not teach the necessity of having patience between casting your bread upon the water and the time it takes to come back to you.

Look at the verse in its fullness as it appears in the Scripture.

You will immediately see that God emphasizes the necessity of patience between the time of sowing and the time of reaping.

He inspired Solomon to write this verse in such a way that shows patience to be a law of the

harvest:

“Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.”  
Ecclesiastes 11:1

This is nothing more than an expansion of the golden rule.

“THE GOLDEN RULE OPERATES ON FAITH AND PATIENCE”

The golden rule is one of those truths from the Scripture that is so dynamic, it is not only popular with those who believe the Bible; it is also popular with non-believers.

Throughout the world, you will find this great truth from God's Word repeated. You will see it on greeting cards, on billboards, and so on.

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

Matthew 7:12

There is, however, a waiting period between doing unto others before it will be done again unto you.

Please allow me another personal illustration.

A few years ago when my wife and I pastored, we gave ourselves totally to a hand-picked group of elders.

They received from us everything we had to give. We gave them our time, our knowledge, our financesour very lives.

Then came the time when God said we would depart from that church for a season.

We left with confidence, feeling that since we had given, we would now receive back from them all the love and support we had sown into their lives.

Well, much to our surprise, they immediately began to treat us as total strangers.

They quickly separated themselves from us, leaving us bewildered.

Our hearts were broken.

Satan used this unchristian attitude to challenge the very validity of the golden rule.

We had given all we had and received the cold shoulder in return.

How much easier this would have been to bear if we had really understood the sixth law of the harvest.

We would not reap immediately upon sowing.

Our bread had been cast upon the water, but now we had to wait the many days of Ecclesiastes 11:1.

Doubts, fears, disappointments, and feelings of betrayal haunted us night and day.

This tragedy was about to take us under when God made this precious sixth law of the harvest real to us.

Little by little, we began to understand there will always be a time of waiting between sowing our seed and reaping our harvest.

Now after several years, my wife and I are seeing our bread of kindness and love coming back on every wave.

The benefits pour in daily from literally hundreds of folks from around the world.

Many new friends have come into our lives and lavish us with the standard of love and respect we planted in the lives of those elders.

By experience, we now know not to look for our harvest on the same day we sow our seed.

#### “SCRIPTURES ON PATIENCE ABOUND”

Notice how important patience is to harvesting the promise of God.

“...the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”

Luke 8:15

“...if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”

Romans 8:25

“For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.”

Hebrews 10:36

“...be not slothful, but followers [imitators] of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

Hebrews 6:12

“And so, after he [Abraham] had patiently endured, he obtained the promise.”  
Hebrews 6:15

Each of these scriptures has two things in common.

First, each speaks of patience.

Secondly, each verse promises that those who patiently wait (allow time to pass) receive the thing they wait for.

“IMPATIENCE WILL CANCEL YOUR HARVEST”

How can a financial harvest be cancelled? It can easily be done by the one who plants the seed.

Let me begin by explaining the world's financial system.

Suppose you go to the bank and plant \$1,000 into a five-year Certificate of Deposit (CD) at an interest rate of 10 percent per year.

If you patiently leave the CD undisturbed for five years, it will pay you the \$1,000 you initially invested, plus your interest at 10 percent compounded over the five-year period.

However, if for some reason you become impatient and demand the money back before the maturity date if your impatience causes you to disturb it even one day short of the full five years you will forfeit the harvest on your investment.

You will not get one cent of interest (harvest) on your \$1,000, and under certain circumstances, you can even lose a substantial portion of your original investment.

The natural realm responds to impatience with cancellation of the harvest!

“FIRST THE NATURAL, THEN THE SUPERNATURAL”

Impatience causes the same thing to happen in the realm of biblical economics.

If you plant a \$1,000 seed into the gospel ministry, you must not allow yourself to become impatient.

While waiting for the manifestation of your harvest, do not begin to murmur and complain.

If you begin to say things like, "God's plan of financial harvest does not work. I don't think God will come through this time. I have waited long enough," you will immediately cancel your harvest.

Notice that I said immediately!

There is something you must realize when you follow God into the financial harvest.

You must remember that you are leaving the realm of the natural and entering the realm of the supernatural.

In the natural realm you can say that your CD is not going to pay you any increase, but as long as you do not alter the written terms, it will still fund as promised when the date of maturity arrives.

Men cannot see the hearts and intentions of other men in the natural realm, so they must rely on written statements. Only when the written document is cancelled in writing is your natural harvest cancelled.

In the spiritual realm, there is a superior principle at work. Things are much more finely tuned.

Everything can change in a moment with just a few words, be they words of faith or words of doubt. In this superior realm, words are very powerful.

A lifetime of crime and sin cannot be done away with in the natural courts by simply saying you are sorry, but in the supernatural world it can be completely and eternally eliminated by saying, "Oh, God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

Those few words in the supernatural spirit realm, make every sin as if it had never happened. God looks upon the heart and knows our thoughts and intentions.

"For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatever he saith."  
Mark 11:23

I am convinced that Christians have missed some of the greatest financial harvests of all time.

They simply spoke them out of existence from hearts of impatience. How many times I have heard well-meaning people speak away their harvest even after they have invested their hard-earned money into good-ground ministries!

They cancel it all by simply making some dumb statement like, "Well, I guess faith-giving doesn't work. I planted my seed into the gospel, and it looks like nothing is going to happen." In essence they are saying, "I cancel my harvest."

...he shall have whatsoever he saith.  
Mark 11:23

Keep Faith; Be Patient; the Harvest Is Coming

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

Galatians 6:9

How quickly some of us faint! We determine to give to God's work, but many times the ink is not dry on the check before our old enemy, impatience, moves in and initiates the cancellation order.

Just settle down! Reject the thoughts that challenge God's Word.

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

2 Corinthians 10:5

Whatever you do, do not become impatient. Make up your mind not to allow your mouth to stop your harvest.

It will come if you planted in faith and stand in patience.

Keep on believing God.

Let patience take your faith to its full potential. In the end, you will have the victory.

You will reap the harvest you planted.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore....

Ephesians 6:13,14

When you have done all God has instructed you to do, just stand there until your harvest is in your hand.

**"IN THE SPIRIT REALM THE REWARDS ARE GREATER"**

Remember that although it takes more discipline to have a harvest in the spiritual realm, the harvest will always be greater than it will be in the natural.

In the natural realm, a financial harvest of 10 to 20 percent is considered extremely good.

However, the smallest harvest in the spiritual realm begins at thirtyfold (thirty times) and progresses up to hundredfold (one hundred times).

Impatience arises when we do not believe God. We think God will not supply, or He will not supply on time.

If you just think about it, patience is the battery that runs the clock of faith. As long as you believe God, the battery will run the clock. The day patience dies, faith stops, and your harvest is cancelled.

Law #1: You must plant your seed.

Law #2: You must render your seed useless.

Law #3: You must plant what you expect to harvest.

Law #4: You establish your harvest size when you sow your seed.

Law #5: You must plant your seed in good ground.

Law #6: You must always wait a period of time between planting and harvesting.

#### "THE SEVENTH LAW OF THE HARVEST: YOU MUST MAINTAIN YOUR CROPS FOR A PROPER HARVEST"

"...the thorns sprung up, and choked them."

Matthew 13:7

Proper maintenance is essential to a proper harvest. Seed will become unfruitful if left to the ravages of a hostile environment.

Insects are very destructive to the growth of the farmer's crop. They eat the lush leaves. They destroy the precious grain. Left unchecked, they will soon render the best of crops unfruitful.

Weeds also cause damage to the crop. They compete with the seed for the precious nutrition of the ground. Anything that takes the ground's nourishment from the crop will eventually render it unfruitful.

Vermin will eat the stalks and leaves of the plants. This also will prevent the farmer from enjoying a bountiful harvest.

The farmer can control all the destructive enemies of the harvest if he follows proper maintenance procedures.

It is obvious it would be more convenient for the farmer to do nothing toward the maintenance of his crop.

It would be easier to follow some interesting course of action instead, maybe sports or some form of recreation. The farmer might like to enjoy a time of leisure while the seed is growing.

However, if he does not maintain his crop, he will not have the privilege of a harvest.

Insects must be controlled. Weeds must be kept to a minimum. Vermin must be stopped at all costs.

If he faithfully executes proper maintenance procedures, they will keep the farmer busy from the day he plants until the harvest is completed.

The successful farmer has to work hard and long to care for his crop and fields.

His labor assures him of an optimum harvest.

### “PROPER MAINTENANCE OF THE FINANCIAL HARVEST”

There are three areas of maintenance you cannot overlook if you expect to receive an abundant financial harvest.

