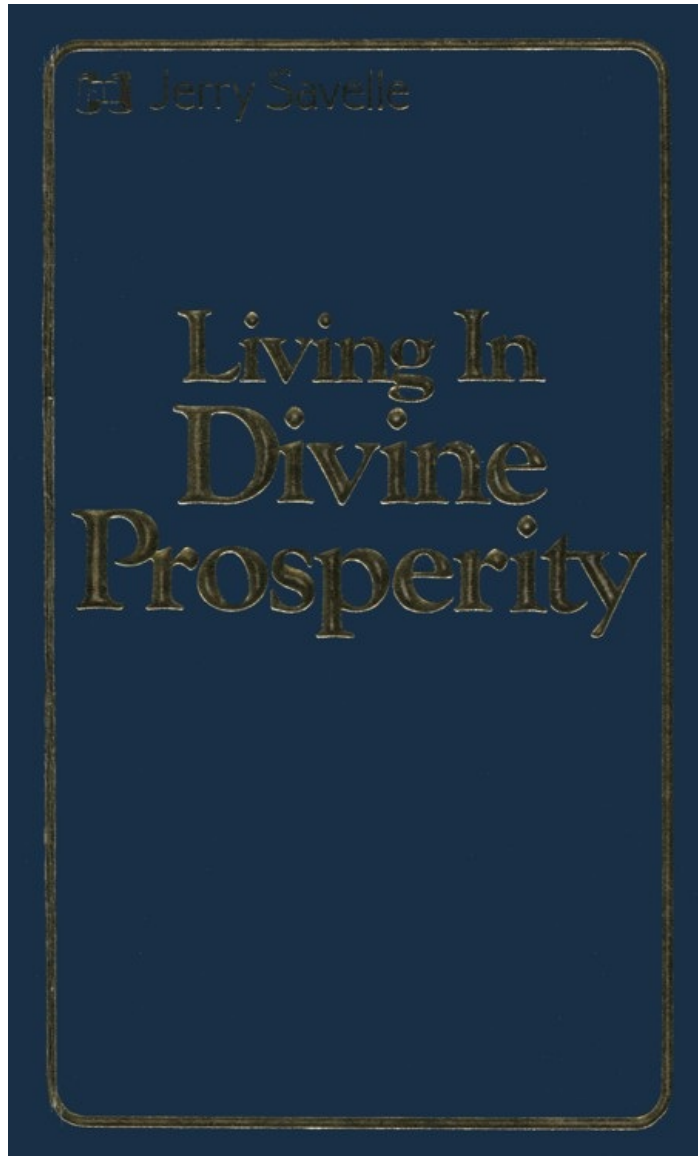


✠ Jerry Savelle

Living In
Divine
Prosperity



**Living in Divine
Prosperity**



Living in Divine

Prosperity

by

Jerry Savelle

HARRISON HOUSE

Tulsa, Oklahoma

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Introduction

In October, 1981, I had the privilege of

ministering in a convention at Charlotte, North Carolina, with Kenneth and Gloria Copeland, Charles Capps, and Norvel Hayes.

Before I went to the convention, I knew something special was going to take place in the meetings. Yet at the same time I knew something was going to happen in my own life. I had no idea what it was, and I didn't try to figure it out. I just flowed in the Spirit of God. My wife Carolyn and I had decided before we went into the convention that we were going to fast and stay in the presence of God every moment that we were not actually in the meetings.

I fasted and got up very early in the morning just to fellowship with God. When I would leave a meeting, I would go right back to my hotel room and stay in God's presence. That went on for almost the whole week,

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until Thursday afternoon. I finished preaching that day, went to my room, and sat down. God had been dealing with me about some things—sharing with me about my own ministry and some new directions we were to take. There had been some great things happen in that

convention, and I sensed a release in my spirit. So I told Carolyn, "I'm going to order a meal, then just relax and rest before we go into the service tonight." She went into the bedroom to lie down and rest while we waited for room service to bring us the meal I had ordered. I went into the living room of our hotel suite, sat down on the couch, and propped my feet up on the coffee table.

Now I didn't ask for this to happen. I didn't pray for it, or even think about it happening. I was just sitting there, minding my own business, not bothering anybody, when suddenly the Lord appeared unto me.

When He appeared, He said these words to me: "Son, My people are in financial famine, and I'm giving you the assignment to tell them how to get out." Then He began to reveal to me the keys to deliverance. That is part of what I will share with you in these pages.

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His presence engulfed me. It filled the room. In fact, after the Lord had finished talking with me, His presence—the Shekinah glory of God—was still so strong in my room that it woke Carolyn. She ran in and said, "What's happening in here?"

I said, "The Lord just visited me."

We got so caught up in His presence that when the waiter brought the meal, we couldn't even eat.

I could hardly talk or think, I was so taken aback by what had happened. But I began to realize the urgency of what the Lord had told me: "Tell the people that I want them out of bondage."

When we got to the service that night, Brother Copeland said to me, "I sense in my spirit that God wants you to preach tonight."

"Yes, that's what I was going to tell you."

"Well," he said, "you do whatever God told you to do."

That night I preached a portion of what the Lord had shared with me, the part about sowing in famine, which I will share with you in this book.

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Without a doubt, my life was changed that night, and the lives of thousands of others as well. Everywhere I have preached this message since that time, the testimonies have been phenomenal.

The message I want to share with you in this book is this: **Put God first place in your**

life.

I want you to know that if you will open your heart and receive what I have to say to you, you will come out of your bondage. You may say, "Well, I'm not in bondage." Good, then pass this book on to someone who is. God's people must become free, for the job we have to do in these last days is tremendous and will demand great financial freedom on our part.

I can show you on paper the names of individuals and churches who have been blessed and bettered as a result of receiving the truth I share in this study. It's not anything new. It's right out of the Word of God. The problem has been that we've just ignored it, or allowed carnally minded men and the world's system to deceive us into believing that it wouldn't work.

But I want you to know that God has a

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higher way, and for those who will dare put it to work, great blessings are in store for them.

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And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of

him through all the region round about. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all. And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.

And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor

Luke 4:14-18

Here we see Jesus proclaiming that God had anointed Him *"to preach the gospel to the poor."*

Now "the poor" can mean poor in spirit, poor in

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soul, poor in body, poor financially, poor socially. There are many people who are poor in some area of their life; some are poor in every area of their life.

In any case, the Gospel is for the poor. If you are suffering in any area of your life, then I have good news for you. If you are suffering spiritually, there is a message for you. If you are suffering mentally, there is a message for you. If

you are suffering physically, socially, or financially, God has something He wants to say to you. **He wants to say something to you about every aspect of your life.**

The Higher Way

I don't know about you, but I'm a little tired of the world telling me how everything is going to turn out. I'm a little tired of the evening news predicting my destiny. I'm tired of reading the newspaper and having it tell me what is going to happen. In fact, I am "fed up" with all the carnal knowledge Satan keeps trying to put into the lives of the Body of Christ. I have made a decision: As for me and **my house, we are not going to listen to the world; we are going to listen to God!**

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I have learned that God has a few things to say. I've discovered that God has a viewpoint, and He wants to get it across to His people. If we will dare to believe it, then we won't have to live like this world.

Let me remind you that Jesus said, "*I am in the world, but not of it.*" (John 8:23.) You and I are the seed of Abraham. We are joint-heirs with Jesus, partakers of the nature of God. If Jesus is not of this world, then neither are we.

You may say, "But I live here." Yes, you do.
But that doesn't mean you have to live
according to the beggarly elements of this
world. (Gal. 4:9.)

"Then what am I to do about it?"

Get on a higher plane.

"Where am I going to find one?"

In the Word of God.

In Isaiah 55:8,9 God tells us:

*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.*

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Someone always says, "Yes, that's the
problem. God's ways are past finding out."
No, that once was a problem, but it's not
anymore! Because now we have the Book and
we have the Teacher, the Holy Spirit Who
indwells us for the purpose of leading and
guiding us into all truth. (John 16:13) The Bible
says, " *For what man knoweth the things of a man,
save the spirit of man which is in him?*" (1 Cor.
2:11). We have not received the spirit of the
world, but the Spirit which is of God. Why? ". .
that we might know the things that are freely given

to us of God" (v. 12).

We're not in the dark anymore. Now we know who we are and what is ours in Christ Jesus! When you lay hold on the Word of God and become filled with the Holy Ghost, then God's ways can become *your* ways and His thoughts can become *your* thoughts. *Then, thank God, this higher way which Isaiah is talking about becomes your way of doing things.*

There once was a time in my life when I lived in sickness. But I found out that by the stripes of Jesus I was healed. (1 Pet. 2:24.) I found out that He bore my sicknesses and carried my diseases. (Matt. 8:17.) I discovered *Freedom From Bondage*

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that in the eyes of God I'm not the sick trying to get well. Since Calvary, I'm the healed and I'm protecting my health by standing on God's Word and resisting every symptom that comes to my body. For the past twelve years my family and I have enjoyed health.

Someone once asked me, "Don't you ever have opportunities to get sick?"