#### 1. “YOU MUST PUT GOD AND A GODLY LIFESTYLE FIRST.”

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

Matthew 6:33

This verse of Scripture is vital to those who plan to participate in God's financial harvest. If you follow its instructions, God will add to you everything necessary to a successful life: food, lodging, clothing, retirement, and life's comforts.

When Jesus said all these things, He spoke of material goods.

However, notice that the two qualifications for receiving them are spiritual.

First, He says you must seek the Kingdom of God before anything else.

How misunderstood this statement can become, especially when you consider all the contradictory teaching about the Kingdom of God that exists today.

The doctrines are many. Some teach Kingdom now, others the invisible Kingdom, and yet another group sees the Kingdom as only the millennial reign of Christ.

How men can make the Word of God seem so confusing!

When Jesus said to seek first the Kingdom of God, He did not intend to stir a doctrinal controversy.

He simply meant we should strive, above all else, to allow the Kingdom of God to manifest

itself in us.

## “THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS IN YOU”

The Kingdom of God is like any other kingdom in this particular aspect.

It is the place where a king reigns (rules).

In the kingdom of England, the monarch of England rules. The kingdom of Monaco is where the King of Monaco reigns.

In the kingdom of darkness, the devil reigns.

The Kingdom of God is simply where God, Jehovah, and His Son, Jesus Christ, reign.

The Kingdom of God also differs from the kingdoms of the world in a unique way.

Every kingdom of the world is a geographic kingdom. It has tangible borders.

But the Kingdom of God does not have geographic (tangible) borders. It is a spiritual kingdom.

The Apostle Paul describes it this way.

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink [tangible]; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost [spiritual].”

Romans 14:17

Seeking first the Kingdom of God is the process of actively seeking the rulership of Jesus Christ in your life.

To do this you must dethrone the devil.

Then you must invite Jesus Christ to take His place on the throne of your life.

You must replace your own will, and the will of others, with His will.

You are to cast down all usurpers, and set up Jesus as the absolute ruler of your life.

## "THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD"

This is the second qualification you must fulfill to have all these things added to your life. You must seek His righteousness as vigorously as you seek His Kingdom.

Teachings on the righteousness of God have brought the Church a mixed blessing.

The confusion comes primarily from what men have taught about the righteousness of God.

There are many man-made rules of righteousness.

They range from dress codes to rigorous prayer schedules, to unattainable rules of abstinence, and beyond.

God's righteousness does not consist of a set of man's rules.

To seek God's righteousness, you must first of all, be saved. When you accept Jesus and His atonement, this imparts to you the very righteousness of God.

“...that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

Philippians 3:8,9

After being saved, seeking God's righteousness goes beyond this initial provisional righteousness.

He desires that we continue on into the practical righteousness of God.

We do this by pressing toward the goal of actually becoming like Jesus Christ.

“...we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

2 Corinthians 3:18

Please notice that of these two qualifications, neither is more important than the other.

Seeking the Kingdom of God and seeking the righteousness of God are both essential to your financial harvest.

Jesus said if we are not first seeking to expand these two dimensions of our lives, we are not going to receive all these things from Him.

You will accomplish a very important part of your financial harvest by properly maintaining your relationship with God. Without daily care of this relationship, you block the possibility of receiving the increase you desire.

You must realize that even seed sown into good ground is at risk if your life is void of spiritual growth and substance.

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

Matthew 6:33

“YOU MUST MAKE WORLD EVANGELISM A TOP PRIORITY”

“...remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day.”  
Deuteronomy 8:18

This verse tells us God has given us the supernatural power to get wealth.

It also clearly states the specific purpose for giving us this power.

It is to establish the covenant God made with our fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

We Are Not the Seed of Moses

This covenant between God and Abraham is not well understood by the children of God. I find that most of the Church tend to confuse it with the covenant God made with natural Israel.

In Deuteronomy 28, the Lord gave a covenant to natural Israel through Moses. God would greatly bless obedient Israelites, but disobedient Israelites would expose themselves to the curse.

We must always remember that God did not only make a covenant made with Abraham's natural seed, Israel. He also made a covenant with his spiritual seed, spiritual Israel, the Church. Every Christian is included in the spiritual seed of Abraham.

...if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.  
Galatians 3:29

There is a significant difference between the covenants God made with these two Israels. The covenant to Moses promised to bless those who complied with the commandments.

Notice how its motivation appealed to the human nature by making promises of being blessed

The covenant God made with Abraham's spiritual seed appeals to something much greater in its recipients. It appeals to the divine nature the nature that exists only in those who have been born again.

That nature is like the nature of Jesus Christ who was not on the earth seeking to be blessed. His motivation was to be a blessing.

“...I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:  
And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all

families of the earth be blessed.”  
Genesis 12:2,3

This verse explicitly promises the power to get wealth to those who desire to be a blessing instead of wishing only to be blessed. It is a promise made exclusively to those who will bless the world.

They will do this with the gospel of Jesus Christ by meeting the needs of the hungry, the naked, and the homeless.

God has given you, spiritual Israel, the supernatural, miracle power to get wealth so that you can be a blessing.

"OBTAINING WEALTH IS ESSENTIAL TO THE GREAT COMMISSION"

In the first chapter of Acts, Jesus made a powerful statement.  
...ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.  
Acts 1:8

Jesus told you to be a faithful witness in your Jerusalem, your Judea, your Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the world. To do this, you must walk in abundance. You must have the money to send others to the places you are not able to go.

The word power literally means ability. God will give you the unique ability to do this. Do not despair. Remember, you are the seed of Abraham.  
...if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.  
Galatians 3:29

You are the heir of the promises. God will give your hands the same power to get wealth that He gave to Abraham. He will fund the covenant He made to enable you to be a blessing in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and even to the uttermost parts of the world.

You can more easily do this today than ever before through giving to your local church, favorite evangelist, or teacher. Remember, God has given you power to get wealth so that His covenant of blessing can be established in and through you.

God will increase your harvest if your intentions are proper. Proper intentions go beyond just blessing yourself. He will supply you the wealth when your intention is to be a blessing.

"YOU MUST DISCERN DECEPTION."

The devil possesses three basic powers: the power to tempt, the power to accuse, and the power to deceive. Of these three powers, deceit is the hardest to defend yourself against.

You can overcome the power to tempt by seeking God's promised way of escape.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

The power to accuse can cause even the strongest to fall, but you can easily overcome it by knowing who you are in Christ. You are the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). You are a royal ambassador sent from God (2 Corinthians 5:20). You are filled with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

...greater is he [Jesus] that is in you, than he [the devil] that is in the world.

1 John 4:4

The most dangerous power the devil has in his arsenal is the power of deception.

...that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world....

Revelation 12:9

...if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect....

Matthew 24:24

Deception is devastating! In the parable of the sower we saw that the deceitfulness of riches causes men to become unfruitful (Matthew 13:22).

When your financial harvest begins, do not be deceived by the expansion of your wealth. Do not begin to lavish it upon yourself. Remember these words:

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

James 4:3

Being deceived by the sudden influx of wealth will turn the harvest process around. This deception will quickly cause you to become unfruitful.

...the deceitfulness riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

Matthew 13:22

You can avoid this problem by giving the lion's share of your surplus to world evangelism.

Remember, you must maintain a clean, godly life, always moving nearer to God. Scripture tells us to properly maintain even the smallest part of our lives in holiness, for even small intrusions and violations can destroy your entire harvest.

...the little foxes...spoil the vines....

Song of Solomon 2:15

Uncontrolled sin is like the foxes of the field. It will spoil even the finest harvest.

However, a properly maintained life will bring forth abundant harvests.

Rehearse with me again the laws of the harvest we have learned to this point.

Law #1: You must plant your seed.

Law #2: You must render your seed useless.

Law #3: You must plant what you expect to harvest.

Law #4: You establish your harvest size when you sow your seed.

Law #5: You must plant your seed in good ground.

Law #6: You must always wait a period of time between planting and harvesting.

Law #7: You must maintain your crops for a proper harvest.

THE EIGHTH LAW OF THE HARVEST:

“YOU MUST ALWAYS SOW to YOUR HARVEST SIZE, NOT from YOUR HARVEST SIZE”

'Then Isaac sowed in that land [of famine], and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him.'

- Genesis 26:12

I have never lived on a farm, so everything I learned about farming was new to me.

Not too long ago I learned something that came as quite a surprise.

The time when a farmer must make his largest seed purchase is when he can least afford it.

This happens when he has suffered a previous crop failure.

During this time, funds are very short. The pressure to conserve is great.

The farmer is in a dilemma, for he must plant more seed than ever in order to make up for the shortage caused by the failed crop.

When this situation occurs, he must plow up the fallow ground, the part of the farm that goes uncultivated each year.

He must even lease additional land.