Yes, all the time. But as Gloria Copeland says, "We pass them by."

I'm too busy to be sick. I don't have time to let the Devil put sickness and disease on me,

especially since Jesus has already borne my sicknesses in His body so that I don't have to bear them. You see, there is a higher way to live physically. Well, I want you to know that there is also a higher way to live financially, above the beggarly elements of this world.

As far as the world knows, there is no hope for financial prosperity and security anymore. The Bible says in Ephesians that people who are without God are without hope. (Eph. 2:12.) They don't have a covenant; they are without God, without hope. Oh, they can put on a front, but deep down inside, they are hopeless. They don't know the outcome of anything. They

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don't know what is going to happen tomorrow. You may say, "I'm a Christian, and I don't know that."

You should. I didn't say you would know every detail of every step of your life. But you should know this: "*No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper*" (Is. 54:17), and "*If God be for us, who can be against us?*" (Rom. 8:31), and nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of Christ. (Rom. 8:35.)

These are a few of the things I've learned from God's Word about how my tomorrows are

going to turn out. I've learned how to take God's Word and make circumstances line up with what God says. We have that privilege; that's our higher way.

The world is suffering today. This country is suffering financially. The news media will verify that. In fact, you may have heard the reports recently that the unemployment rate in our nation has reached its highest peak in decades. People are hurting. The world is in trouble. Governments are failing all over this planet. Economic systems are crumbling.

Financial institutions are not working properly.

I can't remember the last time I read any good

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news in the paper about the financial situation of this country or any other country. Can you?

Things are crumbling all around us.

Carnally minded men for the most part have destroyed the godly principles upon which this nation was founded. However, that is changing. Humanism has almost wrecked our educational system, but that is changing too.

I'm going to tell you something. Don't get down in the dumps when you see Satan on the rampage because "*where sin abounds, grace does much more abound.*" (Rom. 5:20.) Just when it

appears that the Devil has finally taken over, you can look up, because "*.. your redemption draweth nigh.*" (Luke 21:28.) God will never let that rat take over. He'll never let him win! God will never let the Devil get the best of this thing. Satan has been trying to do that for centuries, but you can read history and see: God *always* comes out the winner.

And God is going to win this one, too! If you don't believe it, read the back of the Book—it says we win! Hallelujah!

We don't have to live according to the beggarly elements of this world!

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Believe to Receive

The problem with most Christians is a lack of commitment. Many Christians are trying to live by both the world's system and God's system at the same time. It can't be done. I realize that this may be a little strong, but it's time we talked strong. I don't believe in pulling punches. I don't believe in padding things or just saying things that people want to hear. I'm responsible for my calling, for my assignment. In the book of Revelation, the Bible gives us God's opinion of this matter of commitment. He tells us:

I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Rev. 3:15,16

Many of God's people think it is okay to dabble in the things of the world. They want to keep one foot in the Word and just sort of play around with it. I want you to know, God is against that—totally against it. He will not accept a people with a divided heart. Jesus said, *No man can serve two masters: for either he*
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will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.

Matt. 6:24

You cannot serve two masters. Our Bible tells us that God is a jealous God and will have no other gods before Him. Either you are going to get in the world, or you're going to get into God. If you stay in the world, you will not enjoy the blessings of Almighty God. Now don't misunderstand me. I'm not writing or preaching condemnation or negativism. There is good news for you. There is an answer for your need, for your hurting. But what I am doing is defining the problem.

I'm dealing with some of the reasons why we are not enjoying all of the blessings God has for us.

You see, part of the problem has been dissension among God's children. It is easy to get identified with a group of Christians and pick up a bit of the lingo—talk the talk—and yet live differently from what they preach. It's a shame that Christians tag and label themselves as Baptist, or Catholic, or Church of God, or Nazarene, or whatever. Some still have the idea that when we get to heaven we are going to be

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segregated by denomination with all the Baptists over here, the Methodists over there, and the Catholics someplace else. But it's not going to be that way at all. God never ordained denominations. Those came out of strife. They developed because people were fussing among themselves.

So now we have a new breed of people who pride themselves on the fact that they are neither Baptist, nor Catholic, nor Methodist, nor Nazarene, nor Church of God. They are "Word people." They say proudly, "We're Word people."

"Oh, what do you believe?"

"We believe the Word."

"Well, how is that different from the Baptists, the Methodists, the Catholics, the Nazarenes, and so forth?"

"Oh, we're faith people. We believe God. We overcome the world. We move mountains. We believe the Word. We won't tolerate unbelief. We're Word people!"

Yet you would be shocked if you were to follow some of them around and see how many of them still have one foot in the world,

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compromising God's Word continually.

If we are going to be Word people, then let's truly be Word people. If we are Word people, then we ought to be excelling in every area of our lives.

What do Word people believe? The Word.

Word people believe the Word. Then why, may I ask, are so many "Word people" fussing over God's Word?

It is ridiculous the way some members of the Body of Christ have been so deceived about certain areas of God's Word, the redemptive truths He has spelled out so clearly. A person would have to be totally duped by religious ideas to miss the clarity of God's Word. As

Charles Capps says, "God's Word is so simple you need help to misunderstand it." Through the years we have had plenty of help.

Oh, the clarity and the simplicity of God's Word! When you begin to search God's Word and study it, based on the redemptive truths that took place at Calvary, everything in it makes sense. It all begins to flow together. You will understand what happened in the Garden of Eden. You will understand what is happening in the book of Revelation. When you

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center it around the cross, everything comes into focus, because that's what the Bible is all about.

The Old Testament is a promise of the cross; the New Testament attests to the fact that it happened. The first part of the Bible contains certain things God said would happen; the last part testifies that those things did occur and explains their meaning to us as believers. To enjoy any of God's blessings, you must receive them by faith. You must believe to receive. God has provided healing; but you have to believe it before you will receive it. God has provided prosperity, too; but you can choose to live in poverty, never having enough to meet your

needs. You can live that way if you want to. But there is a better way: His name is Jesus. He was made to be poor that we might be made rich. (2 Cor. 8:9.)

Some people will literally fight for the right to stay sick. They will say, "Well, our pastor taught us that healing has passed away. He says the prosperity message is just a cult."

Isn't it a shame that Abraham didn't know that? He should have been warned against it so he wouldn't have received all those riches from

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God.

I have never understood why people argue about something that God has given us.

Let me clarify something here. I know where much of this confusion and argument comes from. It is a result of the misrepresentation that many so-called "faith people" have given. I realize that there are some among us who have their eyes on nothing but things. They couldn't care less about a real relationship with God. All they want are things. They are out to fulfill the lust of the flesh and of the eye, and to do it in the name of faith. But let's not reject the whole message of prosperity just because there are a few like that.

There are some other people on this planet whose hearts are right and pure before God, and He is prospering them. I'm not going to condemn those who prosper. In fact, the Bible tells us to be "*followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*" (Heb. 6:12). I want to learn from these people, because the more blessed I am, the more I can do for my God.

There are people who rebel against the idea of divine prosperity, but they do it unjustly,

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thinking that anyone who preaches prosperity is part of the minority that has distorted it.

There are those who have distorted that truth; and in so doing, they have done a great injustice to God's Word and a great disservice to His people.

But that doesn't mean everyone who preaches divine prosperity is in that trap and has been deceived as they have. We must be very careful not to reject the truth of God's Word just because some have misinterpreted, distorted, and abused that truth. You see, all false teaching is based on scriptures that men have distorted. But just because they distort it does not mean we should throw out the entire

message.

I want you to know that God wants you saved, baptized, filled with the Holy Ghost, healed, prosperous. You can take it or leave it. I trust that you'll take it, because Jesus paid a precious price for it.

Good News

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me (Jesus said), because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the
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brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Luke 4:18-21

Jesus was saying this: "In these writings by the prophet Isaiah, he was not speaking of himself, but of one to come. I am that One."

You would have thought that everybody would rejoice at that news—especially the Jews. Here was their deliverer, the one of whom the

prophets had spoken before, the one who would deliver them, the one who would set up His kingdom and reign. They were looking for Him and had been awaiting Him for centuries. Now He was standing in their midst. Yet it was not good news. In fact, they got mad. They wanted to kill Him for saying it.

Why didn't they want to hear good news?

Because their minds had been blinded. The eyes of their understanding had been blinded.

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Some people can't let go of religious traditions because of pride. Some ministers today will not let go of things they have been teaching which are contrary to God's Word, but agreeable to their denominations or traditions. They won't let them go because of pride.

In the sight of God, the man who is willing to swallow his pride, admit he was wrong, and be corrected is much greater than the man who does much, it seems, for the Kingdom of God but does it in error.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor ... to heal the brokenhearted.

Every person in that congregation who was poor, brokenhearted, captive, and blind should

have rejoiced and said, "Thank God, deliverance has come at last!" But they didn't. They rebelled against it. They became angry at what He was preaching. They decided it was not God's way of doing things. They got mad at the message and at the Messenger. They tried to kill Him.

But they couldn't stop Him. Just because a group of people rebelled, got mad, and wouldn't believe, God did not take Jesus out of *Freedom From Bondage*

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the earth and say, "Forget it, Son. It's a waste of time. Nobody's going to listen. I made a mistake." No, He didn't do that.

What did Jesus do? He simply took His message to the heathen.

Jesus went to Capernaum. The people there didn't have any better sense than to believe the Good News! They didn't argue with it, and miracles took place. Signs and wonders occurred as the power of God was manifested in their midst. Why? Because they believed. They didn't argue with God. They didn't fuss about the message. They just said, "Yes, I believe that." They believed the message, they believed the Messenger, they believed the Word of the Living God—and it set them free.

In the early '60s, there was a mighty move of the Holy Spirit among the Catholics. These Catholics were getting filled with the Holy Ghost and turned on to the Word of God. Miracles were happening all around them. Do you know what many of the "Full Gospel" people were doing while this was going on? They were praying "Oh, God, give us revival!" And it was happening all around them!

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I preached in a Full Gospel church in 1970 and God moved by His Spirit. We had a tremendous meeting. When it was over, the pastor came to me and said, "I haven't seen anything like this since 1954. I don't know why God quit moving then."

I thought, *Lord, this man's got tunnel vision.*

He needs to get out of here and take a look at what's happening.

There is a mighty move of the Spirit of God today, and no amount of people can stop what God has ordained. They may fuss and gripe and complain, but all they can do is sit back and watch the rest of us who dare believe it, receive it, and enjoy it.

Purpose of Prosperity

Jesus was a messenger of good news, and it's obvious that a lot of people did not want to hear good news. What about you? You should, because that's what the Gospel is—good news. It's important that you realize that you cannot stop a movement of God. You can only stop your involvement in it.

No one is going to stop God from blessing

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His people because it is in His mind. It is the plan of God to prosper His people and it has a very important role in bringing Jesus back. You see, this planet has to be evangelized. And, my friend, you can't do it for \$9.17. It takes enormous amounts of money to get the Gospel out these days.

At the time of this writing, we are in the process of producing programs for our national television ministry. Just sitting and discussing this with all the people who are involved in it is mind-boggling. The plan God has given me almost staggers my mind. But I want to tell you something. God is *El Shaddai*— not El Cheapo. He is the God of abundance, and if He says to do it, then we can do it. I'm excited about it and eager for the responsibility of it.

Now, what I want you to realize is this: In

order for the Body of Christ to set the stage (if you'll allow me to put it that way) for the things that are going to be happening in this earth before the return of the Lord Jesus, then there are a few things we must take control of.

One of them is television. Television is a vital tool in getting the Gospel out.

The Bible says all things were made for

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Him. Television was not made for pornography, murder, prostitution, or any of the diabolical things coming across it now.

Television was made for God. Satellites were made for the Gospel. And before it's all over, we're going to have control of them!

Somebody asked me, "How can you say that? How can the Body of Christ do that?"

I'll tell you how we can do it. The Bible says in Proverbs 13:22, ". . . *the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.*" God will put it into our hands.

On numerous occasions the Bible says, " *The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord.*" (Hab. 2:14). Well, how are we going to fill the earth with the knowledge of God if we don't have the means at our disposal? How is the whole earth going to be filled if we

Christians don't have some avenue to get that knowledge to them?

The only reason man has progressed this far technically, scientifically, mechanically, and electronically is because God is going to use all of that marvelous knowledge and technology for His glory. If God did not have a plan for all these things, man would have been stopped at *Freedom From Bondage*

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the steam engine long ago. The only reason men have been able to achieve what they have is because God has a plan. All these marvels were made for Him, for His use (or more precisely, for our use).

Did you know that 707s, 727s, and 747s were not made for sinners? Jumbo jets weren't invented for the "jet set" to peddle sin all over the world. They were made for the sake of the Gospel. Some people are grumbling now because their preacher drives a nice car. What are they going to do when he owns a 747 and is able to carry a whole congregation into a nation?

By now, I am sure your mind is going, Tilt! You are probably thinking, *Dear Lord, our church can't even pay for the new education building, and here this guy is talking about flying to*

another country in a jet and taking it over for the Lord!

Well, if that shakes you, hang around God some more. He's a big, broad, constructive thinker! There's no limit to Him!

Jesus was a messenger of good news, and His message is still going forth. He told His disciples, "*It is more profitable for you that I go*
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away." (John 16:7.) He said, "*The works that I do shall you do also, and greater works than these shall you do because I go to my Father.*" (John 14:12.)

Jesus was a messenger of good news, but He was limited in how many people He could reach with that good news. Because He was in an earthly body, just like we are, He could only be in one place at a time. If He was preaching in a synagogue in Nazareth, that's the only place people could hear Him. If He was on the shores of Galilee or in the city of Capernaum, a person had to go there to hear the message of good news.

But greater works than those are being done today because Jesus is totally unlimited. He can be in thousands of places at one time because He is not limited to one earthly vessel anymore. He has the Body of Christ, and all of us are the

messengers of good news.

Once upon a time I was living in bondage—spiritually, physically, financially, socially, and mentally. At one point in my life, in 1969, I had no relationship with God at all. I was financially broke, spiritually dead, mentally tormented, and physically wrecked. I just wanted to throw up my hands and quit. There

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seemed no way that I could ever pay back all the money I had lost in my business. My marriage was on the rocks. I was a miserable wreck at age 21.

But a man named Kenneth Copeland came to town and preached the uncompromised Word of God. It was the first time in my life I had ever heard a preacher who wouldn't water down the Gospel. He said what he meant, meant what he said, and proved it by the Word of God. He proved that if you'll believe it, it will work; but if you don't, it won't.

Most of the preachers I had heard until that time would cry and tell me, "Be a Christian. Serve God. Lose everything you've got." I was already living that kind of insecurity before I got saved. I had already lost it all!

Thank God, somebody dared to preach the

Good News!

When I got it in my spirit, I began to come out of that bondage. I got delivered. My marriage got healed. God delivered me financially and spiritually. He put my mind at ease and made a man out of me! Thank God for Kenneth Copeland who preaches good news!

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There was a handful of people in that meeting who believed the Word, and they came out of bondage. The rest of those folks griped, complained, and stayed the same. But I am not the same man I was at that time. My God has caused me to ride upon the high places of the earth. (Is. 58:14.)

What's the difference? They rebelled against the message. I received it. You see, God is no respecter of persons. (Acts 10:34.) I wasn't something special, I wasn't born under a lucky star. I just made up my mind, "I'm going to believe the Word of God regardless of what anybody else thinks."

I began to seek the Lord. The Bible says in Psalms, "*They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.*" (Ps. 34:10). God's blessings began to come upon me and overtake me.

Jesus is a messenger of good news, so all

those who have His message in their hearts should be bearers of good news. **Well, I have some good news to share with you. God wants you out of bondage! He wants you free!**

2

Importance of Obedience

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It has never been the will of God that His people be in bondage of any kind. We need to be free, especially in the day in which we are now living. When God speaks and tells us to do something, we must be able to do it quickly, without hesitation or hindrance, and without having to consult others about it.

My friend, we have reached the point on God's timetable that we can no longer be dependent upon the financial system of this world. God wants us free from all that. He wants the Body of Christ in such a position that everything we have, we possess—not the bank, nor the finance company, nor the mortgage company. God wants us to possess the goods of this world and to make them available to Him for His purposes. For us to get in that kind of position is going to take a tremendous commitment to God's Word.

Carolyn and I had to make that decision in 1969. It was not really a major decision on our part; we had no choice. We were forced to do it. We were broke and the bank wouldn't give us any more money. We had borrowed all we could from the finance company. We had exhausted every avenue.

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We had been living in debt for years, just trying to keep up the interest payments on all we owed. I didn't know any other way to live. I thought the only way to get what you needed was to borrow the money for it. Then if that wasn't enough, to borrow some more. If God hadn't delivered me out of that mess, it would have taken me to mid-Millennium to pay off all that I owed. That's how long my notes were.

Thank God for deliverance!

That's not how God wants us to live. He wants His people free, because we are the extension of Jesus' ministry in the earth. Jesus had a tremendous reputation as a giver. He didn't come into this world to take; He came to give. "*The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*" (Matt. 20:28). Jesus gave His very life for us. And that's exactly what God wants from

us—He wants our lives.

God doesn't want just part of you. He doesn't want your money. He wants more than your money. He wants **you—all** of you. If He can get you, then everything you possess will be available to Him.

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Giving: The Essence of Living

Now I want you to realize that God is not telling us that we cannot have "things." God does not want you to go without. Some people have the mistaken idea that God does not want us to have anything. They think that is why He wants us to give all the time. They have interpreted all this to mean that you have to be poor to serve God.

Now let's rightly divide the Word of God.

Whenever God asks you to **give**, it is first of all because He wants you to **receive**.

Do you remember what He told Abraham in Genesis, chapter 12? Let's look at it:

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 12:2,3

God said, "*I will bless you, and I will make you a blessing.*" It's one thing to be blessed, but it's something else to be a blessing. If I am blessed, it's because I need to be blessed. But if I am a
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blessing, then I become an instrument of God to help someone else. I become a vessel through which His divine favor flows out into someone else's life.