If he does not have enough cash for this untimely expense, he must borrow.

The farmer must do all he can to plant as many acres of seed as possible. The time he needs his biggest harvest is always the time when his funds are the shortest.

Wise farmers always plant to their harvest. They never limit the amount of seed they plant because of the previous year's crop failure.

“FARMERS HAVE TAUGHT ME MUCH”

Several years ago I ministered in a very small town in Kansas. The entire population was made up of farmers.

During a question-and-answer period, I asked them if they understood that the laws of the financial harvest were parallel with the laws governing their agricultural harvest.

They quickly acknowledged that they knew this truth.

With this response, I almost decided not to teach that subject. But as hard as I tried not to, the Holy Ghost would not allow me to teach anything else.

Reluctantly I began teaching the laws of the harvest.

I must admit I felt foolish as I taught them that a seed must be planted, you must plant what you expect to harvest, and so on.

One by one I continued to teach these principles until I came to the eighth law, you must sow to your harvest, not from your harvest.

Suddenly these veteran farmers began to look around at each other with puzzled expressions.

I sensed that something was very wrong and asked, "Gentlemen, have I taught something you disagree with?"

I actually got a lump in my throat as I awaited their response.

After all, these men were all experts on the subject. Here I was a city boy, teaching seasoned farmers the laws of the harvest.

For a moment no one answered.

Finally one of them spoke up.

He said, "Brother John, you are absolutely right. Every farmer knows you must always sow to your desired harvest size. When a farmer can least afford it, he must sow the greatest amount of seed. Even if a failed harvest has left him almost bankrupt, he must plant more the next time.

"The thing that has impacted me is that while I adhere faithfully to this principle in my

agricultural harvest, I have never applied this law to my financial harvest.

I have been sowing from my financial harvests, not to my financial harvests."

All the farmers in the room agreed that when their crops provided good income, they would give large amounts to God's work.

However, when crops failed, and income was low, they gave very little into the gospel.

They all faithfully applied the eighth law of the harvest to their agricultural farms, but none of them were applying it to their financial farms.

I asked them a hard question. "What condition would your agricultural farms be in if you had operated them the way you operated your financial farms?"

After a moment of silence, one of them answered, "That kind of procedure would have put me out of the farming business long ago."

One by one, each farmer agreed.

I am happy to report that before those meetings were over, each farmer repented of his lack of faith.

They promised God they would never again violate this eighth law of the harvest in their finances.

They promised that from then on they would sow to their financial harvests, no matter how their previous harvests had done.

#### "A HARD LESSON TO LEARN"

There is no way to calculate how many of God's children are at the bottom of the financial barrel because they violate this most important law.

I am convinced the majority of Christians gauge the size of their offerings by their income instead of by the size income they desire in the future.

Every church I have ever pastored was full of people who allowed their giving to be influenced by adverse economic circumstances. If there were rumors of factories closing, or any other pending financial crisis, the weekly offerings would immediately go down.

I remember specifically the days of the terrible gasoline crisis.

The price of gasoline literally skyrocketed. As soon as this happened, the weekly income of the church dropped.

I remember how earnestly I preached to my people that they were the sons of God. He would supply their needs if they would only rebuke fear and continue to give.

During this crisis, no matter how hard I preached, church income stayed down. Finally we had to lay off several needed staff members.

The financial backlash to our church was devastating. Some folks lost their jobs, many of them had to file bankruptcy, and others had to reschedule or cancel their special plans.

We had to postpone the plan of God for our congregation because of the lack of faith.

I am convinced that if our church members had increased their giving during that time, their incomes would have increased. Neither they nor the church would have suffered the pains of insufficiency that we all experienced.

#### “THE FEAR OF INSUFFICIENCY”

For some reason, the fear of insufficiency tends to overshadow our faith in God.

In the Book of 1 Kings, a woman almost brought about her own financial collapse because of this fear.

Her barrel of meal was nearly empty, so she stopped giving to God. This almost caused her death and the death of her son.

Through the fear of insufficiency, this godly woman decided to disobey the Lord's command to feed Elijah.

This is how the Bible describes the event.

“Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee.

1 Kings 17:9

This woman was under divine command to feed the prophet.

“And she said...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.

1 Kings 17:12

This woman's rebellion was great. She was sinning with knowledge. God had commanded her to feed Elijah, but the fear of insufficiency had gripped her. It had brought her to the point of deciding not to obey her God.

“...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.

1 Kings 17:13

Elijah attacked the problem, the fear of insufficiency. He encouraged her to give according to her future, bountiful harvest, not from her past shortage.

“For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail....

1 Kings 17:14

From her failing crop of meal and oil, she gave. Her victory came swiftly.

The seed she planted began a miracle harvest for herself, her son, and Elijah.

“...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.

1 Kings 17:15,16

#### “A NEW TESTAMENT WIDOW GIVES TO MEET HER WANTS”

A widow in the New Testament followed this same principle of giving toward a future harvest. She sowed to a new, bigger harvest that would not only meet her needs, but would also bring her the things she wanted:

“And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much.

“And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

“And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:

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

Mark 12:41-44

Look carefully and you will see that this widow woman wanted something.

She did not give her two mites because she did not have enough to live on, but because she wanted more than the bare necessities of life. She was greatly hindered by the insufficiency of her previous harvests.

The King James translation says she literally threw her offering into the treasury.

With this gesture, she planted more seed than she had ever planted before all her living.

This action immediately caught the attention of Jesus.

### “BIG SOWING IN THE MIDST OF FAMINE”

I would like to give one more illustration of this eighth law from God's Word:

“...Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him.”

Genesis 26:12

Please take the time to read this whole account found in Genesis 26.

Isaac was facing great need. Famine had gripped the Promised Land. Harvest after harvest had failed. He was overtaken by the fear of insufficiency.

Isaac made plans to leave the Promised Land, the land of God's provision. He was heading to Egypt, the land of man's provision. He came dangerously close to blocking God's ability to supply for his needs.

Just in time, Isaac heard God's voice:

“...Go not down into Egypt....”

“Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee....”

Genesis 26:2,3

Isaac was obedient.

In the next few verses you will find that he sowed precious seed into the famine-parched land.

How foolish he must have seemed to the unbelievers. I can hear the inhabitants of the land chiding him saying, "You fool! Don't you realize this is famine time? Nothing can grow. It's a waste of good seed to plant now. At a time like this, you should eat or sell or do something more reasonable with your seed."

Isaac used his faith as a shield against bad news and the advice of the best minds of his day.

He boldly obeyed God.

He knew that if he sowed no seed, there was no hope for a harvest.

He also knew that if he sowed only a little, he would reap only a small crop.

To reap the large harvest he needed, he would have to sow much (2 Corinthians 9:6).

By his act of faith in God, and in this eighth law of the harvest, Isaac became so rich that even the heathen Philistines envied him:

“And the man [Isaac] 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.”

Genesis 26:13,14

#### “A MEXICAN APPLE FARMER GOT IT RIGHT”

Several years ago I was speaking in a school of ministry in Monterrey, Mexico. Mexican nationals were in attendance from all parts of the country.

I was ministering the message of the financial harvest. I was specifically teaching these people not to allow their circumstances to affect their offerings to God.

I was not aware of a certain apple farmer from the city of Saltillo who sat quietly in the midst of the audience. Although many people spoke to me after each session, this farmer and I never met personally during that meeting.

Recently I met this farmer in a school of ministry in Torreon, Mexico. He asked for a special moment with me when it would be convenient.

He wanted to tell me of a miracle he had experienced in his finances. This is the story he related to me.

He had given a substantial financial gift to our ministry during that meeting in Monterrey.

He had given the money as a seed for a very great harvest of apples.

He desperately needed this because he had experienced several flawed harvests in previous years. This had brought him to the brink of bankruptcy.

After giving his greatest financial gift ever, he returned home to Saltillo only to be met with the worst of news. An unexpected freeze had come the same night he had given his large offering. It had killed all the apple blossoms in every orchard in his area.

At this news, doubt almost overtook him. The fear of insufficiency was trying to make him accuse God of not honoring the seed he had sown.

But he wisely said to his wife, "Let's pray, for we have faithfully sown to this harvest. We see the result of nature, and it doesn't look good, but we have a relationship with the God who

rules over nature."

He and his wife prayed earnestly. With their prayers they pushed back fear.

The next fifteen days were agony to them as reports came in from across the valley.

Everyone was saying, "No apple crop this year."

Over and over again these faithful servants of God had to bear the laughter and ridicule of their fellow farmers.

In spite of this, they boldly continued to confess, "We will have an apple harvest. God will not fail us. We have sown in faith. By faith we will reap."

On the fifteenth day their miracle was manifested. On every tree where there had been a frozen blossom, a tiny apple had begun to grow.