There is nothing that can compare to being an instrument of God to help someone else be delivered. I have had more fun being God's instrument to bless someone else. I have learned in my own life just exactly what Jesus meant when He said, "*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*" (Acts 20:35). There is no greater joy in life than to be a blessing. It is a thrill to have something a person needs and to hear God say, "Give it to him," then to see it prevent misfortune in that person's life. There is nothing on earth that can surpass that joy.

God wants us blessed so we can be blessings. God is not asking us to give and to make ourselves available to Him, so we will have nothing. If He asks you to give, then you should give with joy, excitement, and praise.

You can't outgive God. He is going to see that you are blessed in return.

I'm convinced that we need to change our attitude about giving. The attitude of many people has been that we give to get. No, that's

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backwards! We don't give to get; we live to give! The essence of living is giving. That's what life is all about. That's the reason you and I are on this planet—not to see how much we can acquire before we die, but to see how much of ourselves we can give away to humanity before we meet the Lord. That's what Jesus' life was all about, and that's what our lives should be all about.

Now it's obvious that spiritual laws are set in motion when we give. We give and we receive—that's a spiritual law, like sowing and reaping. But giving to get should not be the motivation in our lives. Our motivation should be: "I'm giving because that's life. Giving is the nature of God, and His nature has become my nature."

His nature has become our nature, so it should be the most natural thing in the world for the children of God to be givers. It is unnatural for a child of God to be stingy and to

withhold.

A Life-Style, Not a Scheme

The Lord told me, "My people are in financial famine, and I want them out. I want

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them free. I don't want them in bondage."

God needs us out of bondage in order to accomplish what needs to be done in this earth before Jesus comes.

Therefore, we need to tap into the laws that will put us into that position, and be obedient to them, not just so we can prosper, but so we can be instruments of God.

For many years now, I have had the privilege of traveling around this nation, ministering for the Lord. I live in hotels, airplanes, and auditoriums all over the country. I've seen people come and go. I've seen people get into the flow of what God is doing, then I've seen them get deceived and follow after something else.

There is one thing I have noticed over the years which I know must grieve our Lord.

People hear the message of freedom and are set free only to start centering everything they do around themselves, forgetting about the rest of humanity.

When any person replaces his zeal for winning people to Jesus with a desire for things, he is in error. That's the problem with a
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lot of people in the Body of Christ right now. I meet people who have their minds on things—cars, airplanes, houses, clothes, everything their flesh could possibly lust after—so much so that they haven't won anybody to Christ in years. Whatever happened to the zeal we had when we first got born again, that burning desire to share the Good News with somebody else?

Many people sit in churches every Sunday just to hear something else that will enable them to get more things, yet they have no concern about the spiritual condition of their neighbor.

"But I don't have time to witness," they say.

"I've got to make a living. I've got bills to pay.

I've got to get a new car."

Proverbs 11:30 says, "*He that winneth souls is wise*", and wise people don't stay broke. Wise people prosper!

That is the message of this book: "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things (you need) shall be added unto you.*"

(Matt. 6:33).

You see, many people who come to our

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meetings to hear me preach prosperity think

I'm going to tell them how to get rich quick. Let

me tell you something. Any time you hear a

get-rich-quick message, you'd better check it

out because it's probably illegal.

God has no get-rich-quick, over-night-total-

success,

all-abundance-in-the-next-hour

formulas. God's Word deals with a life-style.

This is not something we try for two weeks to

see if it works. Either you are committed to this

for life, or you are just playing around with it. If

you have one foot in the world's way and one

foot in God's way, you will not succeed.

We need to realize that God has a plan for

His people. He has paid a tremendous price for

this plan and for provision to be made available

to His people. It is our responsibility to get our

hearts right before God, to be upright in

character and pure in heart. If we will do that

and make ourselves available to Him, if we will

allow His blessing to come upon us and in turn

be a blessing to the rest of humanity, then there

is nothing the Devil can do to keep us in

bondage.

But it must be done God's way, not our way.

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Obedience Yields Prosperity

Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity. If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.

But if they obey not, they shall perish by the sword, and they shall die without knowledge.

Job 36:9-12

Where did we get the idea that God loves poverty? He loves the poor man, but poverty is a curse in the sight of God. Thank God, we've been redeemed from the curse of poverty. (Gal. 3:13,14.)

God has set forth laws, rules, requirements, and conditions, which, if observed and carried out, will result in a life of prosperity and pleasures. However, if these laws, rules, regulations, requirements, and conditions are ignored, bondage will be the result. You see, God never sets things in motion to be ignored.

Why would God waste His time to put this in print (for which men have shed their very blood that you and I might have a copy) if we
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were just to ignore it?

Man is God's most prized creation, His crowning achievement. However, man is the only creature God made that rebels against Him. The mule is supposed to be the most stubborn animal in existence, yet he won't disobey God.

There was a time when God told the prophet Balaam to preach, but the prophet wouldn't obey. So God anointed the prophet's donkey and the donkey preached. (Num. 22.) Now that ought to tell us something about how stupid men can get! The mule, being a stubborn animal by nature, had better sense than to disobey God, while man rebelled against Him.

Did you know that the birds won't rebel against God? God told the prophet Elijah:

Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan ... I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there.

1 Kings 17:3,4

When God commanded those birds to bring the

prophet bread and meat twice a day, the raven didn't say, "I don't want to, I did it last time. Get the sparrow." Birds don't argue with God. The

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raven wouldn't think of disobeying God.

Fish won't disobey God either. One day when Peter needed tax money, Jesus told him, *"Go fishing. The first fish you catch will have money in its mouth. Take that money and pay your taxes and mine."* (Matt. 17:27.)

I'm convinced that when Jesus said that, every fish around there immediately started hunting money, because none of them knew which was going to be the first one Peter would catch. The fish didn't jump up out of the water and say, "Jesus, we're not going to do this. We're tired of hunting money down here in the deep, scraping our bellies on the bottom of this lake. We're tired of hunting money for ignorant folks who can't pay their own taxes. You're just going to have to get it some other way. Peter got himself in this mess; let him get himself out!" No, they wouldn't argue with God. Why? Because God created all things, and all things are subordinate to God.

It was only to man that God gave a free will.

He wanted man to be as close to Himself as

possible. It is our choice to obey or disobey. We can choose to obey God, or we can choose to disobey.

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Here God plainly tells us that if we obey and serve Him, we shall—not may or might possibly, but **shall**—spend our days in prosperity and our years in pleasures. He has also made it very clear that if we do not obey, we shall perish.

Now we consider ourselves intelligent beings. If so, then we ought to have sense enough to obey God. Why don't we always obey God? If we are totally honest, our answer is probably something like this: "But God doesn't understand, I have this problem." I've said that myself. In times past, when God would speak to me, I would answer, "But, God, You don't understand."

Now isn't that stupid? If anybody understands, God does. After all, He's the All-knowing One. But because I was faced with a problem which looked bigger than anything I had ever experienced before, the problem in my estimation became bigger than God. Suddenly God didn't understand what I was going through.

The Bible says Jesus is the express image of God. (Heb. 1:3.) He came into this earth and perfectly expressed the will, the nature, the *Importance of Obedience*

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ability, and the ways of God. The Bible says that while He was here, He was " *in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*" (Heb. 4:15). There is nothing you and I can ever experience that Jesus has not already conquered. He knows what it's like to live on this planet. The Bible says that we have a High Priest Who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, (v. 15.) Jesus knows what it's like being here. He knows how mean and ugly people can be. He experienced it Himself. He knows the pressures and trials of this world because He confronted them too. But He overcame them all, and He left us an example to follow.

But listen to the testimony of Jesus: " *The Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.*" (John 8:29). This should be our number one goal. **Our primary goal in this life should not be to get rich; it should be to please God.** If you will please God, you will be rich. God will see to it that you have every need met. (Phil. 4:19.)

But we need to realize that God has set forth certain laws, requirements, and conditions which we must obey if we are to receive our
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needs met. God is not going to make us obey them. He is not going to force us to live by His commands. He just simply says, "If you are intelligent enough to do what I say, then here's what I will do for you. If you won't do it, then I have no choice but to let you lead your own life. You will live like the rest of the world and you will perish with them. You will die without knowledge."

God has said, "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.*" (Hos. 4:6). But there's no excuse for a lack of knowledge in the day and age in which we live. The Word of God is going forth in the world like never before. There is no excuse for the Body of Christ being ignorant of the things of God. If there were never another meeting or cassette tape or paperback book made available to you, you still have the Bible. If you will get with the Holy Ghost, you can learn it. There is no excuse for the Body of Christ to be destroyed because of a lack of knowledge.

All the seals have been taken off God's

Word. The Holy Spirit is revealing to us the inner workings of our covenant with God and showing us how to live by it. *The Amplified Bible Importance of Obedience*

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says in Proverbs 1:22: "*How long, O simple ones ... will you love being simple?*" The wisdom of God is available. It's crying out in the streets.

Happy—blessed, fortunate [enviable]—is the man who finds ... Wisdom ...