At first they were only the size of pinheads, but they were alive and well. Each day they grew until they were fully ripe and ready to pick.

This godly farmer had the only apple harvest in his valley that year.

It was the most abundant harvest he had ever experienced.

Now get ready for the best part . . .

Because of the total failure of every other apple crop in the valley, he received more per bushel for his apples than anyone had ever paid before in that area.

This man and his wife are living testimonies to the truth of the eighth law of the harvest.

We must sow to our future harvest size, not according to the insufficiency of a past harvest.

**"SOW ABUNDANTLY TOWARD A GREATER HARVEST"**

The very fact that you need a greater financial harvest witnesses to the insufficiency of your past harvest.

Under these circumstances, be ever so careful when you sow. Your natural tendency will be to give offerings according to your financial shortage.

Doing this will not solve your problem; it will only prolong and intensify its effect.

It will cause you to experience yet other insufficient harvests.

Stop that old kind of thinking. Do not plant according to past insufficiency, but plant boldly

toward future abundance.

You might wonder how you can do this, seeing that you have so little.

Do not forget what we have already learned about faith promise giving.

Make a promise to give a certain amount; give what you can now, and pay the rest in payments.

With a faith promise, you are only obligated to give if God supplies you with what you pledged.

If God fails to supply, you owe nothing.

But remember, God never fails.

If you make your promise in faith, nothing wavering, the balance of your promise will come.

“IT'S YOUR MOVE”

Determine today if your past harvests have been sufficient. If they have, continue to sow in the same way as always.

If your past harvests have been less than enough, you must plant more than ever before.

When you give more, you will reap more.

“...if he plants much, he will reap much.”

2 Corinthians 9:6 TLB

As our list of the laws of the harvest grows, there is a supernatural power growing in you and building your confidence:

LAW #1: YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED.

LAW #2: YOU MUST RENDER YOUR SEED USELESS.

LAW #3: YOU MUST PLANT WHAT YOU EXPECT TO HARVEST.

LAW #4: YOU ESTABLISH YOUR HARVEST SIZE WHEN YOU SOW YOUR SEED.

LAW #5: YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED IN GOOD GROUND.

LAW #6: YOU MUST ALWAYS WAIT A PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN PLANTING AND HARVESTING.

LAW #7: YOU MUST MAINTAIN YOUR CROPS FOR A PROPER HARVEST.

LAW #8: YOU MUST ALWAYS SOW TO YOUR HARVEST SIZE, NOT FROM YOUR HARVEST SIZE.

THE NINTH LAW OF THE HARVEST:

“YOUR EXPENSE IS ALWAYS HIGHEST AT HARVEST TIME”

“...the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.”

Matthew 20:1

As a group of college students ate lunch in a small diner, a middle-aged busboy overheard their conversation.

The students were loudly complaining about the high cost of their educations.

The busboy listened intently to their bellyaching.

When he could hold back no longer, he said, "If you think education is expensive, you should try ignorance as I have!"

I doubt that any of those students ever heard more truth in fewer words.

Ignorance of God's laws has been responsible for the cancellation of more financial harvests than any other single factor.

Strange as it may seem, the ninth law of the harvest is virtually unknown to the Christian Church.

Again and again I hear Christians say, "I gave big a few years ago, and now, after patiently waiting, almost nothing has happened a few dollars have come in, but I know in my heart it is not the harvest God intended."

By now you have learned there are many painstaking steps the farmer must take before he can experience a harvest.

He must plant his seed. He must plant in the good ground. He must care for his crops as they grow.

As costly as all these steps may be, they are not the most expensive steps he will have to take.

“THE DAY OF GREATEST EXPENSE”

On the day the crop is ripe, the farmer must hire laborers to break loose the harvest from the stalk.

A substantial cost is always incurred by the farmer just before he is able to realize the full benefit of his harvest.

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of this law of the harvest.

If only someone had written a book like this one when my wife and I were first pioneering the financial harvest. We would not have made so many mistakes.

Yes, we made mistakes plenty of them.

Thank God we finally got it right.

This law of the harvest works for the farmer. It also works for me, so it has to work for you, too!

"...God is no respecter of persons."

Acts 10:34

With each increase of knowledge in the laws of the harvest, our harvest improved.

Even as our knowledge grew, we were not experiencing the totally abundant harvest so clearly spoken of in God's Word.

We knew there was more.

We knew God would show it to us if we diligently sought for answers.

What I am about to share with you we discovered quite by accident.

As we stumbled into it, we had no idea God was showing us one of the most important laws of the harvest.

Since learning this principle, we regularly experience abundant harvests.

"THE KEY TO ABUNDANT HARVEST"

God spoke to us a few years ago to give a large financial gift of \$42,000 to Trinity Broadcasting Network.

It took tremendous faith on our part.

We did not have the money, so we made a faith promise to pay it within six months.

Without going into detail, let me say God performed a financial miracle.

We received two exceptional financial gifts. The entire \$42,000 was paid two weeks before the six-month expired.

Praise the Lord!

After this, we continued to give offerings.

A year passed without any sign of a harvest.

We knew God was faithful, but we also knew something was not operating properly.

We had sown big.

We had sown in faith.

Now we sensed our harvest was ripe, but nothing was happening. We felt helpless.

What could we do? It was as if our hands were tied.

Many of God's people know exactly what I am talking about.

When your harvest is ripe, there is an unction that tells you, "It's time for harvest."

About this same time, I priced a new car.

I have always enjoyed cars, and I really wanted to trade for a new model.

I was somewhat disappointed to learn it would cost \$12,000, plus my old car to make the trade.

The old car was far from worn out, but I just got the new-car bug.

I get unreasonable when this bug bites. My wife, bless her heart, has the unpleasant task of seeing me through these times of weakness.

That evening my wife and I travelled to Dallas, Texas, to be part of a special Trinity Broadcasting Network campmeeting.

Our anticipation of seeing Paul, Jan, and the TBN family temporarily overshadowed our conversation.

As we rode down the highway, my wife suddenly said, "John, let's not spend our \$12,000 on a new car. Instead, let's give it to Paul Crouch tonight to help pay for the new Dallas-Fort Worth studio TBN is building."

It took me only a moment to reply, "Yes, let's do it."

I was in total agreement with her. I would much rather give the money to a ministry than to an automaker.

Upon our arrival at the campmeeting we told Paul we would be giving him \$12,000 toward the construction of the new station.

We also put some works with our faith.

We handed him a check for \$1,000, promising to send the other \$11,000 as soon as we could.

"THE FLOOD GATES OPEN"

Well, let me tell you, almost instantly the flood gates of our abundant harvest broke open.

Money seemed to come to us from everywhere.

In less than a year, every bill our ministry owed was paid.

Four of the ministry's parsonages were paid off.

Why, in just short of a year, a total of \$250,000 came from everywhere. I mean everywhere.

We were totally debt free.

Now hold on. That's not all. Keep this \$250,000 in mind. There is still more to tell.

His Image Ministries, the ministry God has given my wife and me to work through, had been operating for several years with offices in our home.

It had grown until it took over almost every room in our house.

As we outgrew the house, in desperation, we rented a small office.

The suite adjacent to our office was vacant and under a long-term lease to a person who did not need the space. He assured me that he had no intention of using it, and it would be available to us when we needed it.

Within a very short time, our ministry expanded to double its previous size, then it doubled again.

Once again we were totally out of space. I went to the man next door and told him I now

needed to rent the extra space.

He said, "I have bad news for you. Next week I am moving a business into that space. It is no longer available."

Now what was I going to do? Would I be forced to move supplemental offices back into my house?

I can remember our prayer, "Lord, please, not that!"

To fully understand the extent of this story, I must tell you something else that was happening during this time.

For three years I had been keeping my eye on a beautiful, new office building just a few blocks from my house.

It was very spacious, and I felt it was perfect for us. The only problem was it cost \$550,000, much more than I felt comfortable with paying.

During the previous few months, several changes had occurred.

The builder of the office complex had gone into bankruptcy.

This had lowered the price to \$400,000.

It was an improvement, but it was still far too much money to spend for an office.

I should not be amazed at how quickly God changes circumstances for His children, but I always am.

On the same day I found I would not be able to rent the much-needed office space next door, I also learned the bank that repossessed this beautiful new office had now come to the brink of bankruptcy.

They were receiving any and all offers on the building. With this news I wrote a proposal to purchase it for \$300,000.

Within a few days the bank accepted our offer and we were moving in.

Remember, the initial sales price was \$550,000.

On the day we bought the building, we paid only \$300,000. We had saved \$250,000 off the original sales price.

Add it up: \$250,000 worth of debts and mortgages paid off, plus the \$250,000 direct savings on our new office building.