For the gaining of it is better than the gaining of silver, and the profit of it than fine gold ...

Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand are riches and honor.

Proverbs 3:13,14,16

So the wisdom of God is available to us.

What we need to do is to make the decision to be obedient to God. We have to quit leaning to the natural, to the ways of this world. Do you realize that man—carnally minded man—and God are diametrically opposed to each other? The world has one way of doing things; God has another.

If you listen to most forms of mass communication today, you will hear the world's way. But the Bible says there are two kinds of wisdom in the earth. One is *earthly, sensual,*

devilish (James 3:15). For the most part, that is what is being conveyed to the world.

The sad thing is that the Body of Christ has

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fallen into the trap of going along with what the world says. If the world says there is depression, then we get depressed. If it says there is inflation, then we get inflated.

Generally, whatever the world says, the Body of Christ accepts as the "gospel truth." But it is not the Gospel truth!

There is another truth, another wisdom

" *that is from above.*" (v. 17). This truth tells us that we Christians are not subject to this world's system. We belong to a higher order! We belong on a higher plane!

Need for Discipline

It is sad to report, however, that many of God's children are not enjoying all the benefits of that higher life. They simply lack the self-discipline necessary to get into God's Word and to make up their minds that they are going to live in this higher realm whether anybody else does or not!

It takes determination to do that. Most people haven't been trained to exercise self-discipline. Our society today is geared to a sort

of "take-it-easy, hang-loose, if-it-feels-good-do-it" attitude. The Body of Christ has allowed

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those principles to creep into the Church. The prevailing attitude seems to be: "If the preacher says something I don't like, I'll just leave." "If things don't go the way I like, I'll just quit." "If I don't feel like going to church, I'll just stay home."

With such a "take-it-or-leave-it, anything-goes" attitude, no wonder so many people are having a hard time spiritually, physically, and financially.

Somewhere down the line you have to draw a boundary in your life and say, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, those are deeds of the old man. I'm a new man, and I'm not going to live that way anymore. I'm not going to follow those paths anymore." When you make that decision, be forewarned. It won't be long until you get a marvelous opportunity to go back to the old way. Why? Because "*Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word.*" (Mark 4:15)—if you let him! Be assured that the Devil will try to force you back to your old way of life.

Many times people stand up and say, "I'm

going to do it God's way from now on." Then Satan comes to attack, and suddenly they begin

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to weaken. The pressure builds, and they fall apart. All of a sudden they realize that they've compromised. "Oh, I know this is not right, but I don't know anything else to do." Sooner or later, they are totally back into the world's way of thinking, acting, and living. Oh, they still love God. But because of a lack of commitment and discipline, they end up living like the rest of the world around them, victims of the world's system.

It's time we were delivered from that. It's time we make the decision to go God's way. This is not the easiest decision you will ever make, but, dear God, it's worth it! It is worth all of the hours spent in God's Word and in fellowship with Him. It is worth the effort and the discipline it takes to refuse to go the world's way. It is worth it because one day payday will come. When it becomes a life-style, you wouldn't consider going any other way! I can't imagine living the way I used to live. I can't imagine turning my back on God's system now. I'm blessed. God is prospering me. I'm in health. I'm having the time of my life.

I'm not saying that I never have problems.

I'm not saying that I never experience adversity.

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If anything, I have greater adversity now than I've ever known, because "*to whom much is given, much is required.*" (Luke 12:48.)

The Devil does not stop attacking you just because you gain knowledge. If anything, you become more dangerous to him, and he will attack harder. But the more knowledge you get, the stronger you get. The stronger you get, the better you resist. The better you resist, the quicker he flees. God has made provision so that even though Satan does come to try to steal the Word from us, we get stronger in the Lord and can overcome every attack.

Why God's People Suffer

Now notice that God says, "*If they obey and serve Me, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. But if they will not obey Me, they shall perish by the sword, and shall die without knowledge.*" In His visitation, the Lord told me, "Son, My people are suffering financially in this day and time because of three major factors: disobedience, rebellion, and lethargy." Let's consider these for a moment.

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Disobedience

God has told us what to do, but we have said that it won't work. He has told us how to do things His way, but we have said, "But, Lord, the evening news says . . ."

God is telling us one thing; the world is telling us another. We stand in the strategic position of choosing which one we are going to believe. Many times because of a lack of commitment to God's way, we lean to the world's way.

Let me ask you a question. Do you have children? If you do, do you demand obedience from them? Is it not well with them when they obey, and **not** so well with them when they don't? The Bible says, "*Honour thy father and thy mother ... that it may go well with thee.*" (Deut. 5:16). That's what I tell my kids every time they are disobedient. I say, "It is not well with thee, and it is not going to be well with thee until thou doest right. When thou doest right, it will be well with thee again." If there is one scripture my kids know it's this: "It won't be well with thee unless thou obeys thy papa!"

I demand obedience from my children. It

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displeases me when they are disobedient. Now they are just kids, like anybody else's kids. They try things here and there, and they get punished for it. They are corrected and disciplined. We sit down together and talk about what's right and wrong. I can show them from God's Word why what I say is the way to behave. Then they have the choice of either obeying or disobeying. If they disobey, it is not going to be well with them. They open themselves up for trouble. If they obey, then just what has been promised is going to come to pass.

If I demanded obedience from my children, and then disobeyed God myself, I would be a hypocrite. What kind of an example would that be for my children? If I expect them to obey me, then they have every right to expect me to obey my Father, and so does God. If we say to our children, "You are going to obey me or be punished," then turn right around and say to God, "But, Father, You don't understand; I don't want to do that," what kind of example is that? What do you think will be the result of that kind of hypocrisy? No wonder so many families end up with rebellious children, because the parents themselves rebel.

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Rebellion

You may say, "But I'm not rebelling against God." Well, let's consider what rebellion is. Let's take tithing for example. Did you know that tithing is a principle of God? Some people argue about whether tithing is a New Testament teaching and whether New Testament people should be tithers. Those who want to argue against it say that tithing was instituted in the Old Testament under the Law; therefore, as New Testament creatures we are exempt from it.

That's not so. Tithing **was** part of the Old Testament Levitical Law. We find the tithe first mentioned as a requirement of the Law in the twenty-seventh chapter of Leviticus. But that is not the first time tithing is mentioned in the Bible. Tithing goes back to Genesis, the first book of the Old Testament. There we read that Abraham gave God " *tithes of all.*" (Gen. 14:20). In fact, it was not God Who instituted the tithe—it was Abraham. Abraham did not tithe because it was a law. The law hadn't even been given yet! He did it because of his love for God, because of his "attitude of gratitude" for what

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the Lord had done in his life.

We tithe because we want to. When you realize from God's Word that tithing is a principle in which God expects you personally to take part, but then refuse to do so, that is disobedience. Once you have been told that it is disobedience and still refuse to tithe, then that is rebellion. The Bible says "*rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.*" (1 Sam. 15:23). And God won't bless witchcraft!

When you fail to obey God, you are disobedient. Once you realize you have been disobedient in any area (I just used tithing as an example) and have been told to correct that disobedience, but you still refuse to obey, then you are no longer just disobedient—you are rebellious. Disobedience leads to rebellion.

If you tell your child to do something around the house and he doesn't do it, that is simple disobedience. But if you point out to him what he was supposed to do, clearly instruct him to do it—and how to do it—and he still refuses to obey, then his disobedience has become rebellion.

You see, many times the reason we have not known the kind of prosperity that God has

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made available to us is because there are areas of disobedience in our lives. When we continue to be disobedient, it leads to rebellion. And there is no way God can bless rebellion. But there is a cure for disobedience and rebellion: repentance. If we will turn to the Lord in sincere repentance, He will save us and deliver us from destruction.

There have been times in my own life when God has instructed me by His Word to do something, and as soon as I saw it, I wished I hadn't! I didn't want to hear it, so I tried to ignore it. If I was mad or angry at somebody, I would try to forget I had ever read Christ's teachings about strife and disharmony. I would find something in the Bible I liked better, something like, "*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.*" (Ps. 103:2). I liked the part about all His benefits. **But, you see, we can't ignore God's instruction and expect to receive His benefits. It just won't work.**

When we ignore the things God has spelled out very clearly in His Word, that's disobedience. When we continue to disobey, it leads to rebellion. When we are in rebellion, we cannot invite God into the midst of our problem

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until we have rid ourselves of that disobedience and rebellion.

He is always there with open arms, waiting for the moment that we say, "Father, forgive me." When we do, that's when He takes charge. He forgives and cleanses, putting that sin under the blood of Jesus. He wipes the slate clean and says to us, "Now, start afresh." Then He says, "Go, and sin no more. Don't be disobedient anymore."

Thank God for His grace and for His mercy!

But somewhere down the line we should mature enough that we don't need special manifestations of His grace. We should begin to grow up spiritually. We expect our children to grow up. We expect the principles that we lay down to become a part of their nature and their life so that they follow them unconsciously, just like getting dressed in the morning.

It is a part of my nature to wear clothes. My mother taught me how to put on my own clothes when I was a little boy. Though I didn't understand why, she made me realize I couldn't leave the house without my clothes on. I don't have to call up my mother every morning and ask her, "Mama, should I put on

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my clothes today?"

The things we are teaching our children should eventually become an integral part of their lives, of their very natures. In the same way when God instructs us in an area or leads us in a path we are to take, we should do it without hesitancy. We should not even think twice about whether or not we ought to obey. It almost amuses me when people come up to me and ask, "Brother Jerry, God told me to do something. Do you think I should?"

If God told you to do it, by all means do it! If you are not sure whether or not it was God, that's another thing. But if you know deep down in your heart that God told you to do it, then you don't need a confirmation. God's telling you is confirmation enough.

Well, God has told you that if you will obey Him, you will spend your days in prosperity and your years in pleasures. Are you going to do it?

Lethargy

Lethargy is another thing which has run rampant in the Body of Christ. People get lazy
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and slothful sometimes.

In every church there is usually one guy

who is turned on and who wants to do everything. When the pastor gives him something to do, he gets in there and does it. When another need arises, the pastor asks for people to get involved, but nobody will. Then this guy pops up and says, "I'll do it, Pastor!" So he does it. Before you know it, he's doing all the jobs. No matter what the need is—teaching a Sunday School class, keeping the nursery, cleaning the restrooms—this guy is right there to do it. Everything gets piled on that one person. Why? Because there are a multitude out there who are lazy. They say, "If I take that job, I'll be too tied down," or "If I get involved in that, I won't be able to do this," or "If I get committed to that, I'll miss the Super Bowl." And those people can't understand why they're having such a struggle with problems all the time! I'm so glad God doesn't have that attitude when I'm in need: "I'm sorry, Jerry, but I'm so busy with Brother Copeland. I can't help you right now. If I met *your* needs, I couldn't visit with him."

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Aren't you glad God isn't like that? I have never run into Kenneth Copeland at the throne

room of God, have you? When I go to God, I never see any of God's children there. Every time I'm in need, I have God's full attention—and I don't have to stand in line to get it. That's the way He wants me to be where He's concerned—available. If I make myself available and obedient to Him, then He says I will spend my days in prosperity and my years in pleasures.

There was a young man who worked with our ministry a few years ago. The first time I met him, I knew he was one of the rare kind who just can't get enough of the Word of God. This young man wanted to work with us, but at the time we didn't have any positions open. He started coming to our church. He took notes on everything that was preached. He studied the Word constantly.

A few months went by, then one day our office manager said to me, "You know, we need another maintenance man to clean up around here." So I suggested that he check with that young man and see if he was interested.

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Most people who come around looking for a job want to start at the top. They want to preach. But this young man said, "I'll do

anything." When he came on staff, the first thing he did was work outside on the grounds. When I drove up, he was out there working. He had a cassette recorder about 18 inches long strapped to his side, with headphones on his head and wires running all over his body. He was playing some of my teaching tapes while he worked.

One day he read in Deuteronomy 6 where God said to bind the Word around your neck and have it on your wrist. He came in the next day with that recorder and headset on as usual, but there was a big band around his arm. He had put some scriptures on that band. Every time he looked at it, he would read it over and confess those scriptures.

One day he came in with a piece of wire wrapped around his neck and sticking out in front of his face. He had some scriptures on it so he could read them while he was hoeing! I never saw anything like it.

I'm not suggesting that you go to such an extreme. That guy was desperate for the Word,

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and he didn't care what he looked like or what people thought or said about him. Some folks thought he was nuts. He did look like a nut.

But, you see, he had made up his mind that he was going to get the Word, and he didn't care what it took to do it! He just kept obeying God and doing what God said to do. Today he is the pastor of a very successful church. God prospered him.

Lethargy is actually a spirit that comes upon people—a spirit of laziness and slothfulness. It is an effort of the adversary to get us to lay down, give up, and play dead. Lots of people are affected by this spirit. One reason is the way they were brought up. Some people never had any responsibility, so they don't know how to handle it. (But, thank God, they can learn.)

I was not a disciplined individual when I came to Jesus. In fact, I was totally undisciplined. I was a compromise going somewhere to happen. I went through at least ten jobs the first year and a half of my marriage. Why? Because when things got tough and pressure came, I would just quit. During my first semester at college, I did fine until final

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exams. I quit school two weeks before the semester ended.

I did not have the principle of discipline

built into me as I do now. It was not something I had already developed. The Word of God made a new man out of me.

Jesus said, "*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.*" (John 8:31). *Disciple* comes from the word *discipline*. That's what a disciple is—a disciplined one. If we continue in the Word, it will discipline us. In fact, if you expect to live by God's Word, you will have to get disciplined. It puts a demand on your life. Many people rebel at what they call the "faith message." The reason they rebel is because it demands that they do something. Some people simply don't want to do anything. But in both the Old Covenant and the New Covenant, God always demanded that His people obey. If they did, it was well with them. If not, they suffered the consequences of their disobedience.

Commitment

When you get so desperate for the Word

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that you will obey God no matter what, then you will spend your days in prosperity and your years in pleasures. If you don't obey, you will perish.

Jesus said, "*He that hath my commandments,*

and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." (John 14:21). If we don't keep His Word, there is every reason to question whether we really love God. It's important to realize these things and make the decision to do whatever we see in God's Word. We must make the commitment that whatever God says to us by the Holy Spirit, we will do. We must not be children who are disobedient and rebellious, but always pleasing to our Father.

Where the Blame Goes

I said that the three major things which have caused God's people to be in bondage are disobedience, rebellion, and lethargy. The cure, as we have seen, is simply to repent and begin to obey God. Now, you need to recognize and admit one simple fact. Read it out loud:

"If I am failing, if I am not prospering, if I am not successful, it is not God's fault, nor the fault of the Word of God—it is my fault."

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Too many times people don't want the responsibility put on them. It's so much easier to place the blame on somebody else when things are going wrong. We got that from Adam. When God asked Adam why he had disobeyed, Adam said, "It wasn't me. It was

that woman You gave me!" Ever since that time, people have been pointing their finger at somebody else.

Ask somebody, "What's your problem?"

They will probably answer: "My wife . . . my husband . . . my kids . . . my pastor . . . my boss . . . my employees . . . the government!"

How many times will someone answer, "Me"? Not very often. But that's where the fault lies—with us. If there is any failure, any defeat in our lives, we are responsible. We have no one to blame but ourselves. But, praise God, we don't have to stop there. We don't have to accept things as they are. We can change them. We just need to recognize the truth of our failure and quit blaming others for it. Then repent, begin to obey God, and reap all the benefits of that obedience!

I'm so glad that God isn't going to wait until everybody in the world shapes up before He

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does something with me. The responsibility is on me. My blessings will begin to flow when I get myself lined up with God's Word.

It is obvious that the world is not obeying God. That's why the world is suffering like it is right now. The world is hurting, governments

are failing, economic systems are in chaos, financial institutions are crumbling, and people as a whole are suffering. But just because that's the way the world is going does not mean the Body of Christ has to follow that trend. We don't have to go down that negative stream.

God has said:

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 we make the decision to go God's way, then we will be on a higher plane than the one on which this world is operating. Even though the world may be headed for ruin, we don't have to go with it. Just because the world is headed for a recession, or depression, or inflation, does not mean we have to go that

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way.

We are in the world, but not of it. The

Psalmist said: "*I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.*" (Ps. 37:25). Though we are in this world, and this world is headed in a

negative vein, we do not have to be governed by that.

Somebody asked me, "What are you going to do if gasoline reaches \$5 a gallon?" As long as God has \$5.10, we can go. Every time gas prices go up, and grocery prices go up, and rent goes up, I make an appointment with my Father and say, "Father, I need an increase in my allowance." I have never been forsaken and have never begged for bread. It doesn't make any difference if bread goes to \$19.72 a loaf—God has \$19.73! And it's available to all His kids. If we are obedient to God, we don't have to be governed by what is happening in this world. As for me and my house, we are going God's way because God's way works! How about you?

God's system is a higher system, and it works. It supercedes the laws by which the world lives. If we are not prospering because

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we are following the course of this world, it's our fault. It's because of our disobedience. All it takes for us to turn the situation around is to make a true commitment to God's way of doing things, then refuse to back off from that commitment.

I have never regretted my decision to live by God's Word—and neither will you. But in order to reap the benefits, we must be obedient. Say this with me out loud: "If I obey and serve God, I shall spend my days in prosperity and my years in pleasures."

Now stand firm on that promise, and you will see it come to pass in your life!

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Willingness to Serve

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It is the will of God that His people prosper. This is especially important to the Church because of the times in which we live and because of our responsibility as Christ's representatives and ambassadors in this world. God tells us in His Word that "*the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.*" (Prov. 13:22). Why is that? What is the purpose of that wealth? What are "the just" going to do with it? We are going to finance the greatest revival this planet has ever seen.

God has not promised wealth for us so we can spend it on our lust. God is not against our possessing things; He is against things possessing us. The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just so that our needs will be met, but its primary purpose is so that we can become

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channels of blessing or instruments of Almighty God.