Why, God had given us \$500,000 (a half million) in just short of two years after planting our \$42,000 seed in the good ground.

#### “A SPECIAL OFFERING RELEASED OUR HARVEST”

Yes, we also gave offerings all along the way, but it was not until we gave the \$12,000 offering that the abundant harvest was released.

It was at this time we realized we had found a key law of the harvest that would release our harvests again and again when they became ripe.

The farmer faces his greatest additional expense when he has to hire reapers to gather the harvest.

In the same way, we also must make a substantial expenditure by giving a special harvest-release offering just as we sense our financial harvest is fully ripe and ready to be reaped.

“...the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.”

Matthew 20:1

Please realize that you need spiritual discernment to know when your financial fields are white unto harvest.

#### “IS YOUR FINANCIAL HARVEST READY?”

Many of God's children are due abundant harvests, but they do not receive them because of their ignorance of this ninth law.

Ask God if this special harvest-release offering is the key you have been looking for.

Put this principle to work in your life right now. Write a substantial check, and send it to one of the good-ground ministries.

The sooner you put this law of the harvest into action, the sooner your overdue harvest will be released.

Add this special truth to your steadily growing list.

Law #1: You must plant your seed.

Law #2: You must render your seed useless.

Law #3: You must plant what you expect to harvest.

Law #4: You establish your harvest size when you sow your seed.

Law #5: You must plant your seed in good ground.

Law #6: You must always wait a period of time between planting and harvesting.

Law #7: You must maintain your crops for a proper harvest.

Law #8: You must always sow to your harvest size, not from your harvest size.

Law #9: Your expense is always highest at harvest time.

"THE TENTH LAW OF THE HARVEST:  
A PART OF YOUR HARVEST IS FOR SOWING AGAIN"

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

2 Corinthians 9:10 TLB

What do you call a farmer who eats all of his harvest?

A fool!

Surely you cannot call him a farmer any longer, for every true farmer always saves some seed from each harvest for replanting.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF THE ONE-TIME HARVEST

Several years ago while pastoring in Southern California, I delivered a strong series of sermons to my congregation on sowing and reaping finances.

I concluded the series with a strong appeal to put God to the test by planting a substantial financial seed into the ministry.

I encouraged them to believe God for an increase, and then report back to me with the results.

I was amazed at how quickly almost everyone received a great financial harvest.

As you can imagine, the church was astir with testimonies.

I felt good that the people had not only learned the Word of God, but they had experienced a

positive result from putting it into action.

After a period of several months, I began to ask the people individually how they were progressing with subsequent sowing and reaping.

To my utter amazement, I found that only about one out of ten of them ever replanted any of the money from their harvests.

They had foolishly spent it all on themselves.

The more people I spoke to, the more disappointed I became.

Not only did they fail to replant, but more than 60 percent of them had not even tithed on their original harvest.

## FORGETTING WHAT WE LOOK LIKE

How strange a creature the Christian can be.

No wonder the Book of James describes us as those who see ourselves in a mirror, and then immediately forget what we look like.

“...he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:  
For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.”

James 1:23,24

The saints of God see what they are to be like each time they read the Bible (mirror).

It describes us as possessing faith, integrity, healing power, and dominion over Satan.

The mystery is that immediately after reading what the Bible says, we forget who it says we are in Christ.

We then foolishly return to being who we were before we were saved.

Often when we experience a financial harvest, we rejoice, knowing the increase is from God.

We know it is our right to have abundance, for we are the children of God.

Then we foolishly lavish it all upon ourselves, never planting any of it back into a good-ground ministry.

We have forgotten who we are.

We are the ones God promised would have the power to get wealth in order to fund His covenant (Deuteronomy 8:18).

Look at God's Word. He is more than willing to give you an abundant harvest.

He sincerely desires to meet your every need.

However, He expects you to replant a portion. You are to use a part of every harvest to give generously toward spreading the good news that Jesus died for the sins of the world.

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

2 Corinthians 9:10,11 TLB

## BE A FARMER, NOT A FOOL

Do not let the adverse circumstances of your everyday life block you from experiencing your next harvest.

After you have put the principle of sowing and reaping finances to work, have the good sense to direct a portion of every harvest back into the gospel ministry.

If you make a practice of faithfully doing this, I praise God for your wisdom and faith.

If you have foolishly eaten all your seed, do not despair! You have not eternally blown it!

Remember, the laws of the harvest are perpetual. They are always in operation.

You can plant again any time.

“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest...shall not cease.”

Genesis 8:22

Just begin RIGHT NOW with a generous gift into a good-ground ministry.

It will soon come up and bring forth a harvest for you.

The important thing is to act NOW, for each day you wait is another day's delay before reaping your harvest.

JESUS' LIFESTYLE WAS GIVING

Jesus lived a lifestyle of giving! He clearly declared this when He said,

“...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”  
John 10:10

His habitual giving was evidenced by the reaction of His disciples when He dismissed Judas from the table of the last supper.

They were so accustomed to His lifestyle of giving, they immediately supposed he was sending Judas to give money to the poor.

“...some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him...that he should give something to the poor.”  
John 13:29

We are told in the Word of God we should be changing from glory unto glory into His marvelous image.

How wonderful it will be when all the Church comes into this grace. Instead of hearing how Christians are meager givers, people will say our lifestyle is giving.

I like the sound of that!

“GIVING DOES NOT SEEM TO COME NATURALLY”

Throughout the gospels, Jesus encouraged His disciples to give.

Despite this, they stubbornly continued to display the characteristics of their old natures.

When the woman with the alabaster box came to anoint Jesus, as soon as she began to lavish her rich gift upon Him, she was sternly rebuked by those closest to Him.

“But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?”  
- Matthew 26:8

Giving to God is not a waste! It is a guaranteed way of multiplying that which is given.

“Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”  
-Luke 6:38

How strange it is that the children of God consistently miss this most obvious promise when it comes to giving.

In my personal experience I have seen the ugliest side of Christians when it came to giving to God. The worst is not seen when they fall to the depths of what man calls "gross sin."

The ugliest side comes forth when they fall to the depths of greed. No manifestation of human nature is less godlike than greed and selfishness.

#### "FOOLS EAT THE SEED CORN"

Let me illustrate with the following story the folly of eating that which we should plant.

A colony was being established by a band of settlers on a remote island located far from the normal shipping lanes.

Settlers were left there with an agreement that a ship would return to check on their progress in about five years.

The colonists were well equipped with sufficient provisions for a year, and enough seed to provide an abundant harvest for the future.

As they began to prepare the ground for farming, a most wonderful thing happened.

Just below the surface of the ground they found many large gemstones.

Everywhere they plowed, up came hundreds of precious stones.

Needless to say, they declared their venture to be an instant success. They quickly amassed millions of dollars in gems.

During this first year, they planted only a few seeds. There seemed to be little time for farming as everyone was so busy becoming a millionaire.

Every inhabitant of the new colony became rich beyond his wildest dreams.

At the end of the year, only a small corn harvest was gathered because they had planted so little.

During the second year even greater discoveries of gemstones were made.

They ate all of the first harvest, but didn't replant any of it. Everyone was just too busy mining gemstones to plant corn seed.

The end of the third year found them in a hopeless situation. Everyone was fabulously wealthy, but no one had anything to eat.

Now they were face to face with their folly, for it would be two full years before the next ship

would arrive.

Need I go further?

This island full of millionaires became an island full of failures because they neglected a basic law of the harvest.

Part of every harvest is for sowing again.

When the ship arrived at the end of five years, all that remained of the settlers were their dead bodies. Yes, these people had riches untold, but rich or poor, only a fool eats the seed corn.

So many Christians foolishly exchange a one-time blessing for the perpetual blessing of the harvest by not replanting some of the seed (money).

#### “THOUSANDS OF GALLONS OF WATER IN A PINT BOTTLE”

Many years ago in the great Mojave Desert of America, there was a small oasis. It was located midway across the most treacherous portion of the desert. At this strategic point, every traveler needed water.

In the middle of this oasis was a well with an old-fashioned hand pump.

To make the pump operate, its handle had to be vigorously moved up and down until a stream of clear water would pour forth. Everyone who passed that way spoke of the importance of the well. It was considered man's best friend in that part of the world.

One day as a group of travelers were seated around the well enjoying the benefits of its cool, clear water, they began to reflect on its great importance. The guide who led them there listened intently as each spoke words of admiration for the well and its precious life-giving flow of water.

After a while, he said, "The well and the pump are not the most important things at this oasis!" With this statement, the weary travelers began to look around for some great treasure they might have overlooked in their hurry to drink of the well's stream. After a careful examination of the bleak terrain, one of the travelers spoke.

"I beg to disagree. I see nothing that can even begin to approach the importance of this well!"