It is going to take lots of money to finance the revival that is coming on this planet before the return of the Lord Jesus. Right now Satan is using people in the world as reservoirs of the wealth which rightfully belongs to the Body of Christ for the sake of the Gospel. Satan wants people who will follow him and do exactly as he instructs them to do. Then he can use those people as reservoirs to funnel great sums of money into activities that are evil and detrimental to society.

But Proverbs 13:22 is a commandment of God which has already been released, and it will come to pass: "*The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.*" *The Amplified Bible* puts it this way: "*The wealth of the sinner [finds its way eventually] into the hands of the righteous, for whom it was laid up.*"

That's why I am so thrilled with the message Jesus has given to me, so assured of its authenticity and so confident of our success. God wants us to prosper because in these last days we have a tremendous responsibility, a

vital role to play in bringing Jesus back to the
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earth to catch away the saints. There is an enormous job to be done. To accomplish that job, God needs for us as His people to be prosperous.

The Lord's Rebuke

As I have already stated, we have not prospered to the degree that God desires because of disobedience, rebellion, and lethargy. We simply have been lazy where God's instructions are concerned.

Let's read Job 36:9 once again:

Then he sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.

Let me make this statement: If you will stay pure before God and allow Him to reveal your work to you, He will show you where you are missing it. He will bring your error to your attention and show you what you have been doing wrong. I want you to realize that we as members of the Body of Christ should welcome a rebuke from the Lord. If I'm in error, I don't want to stay there; I want God to correct me. Error creates bondage, but the truth will set you free. (John 8:32.) If I am in error, I want God to

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tell me plainly, "Jerry, here's your problem." It may hurt, but that's better than living in bondage all my life.

When God points His finger at you and says, "Quit doing that," it may hurt. At first, you may not want to accept it. But the Bible says it is a fool who refuses instruction. (Prov. 1:7.) A wise man welcomes a rebuke. That's how we are corrected and brought out of error.

Let me call to your attention what the Apostle Paul said to Timothy: "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.*" (2 Tim. 4:2). Two of these three instructions are not comfortable for the Body of Christ: reprove and rebuke. Why did Paul instruct Timothy to reprove, rebuke, and exhort? Because these things bring perfection to the Body of Christ. Second Timothy 3:16 says that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for reproof, correction, and instruction.

We need to welcome God's correction in our lives. When God reveals that we are in error, it is not because He is condemning us. When you are acting in conflict with God's Word, He will not condemn you, but He will convict you by *Willingness to Serve*

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His Spirit. I welcome God's correction and instruction because I don't want to live in bondage.

He sheweth them their work, and their transgressions that they have exceeded.

He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity.

Job 36:9,10

That's good instruction. If you will go before God and say, "Father, show me my error," God will do it. Then He will open your ear to discipline. Once you have been shown your error, God will expect you to discipline yourself in that area. In other words, you will be held responsible for that instruction. He will expect you to walk in the light of it.

You will be expected to determine that no matter what the pressure or temptation, you will not compromise and yield to it again. God will expect you to "return from iniquity."

An Attitude of Servitude

Then verse 11 says, *"If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures."* Once again, we have a

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condition. God says, *"If they obey and serve"*

Some people think about being obedient, but they will not serve. God says, "*If they obey and serve....*" Evidently God wants us to have an attitude of obedience and an attitude of servitude.

I realize we are no longer under the Law. However, Jesus said that no man can serve two masters. No man can serve two masters. Apparently there is a responsibility where the Body of Christ is concerned to serve one master, not just give lip service to him. When you relinquish your relationship with Satan, you become loyal to God. When you say, "Satan, you're no longer the god of my life. I make Jesus the Lord of my life," you take upon yourself an attitude of servitude. Your entire existence should then center around serving Him.

When young men are called into the armed forces of this nation, we say they are "in the service," meaning "in the service of our nation." As Christians, we are soldiers of the Lord, in the service of the Lord.

Have you ever been to boot camp? If so, then you can relate to the following story.

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While I was in basic training, I thought, Dear

God, what's a nice guy like me doing in a place like this? What's wrong with these people? Why don't they let me sleep? Why don't they let me eat what I want to? Why do I have to run through those exercises yelling "kill, kill, kill" before I can eat breakfast? I don't want to kill anybody; I just want to eat.

We had a saying in the service: "There is the right way, the wrong way, and the Army way." We learned to do things the Army way, regardless of whether we liked it or not. When you're in the Army, you do things the Army way. Many times that way seemed absolutely ridiculous to us, but we did it. We learned obedience. We were taught discipline. We learned to serve.

There comes a time in the life of any soldier in combat when he becomes grateful for the things he was taught in boot camp. Sooner or later he realizes and appreciates the value of obedience to commands, because his very life depends upon it.

Well, my friend, we are in the service of the Lord. The Bible says if we obey and serve Him, that obedience and service will pay off. Too

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many times people misinterpret the

term "charismatic." They think they are free of their denominational restriction. But "free" usually is interpreted to mean irresponsible. That is not what being charismatic means. The Apostle Paul warned us about this kind of attitude. In Galatians 5:1 he said: "*Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.*" Then in verse 13 he wrote: ". . . *only use not liberty for an occasion to (serve) the flesh.*" Some people think that because they are freed from denominational bondage that they are freed from commitment of any kind. That is not true. God wants a commitment from us. We are free from religious tradition, but let's not forget that the Bible still teaches us to be committed and totally dedicated.

We need to straighten our thinking where this freedom is concerned. We are in the service of the Lord and our lives are not our own. We have been bought with a price—the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. We belong to Him. We are to be at His disposal, in His service, ready for whatever He desires us to do.

Purpose of Faith

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Many people have gotten the "faith movement" so confused. Now don't

misunderstand me. I'm not preaching against faith. I'm a faith teacher. I am preaching against the error that has somehow crept into the movement.

Some people have the mistaken idea that we don't have to commit ourselves to anything, that we can do whatever we want. Such people never channel their faith toward meeting the needs of humanity and serving God. But that's what it's all about. That's what faith is for! God never intended for you to develop your faith so you could go around accumulating the things you want. **God wants your faith strong so you can be His instrument of blessing to humanity, to stop the ravages of Satan's warfare in the lives of others.** That's what this thing is all about. If you will get involved in blessing others, God will see to it that all the things you need will be added unto you as well.

Many times we have gotten our priorities in the wrong order. We seek things instead of seeking the Creator. That's backwards. God has said that if we will seek first His Kingdom and

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His righteousness, all the things we need—even the desires of our own heart—will be added

unto us. We need to realize that we are in the service of the Lord. Faith has been given to us by Him to get **His** work done, not to serve our own selfish ends.

Daily Prosperity

God has told us, *"If they obey and serve Me, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures. But if they do not obey, they will perish by the sword, and they will die without knowledge."* Obedience causes prosperity to come to us daily. He said, *"They will spend their **days** in prosperity."* In other words, God desires that we prosper every day.

There is a verse in God's Word that says He desires that whatever we set our hand to prospers. Well, my little hands are busy every day. If God wants to prosper whatever I set my hand to, then evidently He wants me to prosper every day. My obedience will cause me to prosper daily; disobedience will rob me of a day's prosperity. If I am not willing to obey and serve, then my actions will rob me of that day's prosperity. If I refuse to follow the instructions *Willingness to Serve*

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God has given me in His Word and by His Holy Spirit, then I cannot expect prosperity that day.

That has happened to lots of people. Their days have begun to mount up, and years of prosperity have been robbed from them. That is not the will of God. But, as I have said, there is a cure: repentance.

If we are willing to repent—to go before God, confess our sin of disobedience, and ask His forgiveness—then God will cause that sin to be removed. When the sin is removed, the hindrance to our prosperity is removed. We can start afresh, and our prosperity will begin to flow again. But He will expect us to walk in obedience and serve Him daily. We should prosper every day as we follow God's instructions daily.

Daily Obedience

Many times people want God to talk to them about their daily guidance, but are not willing to follow the general instructions in His Word. By general, I mean the instructions that are for all the Body of Christ. You see, the Bible is for all of us. I am expected to live by it, just as

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you are. However, there may be some individual instructions God gives to me personally that He never speaks to you about. He may tell me to do something He would

never ask you to do. However, we are all required to obey the written Word.

Our obedience to that Word puts us in a position to have God speak to us individually by His Spirit to guide us daily in our own personal lives. If we are willing to obey the general instructions, then we are willing to obey the specific instructions to us personally.

Because some people won't obey the general instructions, they have a hard time hearing specific instructions. I hear people complain, "God never talks to me."

I ask them, "Are you obeying the Word?"

"No."

"Then you shouldn't expect God to talk to you. If I had written you a letter with instructions about how to live, and you wouldn't read or obey it, I wouldn't bother to try to instruct you verbally."

Some people keep God's Word out on the coffee table so everybody will be sure to see it

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when they come in. They may pick it up now and then to read a verse or two at night before they go to sleep. Some may even read it religiously, but they will not obey its contents.

Then they go to God and say, "Lord, please

help me. I need some advice."