The guide replied, "Look at the little pint bottle of water hanging from the well. That little, old bottle with its tight cork holds the most important thing at this site. It contains the water needed for priming the pump. Before the well can give up its precious water, you must pour the contents of that bottle into the well shaft to wet the leather seals at the bottom. That

water moistens and expands the leather so that it can produce a vacuum in the pump to bring up water from the bottom of the well.

"Many travelers have been found dead here because they did not have the faith to pour that pint of water down the well shaft. They drank it instead and then perished from thirst because they did not obey the law that operates the pump. You have to give it a drink of water before it can deliver a stream of water."

Your seed is God's promise to you of a future harvest. If you eat it, it will deliver only a short-term benefit.

However, if you exercise your God-given faith and plant it, it will prime the pump of God's abundance and bring forth a refreshing harvest.

**"THE PLANTED SEED IS MORE POWERFUL THAN THE EATEN SEED"**

Do not get confused on this point.

The most important part of every harvest is not the part you eat, but it is the part you faithfully plant again.

The miracle of the perpetual financial harvest depends upon your ability to plant a portion of your finances back into the gospel.

If you faithfully perform this law of the harvest, you will not just receive a one-time blessing, but you will receive an unending succession of harvests that will meet your every need and desire.

**"I CANNOT EMPHASIZE IT ENOUGH"**

There is a vast difference between a one-time blessing and continuing success.

Anyone who sows into the good ground can have a good harvest once, but only those who sow again and again will experience success from harvest to harvest.

There is nothing to hinder this process from working throughout your entire life.

You can harvest over and over as long as you plant from each harvest.

Yes, you can harvest until Jesus returns if you will not grow weary in well doing, and sow again from each new harvest.

"...for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."  
Galatians 6:7

YOU REAP ONLY WHEN YOU SOW.

You must observe the tenth law of the harvest if you choose to have successive harvests.

Part of every harvest is for sowing again.

Remember, God will give you more and more seed to plant (2 Corinthians 9:10).

Law #1: You must plant your seed.

Law #2: You must render your seed useless.

Law #3: You must plant what you expect to harvest.

Law #4: You establish your harvest size when you sow your seed.

Law #5: You must plant your seed in good ground.

Law #6: You must always wait a period of time between planting and harvesting.

Law #7: You must maintain your crops for a proper harvest.

Law #8: You must always sow to your harvest size, not from your harvest size.

Law #9: Your expense is always highest at harvest time.

Law #10: A part of your harvest is for sowing again.

THE ELEVENTH LAW OF THE HARVEST:  
"A PART OF YOUR HARVEST IS FOR YOU TO KEEP"

"...who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?..."  
1 Corinthians 9:7

There are those who teach that Christians are not to have any material possessions, or limited possessions at best.

This idea has attracted followers throughout Church history.

Even today, the predominant mentality throughout the Church is that God wants His children to be poor.

Many wonderful people adhere to this philosophy. It does not seem to cause them to love Jesus any less.

They do, however, have a distorted definition of spirituality.

They seem to believe God is especially pleased with anyone who has given up all of life's comforts for Him.

In the extreme cases of this belief, they may even feel abundance is a sign of sin.

This theology has left the Church at the edge of bankruptcy, and most church members barely able to survive. It is almost totally void of any balance or biblical basis.

### “KINGDOM STEWARDSHIP”

Other than the Bible, there is little information about Kingdom stewardship.

Kingdom stewardship is the biblical teaching that we (God's children) are to have all sufficiency, actually more than enough to meet all our needs and desires; but it doesn't stop there.

It goes on to teach we will have an abundant surplus to give generously into every endeavor where God directs.

“...cheerful givers are the ones God prizes.”  
2 Corinthians 9:7 TLB

It is clear from the Scripture God does not want His children pressured into giving more than they want.

He wants our giving to be voluntary and joyful.

He says He especially enjoys our giving when we do it cheerfully.

It is difficult to be a cheerful giver when you constantly walk in insufficiency.

“God is able to make it up to you by giving you everything you need and more, so that there will not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over to give joyfully to others.”  
2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

Please keep in mind, these words are not the words of a man, but the words of our God.

God says He is able to make up to you everything you have given.

This is not a promise to return to you only as much as you have given. It is a promise to multiply it back to you in such abundance that it will meet your every need and desire.

This fact is clear.

The person who gives finances to God is entitled to have enough returned to him for his own use.

In addition, there will be a surplus that goes beyond his own needs and wants.

This surplus is not spoken of as being only a small amount, but it is described as plenty.

“...not only be enough for your own needs, but plenty left over....”  
2 Corinthians 9:8 TLB

#### “THE HARVEST BELONGS TO THE SOWER”

‘The seed (money) you plant is yours, so the harvest (money) you reap is also yours.  
...so that you can give away more and more fruit from your harvest.’  
- 2 Corinthians 9:10 TLB

It is not the Lord's harvest.

It is not the ground's harvest.

It belongs to you, the one who planted.

The Bible shows who owns the harvest and abounds with proof of the owner's right to eat of it.

“...who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? ...Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn....  
...this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope.”  
- 1 Corinthians 9:7,9,10

‘Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof:...’  
- Proverbs 27:18

“...every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labor, it is the gift of God.”  
-Ecclesiastes 3:13

“There is nothing better for a man, than that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor....”  
- Ecclesiastes 2:24

“...trust...in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.”  
- 1 Timothy 6:17

Throughout the Bible, God invites us to eat our fill from the abundance of every harvest He brings forth from our seed.

Please do not draw back from enjoying your portion of your harvest because of the misunderstanding of others.

God desires you to live the good life.

He wants you to have proper housing, warm clothing, nutritious food, dependable transportation, relaxing vacations, profitable investments, and a comfortable retirement.

None of these are bad things if they are kept in their proper perspective.

Remember the words of Jesus.

“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”  
- Matthew 6:31-33

God knows you need things. There is nothing wrong with having your needs and desires adequately provided.

“WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TO BE POOR”

Several years ago I was about to address a church just outside Capetown in South Africa.

Prior to my lesson on abundance, the congregation was being led in the song, "He Is All I Need." They sang it through for about ten minutes, then introduced me.

I opened my message by saying the song was beautifully done, but it contradicted the teaching of Jesus.

Well, you can imagine the stir that followed. I then opened my Bible and read to them from Matthew 6:32, "...your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things."

These poor folks had been without the bare necessities of life for so long, they fed on that song as if it were a narcotic. They sang it over and over again, "He is all I need, all I need. Jesus is all I need."

It somehow seemed to dull the pain of their insufficiency.

Traditional teachings had locked this whole segment of the Capetown society into poverty

and want.

Do not let tradition intimidate you.

God does not mind if you keep a part of your harvest to eat and enjoy.

He knows you need all these things.

“YOU ARE WORTHY OF YOUR GOD-GIVEN REWARD”

It was Jesus who made the statement, "the workman is worthy of his meat."

This truth is repeated throughout the New Testament. (Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7; 1 Timothy 5:18.)

If you give in accordance to the laws of the harvest and live a life consistent with God's Word, you will reap that harvest.

Some say it is sending the wrong signal to those who do not have enough, to wear gold jewelry. Some say it is a sign of worldliness to wear good gold jewelry.

What am I to do? Hide them?

Wear them only when I am away from those less fortunate than me?

How can I do that when Jesus said I will have the poor with me always (Matthew 26:11)?

And how about Jesus? Should He have rebuked the woman with the alabaster box of expensive ointment?

Does He intend us to hide our blessings?

I took this problem to God.

I told Him I will gladly sell my jewelry or give it away, but He impressed me not to do that.

He said, "You have sown watches and rings, and this very good watch and this precious ring are the result of a biblical principle you have followed. They are evidence of the accuracy and dependability of my Word. You are to wear them. They are a part of your harvest that is yours to keep and enjoy without feeling guilty."

The Church must learn that a portion of every harvest is for the sower to keep and enjoy. The gifts of God are from Him to us.

We cannot allow the misconception of others to dictate what we eat, where we live, what we drive, and what we wear.

If everyone walks at the level of those who have the least faith, the least understanding of God's abundant supply, soon we will all walk in poverty.

“WE ARE TO PLEASE GOD, NOT MEN”

Imagine how displeasing it would be to you if you gave your children beautiful, new coats, only to find they would not wear them because none of their friends had received new coats from their parents.

God is your Father.

If you, His beautiful child, properly sow your finances and live a life pleasing to Him, you are going to experience a financial harvest.

When this happens you must sow a generous portion of it back into the gospel, but that which remains is for you and your family to enjoy.

It is the fruit of your labor.

It is lovingly given to you by your Heavenly Father to meet your needs and desires.

The last thing God wants you to feel when He blesses you is guilt.

He is the One who has given you the abundant increase.

Guilt feelings find their origin in the person of Satan.

Rest assured, feelings of guilt do not come from God.

“JESUS HAD A NICE HOME”

Many of the misinformed teach us we should be poor because Jesus was poor. They say He did not even have a home to live in, and they sanctimoniously quote:

“...Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”

Luke 9:58

Before you fall for this partial truth, read the whole passage.

You will quickly see why Jesus had no place to lay His head that night.

He had planned to stay with the Samaritans.

His lead team arrived well ahead of Him to prepare a place.

The Samaritans refused to give Him lodging because of their religious differences with the Jews.

Contrary to the teachings of men, the Bible shows that Jesus did have a home.

“...Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi...where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day....”

John 1:38,39

### “JESUS HAD NICE CLOTHES”

Scripture also teaches that Jesus had nice clothing.

He did not walk about in drab, non-stylish attire.

This is adequately documented in John's gospel.

“...the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

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

John 19:23,24

The coat Jesus wore was of such a high quality, the soldiers dared not tear it.

If we described it in today's language, we would have to call it a "designer coat."

The value was so great, they cast lots for it.

Do not allow the old, non-scriptural arguments about Jesus living in poverty confuse you.

He had everything He needed and more.

### “NO GUILT TRIPS ALLOWED”

“...if you give little, you will get little....”

2 Corinthians 9:6 TLB

The Church has no trouble accepting this portion of the verse.

We gladly concede it is all right to teach anything that will cause the saints of God to get

little.

I have never been maligned by anyone for speaking of shortage and hard times for Christians. However, the verse does not stop with the promise of getting little. Read on and see a better way of planting.

“...but if he plants much, he will reap much.”  
2 Corinthians 9:6 TLB

You see, the choice is yours.

Your harvest is controlled by your giving, and God does not put any pressure on the giver.

“...Don't force anyone to give more than he really wants to, for cheerful givers are the ones God prizes.”  
2 Corinthians 9:7 TLB

If you want little, just sow little. God doesn't mind! It is up to you.

Just don't be deceived into expecting a big harvest from only a few seeds.

If you desire a big harvest, then you must plant abundantly.

If you sow much, the Word says you will reap much.

It's your choice.

I encourage you to cast down all the evil imaginations that make you feel guilty about enjoying your rightful portion.

Go ahead and enjoy all the good things.

They are your reward for being a faithful steward.

You are the one who has sown liberally into the work of God.

According to Scripture, you are entitled to reap a generous harvest from God's harvest that is yours to enjoy without guilt.

My advice is to plant much so that you can reap much.

**LAW #1: YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED.**

**LAW #2: YOU MUST RENDER YOUR SEED USELESS.**

**LAW #3: YOU MUST PLANT WHAT YOU EXPECT TO HARVEST.**

**LAW #4: YOU ESTABLISH YOUR HARVEST SIZE WHEN YOU SOW YOUR SEED.**

**LAW #5: YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED IN GOOD GROUND.**

LAW #6: YOU MUST ALWAYS WAIT A PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN PLANTING AND HARVESTING.

LAW #7: YOU MUST MAINTAIN YOUR CROPS FOR A PROPER HARVEST.

LAW #8: YOU MUST ALWAYS SOW TO YOUR HARVEST SIZE, NOT FROM YOUR HARVEST SIZE.

LAW #9: YOUR EXPENSE IS ALWAYS HIGHEST AT HARVEST TIME.

LAW #10: A PART OF YOUR HARVEST IS FOR SOWING AGAIN.

LAW #11: A PART OF YOUR HARVEST IS FOR YOU TO KEEP.

THE TWELFTH LAW OF THE HARVEST: "YOUR HARVEST IS A MIRACLE"

"I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

1 Corinthians 3:6

No factory has ever manufactured a seed that can reproduce itself.

No laboratory has ever made a seed that can multiply itself into a harvest.

Only God can make seed that multiplies.

You will find this in the first book of the Bible.

Seed is not manufactured. It is produced from other seed.

It finds its origin, not in the genus of creation, but in the power of the Creator.

"...God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

"And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:11,12

The above verses deal specifically with the origin and purpose of seed.

God says within the grasses, trees, and herbs there is seed. Each seed is a miracle capsule that will perpetually reproduce the kind of vegetation it came from.

"THERE IS A MIRACLE IN EVERY SEED"

The Book of Mark speaks of the hidden miracle that lies inside every seed.

"...So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep,

and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

“For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.

B”ut when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

- Mark 4:26-29

Notice the words “he knoweth not how.”

Two thousand years have passed since this statement was made, yet the secret still stands today.

Although modern man knows many things that can be done to increase the yield of seed, he still does not know how the seed becomes a harvest.

Certain seed can be cross-pollinated, and hybrids can be produced through this process. However, no matter what we do, no man, or process, or machine can make a seed.

Every seed has to pass through a miracle stage before it can reproduce. It requires the divine intervention of God each time.

It does not matter if an agricultural farmer believes in miracles.

A miracle must take place before his seed can become a harvest.

He must allow God to work.

He cannot pray the harvest out of the seed.

He cannot blast the harvest from inside the seed.

He must just leave it alone, under the proper conditions, allowing God to work the miracle.

“THERE ARE MANY HARVESTS”

The Bible speaks of the multiplication of seed in several harvests.

It speaks of this process occurring in the agricultural harvest.

It speaks of the harvest of mankind at the end of the age.

It speaks of the financial harvest.

God is involved in the return you experience in every harvest. He sees to it that a harvest is

manifested according to what you, the sower, have planted.

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

-Galatians 6:7

Christians who desire to optimize their harvest must recognize that the Lord plays the major role in its manifestation.

“FORMULAS AND MECHANICAL CONFESSIONS”

Always remember that when a harvest occurs, a miracle has taken place.

Harvest always necessitates the intervention of God.

There cannot be a harvest without Him.

He is the giver of life.

There is a trend among Christians to reduce the operation of the harvest to a mechanical process, or to a carefully rehearsed confession.

You can plant a good seed in good ground. You can water and weed it. You can wait patiently for it to grow, but unless God gives the increase, nothing will happen.

“...God gave the increase.”

- 1 Corinthians 3:6

A farmer can receive an agricultural harvest by following a mechanical formula. Seed of the botanical kingdom can be multiplied, even if it is planted by a lost man.

There is a higher realm of planting and reaping.

In this realm there are special harvests.

The Bible tells us of the multiplication of money, the multiplication of loaves and fishes, the multiplication of friends and so on.

When you enter this supernatural realm, you cannot multiply your seed by operating a formula. There must be a relationship with God in order to manifest these special harvests.

The spirit world is greatly affected by the heart of the person who is operating the laws of the harvest.

Your financial harvest is a highly spiritual matter.

You will have to acknowledge and seek after the Lord's part in it.

“FAITH MOVES GOD'S HAND IN THE HARVEST”

Jesus instructs us to use His name when we desire anything from God, the Father.

So it only makes sense that when you have planted financial seed, you should approach the Father, in the name of Jesus, and ask Him to optimize your harvest.

Remember, Jesus said that God will do whatever we ask Him to do in His name.

“...whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”

- John 15:16

Faith in the name of Jesus Christ is the highest form of faith.

All the spirit world, as well as all the physical world, must give way to the faith-filled child of God who speaks in the name of Jesus.

“...even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.”

- Luke 10:17

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.”

- Philippians 2:9,10

Everything must come into submission to His name not only in heaven and in earth, but everything under the earth as well.

Keep in mind, seed germinates under the earth.

Your seed can be stimulated to greater growth if you speak to it in the name of Jesus.

Command your seed to come forth in a great harvest in His name.

Every time you give your financial seed (money), boldly pray to God in the name of Jesus for your seed to bring forth an abundant harvest.

Speak to God often of the money you have planted.

Pray fervently for the ministry you have given to.

Speak positive words of life to your seed.

Keep the way clear of obstacles.

### “MOUNTAINS OF IMPOSSIBILITY”

Any number of mountains may stand between you and your harvest.

There are economic situations such as unemployment, depression, recession, political upheavals.

Your mountain may be the lack of job skills, opportunity, or even a lack of education.

All of these may seem like great obstacles that block the possibility of a harvest.

You must realize these obstacles will not go away by themselves.

You must have God intervene.

He will help you move them if you properly use the name of Jesus.

Every mountain of opposition you face, even the mountain of debt, must move when you exercise unwavering faith in His name.

“...Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. [Literally, have the faith of God.] For verily I say unto you, That whosoever [that is you] shall say unto this mountain [whatever stands in the way of your harvest], Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart [the God-kind of faith never doubts], but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire [your harvest], when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

- Mark 11:22-24

I cannot overemphasize the need to ask for the blessings of God upon every seed you sow.

God must always act first before your seed can multiply.

Our Bible promises us God will act if we properly ask Him.

Prayer is a necessary part of every financial harvest.

## “YOU MUST NOT DOUBT”

The following verse says when you exercise the God-kind of faith, it is important not to doubt.

“...shall not doubt in his heart...”

- Mark 11:23

You must shield your faith from doubt. When you allow doubt to mix with your faith, it will weaken, then kill it. Strong faith is of the utmost importance to the multiplication of your harvest.

There is a period of time when your entire harvest depends upon your faith for its existence.

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

- Hebrews 11:1

The word “substance” used in this verse can be better understood if you substitute the words “raw material”.

Your faith in God to multiply your money back to you is the raw material from which your harvest will be made.

When you allow doubt to enter your spirit, you are allowing the cancellation of your harvest.

When your faith is gone, your harvest goes with it.

Your faith is also the evidence that your harvest exists in the spirit realm.

Everything in the spirit realm is invisible. Everything that now exists visibly, existed first in the invisible (spirit) realm.

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

- Hebrews 11:3

Guard your heart against doubt, for it can cancel your financial harvest.

Remember, faith is the doorway between the invisible and the visible realms.

Your harvest will enter the visible through the door of your strong faith.

## “YOU MUST SPEAK RIGHT WORDS”

Three times in this verse we are told the words we speak are critical to receiving what we ask for in faith.

“...whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.”

- Mark 11:23

Speak only words of victory concerning your financial harvest.

Never speak words of doubt, fear, or destruction.

Always keep a firm belief that God can do what He has promised you.

Speak only those things that confirm your harvest.

Never speak words that will cancel your harvest.

"...shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.”

- Mark 11:23

## “YOU MUST PRAY”

The Scripture says when you pray, the things you desire are manifested.

“...What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

- Mark 11:24

If you are a serious investor in the gospel of Jesus Christ, you cannot afford to overlook your time in prayer.

It is crucial that you petition God for an abundant return on the seed you have planted.

Your Heavenly Father has the ultimate authority over your harvest.

You have been invited to speak freely to Him.

Keep all of the laws of the harvest.

Go over them from time to time and be sure you are in compliance.

This is necessary for your great harvest.

LAW #1: YOU MUST PLANT YOUR SEED.

LAW #2: YOU MUST RENDER YOUR SEED USELESS.

LAW #3: YOU MUST PLANT WHAT YOU EXPECT TO HARVEST.

LAW #4: YOU ESTABLISH YOUR HARVEST SIZE WHEN YOU SOW YOUR SEED.

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LAW #10: A PART OF YOUR HARVEST IS FOR SOWING AGAIN.

LAW #11: A PART OF YOUR HARVEST IS FOR YOU TO KEEP.

LAW #12: YOUR HARVEST IS A MIRACLE.

YOU MUST NOW PLANT YOUR HUNDREDFOLD SEED

"...God...will give you...seed to plant and will make it grow..."

- 2 Corinthians 9:10 TLB

For some reason the time never seems right for giving. There is always some adverse circumstance to hinder you.

It may be that it is tax time.

There may be pending lay-offs in your industry.

Your car may need unexpected repairs.

The children may need school clothing.

Even Christmas, the celebration of the Lord's birthday, can hinder giving to God.

God understands there is never a convenient time for giving.

That is why He gave us the following instructions:

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

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

- Ecclesiastes 11:4,6

There it is. The farmer who observes the adverse circumstances of nature will never plant his seed.

There is never a perfect day for sowing.

This same principle applies to the Christian who desires to give a significant financial gift into the Kingdom of God.

You must press on, even though it is not a convenient season.

Isaac had to disregard every adverse condition to obey God when he sowed.

If you recall (Genesis 26) the entire nation was in a death grip of drought and famine.

Not only was the weather bad for sowing, but his wells had been stopped up by the Philistines.

However, in faith he paid no attention to these bad circumstances. He simply obeyed God and sowed.

There was no natural reason to justify the release of his precious seed into that parched earth.

No man with good sense was wasting his seed on that hardened ground.

However, you must remember that Isaac had more than good sense when it came to planning his actions.

He had an advantage, for while the heathen had only five senses, Isaac was blessed with a sixth sense.

He had faith in his God.

Even in what seemed to be impossible circumstances, Isaac's faith was able to hold onto God's Word.

No matter how futile it seemed to others, he was able to sow anyway.

Please notice, he did not plant in desperation.

He planted in faith. He had faith in God's instructions:

“Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him.

“For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.”

- Genesis 26:12,14

There is no reason to think this will not work for you.

Isaac served the same God you serve today, and He is the God who never changes:

“...I am the Lord, I change not....”

- Malachi 3:6

Jesus, our Savior, also never changes.

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.”

- Hebrews 13:8

Isaac operated under the same covenant promises in which you operate today.

He was the seed of Abraham even as you are the seed of Abraham.

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

- Galatians 3:29

Remember, the promises to Abraham's seed include the power to get wealth.

“...thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.”

- Deuteronomy 8:18

The wealth of this promise can come from many places.

However, the power to get it is activated when you plant your financial seed to a financial harvest.

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

- Luke 6:38

“GO THROUGH THIS PROCESS STEP BY STEP”

Allow me, once again, to take you step by step through God's simple laws of the harvest.

Let this review assist you in planting your seed to a hundredfold financial harvest.

Check off each step of the process as you agree to comply.

#### 1. YOU MUST PLANT A SEED.

Decide today that you must prepare an amount of money to give to the Lord.

It will be a specified amount of money that will become your seed into the gospel.

I understand this is not the most convenient time to give.

We have seen that there will never be a convenient time.

Resolve in your spirit that this is the day you will commit to give a substantial amount of money to God.

Remember, you are not planting your finances just to get rid of some money or help with some special project.

You are deliberately giving your finances for the purpose of receiving multiplied finances back again.

Make a clear commitment to yourself and your God that you are giving this money with the full intention of following all the laws of the harvest.

Yes, I will plant a seed.

- No, I will not plant a seed.

If your answer is no, go no further. Return to Chapter 1 and start reading this book again. You have missed something. If your answer is yes, proceed to step two.

## 2. YOU MUST ALLOW YOUR SEED TO BECOME USELESS TO YOU.

Do not expect a harvest if you plant a seed that you have not allowed to die.

Remember, the seed (money) you plant must become useless to you.

You must not have any strings attached.

- Yes, I will plant my seed in such a way that I receive no benefit from it other than my promised harvest. It will be a real gift to God. I will have no strings attached to it.

- No, I will not plant my seed in such a way that I can receive no benefit from it.

If your answer is no, go no further. Return to Chapter 4 and read it again. If your answer is yes, proceed to step three.

## 3. YOU MUST PLANT THE THING YOU WISH TO REAP.

If you plant tomatoes, you will have a tomato harvest. If you plant apples, you will have an apple harvest. If you plant kindness, you will receive a harvest of kindness.

If you plant money, you will have a money harvest!

- Yes, the seed I am planting is a money seed. I am planting money expecting to reap a money harvest.

- No, the seed I plant will not be a money seed, but I still expect to reap a money harvest.

If your answer is no, go back to Chapter 5 and read it again. You missed the whole point of that chapter. If your answer is yes, proceed to number four.

## 4. YOU MUST DECIDE THE SIZE HARVEST YOU DESIRE ON THE DAY YOU SOW.

This can be one of the most frustrating laws of the harvest to comply with.

It is difficult to decide how much seed to plant.

Please let me give you a scripture and a brief comment.

The Apostle Paul helped the Corinthians with this problem.

“For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.”

- 2 Corinthians 8:12

If you have come this far, you have already decided to plant a seed. You are already of a willing mind.

Next the verse says the amount of your offering should be in accordance with your sufficiency, not your insufficiency.

The amount you give should be governed by the blessing God has been to you, not according to the shortage you are experiencing.

When you plant a seed, there will be a natural tendency to decrease the size of your gift because of things you still need.

Your offering should not be reduced because you have needs.

You should give it in accordance with the blessings God has given to you.

Don't penalize God because of the shortages you are suffering from the kingdom of darkness.

Don't let your lack decide the amount of your gift. Let God's abundant blessings set the pace.

Please keep in mind that God is always willing to tell you how much to give if you just ask Him.

The peace of God will signal you when you have decided on the amount that He is in agreement with.

“...let the peace of God rule [umpire] in your hearts...”

- Colossians 3:15

Let God's peace be the umpire when deciding how much to give.

Yes, I have peace about the amount I am to give. The amount is \$\_\_\_\_\_.

No, I cannot decide how much to plant.

If your answer is no, stop here. Count your blessings and pray until God gives you peace about an amount. If your answer is yes, and you have written down the amount, proceed to step five.