God asks, "Did you read My Book?"

"Well, no. I don't get anything out of it. But I've got to have some help on this situation here. You've just got to tell me how to handle it!"

If this describes you, **read the Book!** It will give you a general concept of how God operates. From His Word we learn God's thoughts and ways. When we know such general things and are obedient to His general instructions, then we are in a position to receive specific instructions about our own situations. Many people are wanting God to help them in their business, yet they won't follow God's general instructions about business. They want God to give them specific instructions about their marriage, their health, or their finances, yet they won't obey what He has said in His Word about these things.

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We cannot expect to receive help from God if we ignore what He has already told us. We must learn to obey God's Word. There is no other way. When we are willing to obey God's Word (all of it, not just the parts we like), then God will have daily communication with us by

His Spirit.

Trust the Word

Someone asked me one time, "How can you possibly base your life on the Bible when men wrote it, and men are capable of making mistakes? How do you know those men were accurate?"

I told that person, "Well, I just believe that anybody smart enough to create a universe is surely capable of getting something across to a man clearly enough that he could get it down on paper the way He wanted it written."

Another person told me once, "Well, I'm just not going to base my life on something men wrote."

"Are you saved?" I asked.

"Yes."

"How did you get that way?"

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"John 3:16."

"A man wrote that. It's **John** 3:16, not **God** 3:16. A man wrote that."

"Yes, but God inspired it."

"Yes, God inspired it, and I have the audacity to believe it. I'm going to heaven because I believe what John wrote. If I can believe John 3:16, I can also believe 3 John 2 in

which he said, "*Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper.*" The same man wrote both verses. It was the same man hearing God. If John was accurate in John 3:16, it's possible he was accurate in 3 John 2. If he was accurate in either one, he should have been accurate in both. If he was inaccurate, then we are wasting our time because none of it can be trusted, none of it will work."

Someone else asked me, "How can you base success on the Word of God when it was written by mere men? How can you have the audacity to believe that circumstances are going to change because of something written by a man?"

I answered, "Because that's what Jesus did."

On the mount of temptation, our Lord Jesus

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Christ didn't base His victory and success on something God had said to Him in an audible voice. He quoted something Moses had written—something written by a "mere" man. If Moses had missed it, Jesus would have been in trouble. Jesus told Satan, "*It is written.*" Written by whom? Moses. Not God, but Moses. If Moses had not written the message the way God intended it, Jesus would have been basing

His victory over Satan's temptations on a fallible source. What if Moses had missed it? But he didn't miss it, because he had heard from God.

Peter said that these things were written in times past by holy men who were moved by God. (2 Pet. 1:21.) Thank God, we can base our lives on it. I know I'm not going to hell because God gave the words to a man. God inspired it, breathed upon it, and anointed it. My eternal destiny was changed because of it.

Since I believe John 3:16 was inspired of God, I have no reason to doubt that the whole Bible was inspired of God. If Paul wrote that God shall meet all of my need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:19), to me that is just as real and powerful as John's telling *Willingness to Serve*

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me that if I believe on Jesus Christ I shall not perish but have everlasting life. I have no more problem with Philippians 4:19 than I do with John 3:16.

Some people can believe one part of the Word, yet have trouble with another part. The only reason for that is because they haven't developed their faith in that particular area. When we believe God's Word (all of it) is

inspired of God and we are willing to obey the principles outlined in it, then our daily communication with Him will become very intimate. He will guide us in our daily affairs. If you are always willing to do what God tells you, then you are going to prosper. If you hesitate, argue, and try to talk God out of it, you will be robbing yourself of prosperity. It's just that simple.

Ordered Steps

The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.

Psalm 37:23

God wants to order our steps. The word *order* is a military term. To order is to

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command. God orders (commands) our steps, if we will obey those orders.

Many people have no idea that God is trying to lead them step by step in this life. They just take off in some direction. They try and fail in different areas. Then finally they begin to get smart and see their mistakes. Yet all the time God was wanting to order their steps and prevent those mistakes. **We don't have to learn by trial and error; we can learn by simple obedience!**

... I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.

Isaiah 48:17

God wants to lead us in the way we should go. If we will obey and serve, then we will profit and prosper. If anybody ought to know how to profit, it's God. If anybody knows how to live well, it's God. I am so thrilled that this personality—this All-knowing, All-mighty, All-successful God—was willing to put the principles upon which He lives into a book, then send us His Holy Spirit (Who knows how they operate) to indwell us, to teach us how to profit, and to lead us in the way we should go.

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All we have to do is be willing to obey and serve.

If I want to prosper and succeed in my life, God already knows the steps necessary to get there. He has already laid out the path I should take. He knows what is necessary to reach every goal or ambition or vision that He has placed in my heart. He knows what steps I need to take. If I am willing to let Him order my steps and if I will do exactly what He tells me without hesitation or argument, then prosperity

will come to me. Everything I set my hand to is going to prosper, and I'm going to spend my days in prosperity. But if I'm disobedient, the whole wheel of progress is stopped.

Attitude of Obedience

Now let me share something with you about an attitude of obedience. In Ephesians 6:1-3 Paul writes:

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

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God has a family. He is the Father, the Head of that family, and we are the children. Surely, anything He would tell children in the natural to do, He would expect from His spiritual children. In fact, everything I have learned about being a good father to my children has come from God. The similitude of my fatherhood comes from God. In other words, anything good that I do as an earthly father was imparted to me from God, my heavenly Father. I've had some situations with my two daughters. When they became teenagers, I had

to lay down some new rules. These rules were not always too popular with the girls. There have been times when they have disobeyed me. (They knew better, but they did it anyway.) Well, it was not pleasing to me, and it was not well with them. When I come home and find that my daughters have been disobedient, that they have rebelled against the instructions I left, I don't like it. I expect my girls to obey. When they don't, things definitely don't go well with them.

What pleases me most is when they obey what I say without argument. I detest argument when instructions have been given. I don't like *Willingness to Serve*

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that in any kind of relationship, and neither does God. It is dishonorable to argue with God. I don't want my children to argue with me, but I also don't want them to ignore what I tell them. Have you ever grabbed your child and said, "Listen to me! Are you listening to me?" "Yes, sir, I'm listening."

"What did I say?"

"I don't know, but I'm listening."

Many times God is trying to tell us something, but we are so busy doing something else that we don't hear Him. "God told me to

give that away, but I don't want to, so I'll just act like I didn't hear what He said." If your child did that, you would spank him. Do you see what disobedience does? It opens the door to the adversary.

When God has given us instructions which we refuse to obey, it's not God who beats us in the flesh—it's the Devil. God is the Father of spirits. He chastises His children with His Word. He will scourge (beat on) us with His Word. God is a spiritual Father; He does not use carnal methods to train spirits.

As a father in the natural, I use words and

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rods. The Bible says, " *He that spareth his rod hateth his son.*" (Prov. 13:24). My kids know I love them, just as my dad loved me.

But God uses words. If I rebel at His words, it's almost as if He has to fold His arms and say, "I'm trying to tell you, but you've decided you want to learn it the hard way." And He just has to back off and let us have our little experience. Someone has said, "Yes, but experience is the best teacher." No, experience is second best. The Holy Ghost is still number one. If we will obey God, we will learn the easy way.

Most people are hard-headed. I was so

hard-headed in the past. I wanted an experience. So God would back away and say, "Okay, have your experience then." Later I would say, "I'll never do that again!" I could have saved myself that hard lesson if I had listened to God.

My dad used to try to get through to me when I was a teenager. You see, I was a hotrodder, always drag racing in the streets, and Dad didn't like it. He would say, "Son, if you don't quit drag racing in the streets, I'm going to take your keys away from you. You're going to tear up your car. You could hurt

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yourself and endanger the lives of others. I'm not going to put up with it." He told me all the consequences that could happen if I continued to disobey. Do you know why? He didn't want me endangered. He didn't want my life snuffed out because of some foolishness. He knew what he was talking about.

But as a youngster, I thought I knew more than Dad. As children we think we know it all. Some of God's kids think they know more than He does. They have the same attitude toward Him as youngsters sometimes have toward their parents: "Oh, what does He know? He

doesn't understand." If only we could learn once and for all that God knows what is best for us! Then obedience would be so much easier and quicker for us. We could save ourselves so much misery. But, no, sometimes we just have to learn the hard way.

My dad told me why I shouldn't drag race in the street. He told me what would happen if I continued to do so, but I ignored his advice. At first, it wasn't deliberate. I would just get tempted to race. I would be fine until somebody pulled up next to me and revved his engine. I really didn't intend to race. I didn't

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intend to break the law or to disobey Dad, but I couldn't resist the temptation. I couldn't refuse a challenge.

Then one time I left the rear end of my car laying in the middle of the street when I blew up the transmission. When I got home, Dad asked, "What did you do?"

"Drag raced in the street."

"What happened?"

"Tore up my car."

"Didn't I tell you that would happen?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why didn't you obey me?"

"I will now."

Isn't that dumb? But that's what we do. We grow up with that kind of attitude, then we let it carry over into our relationship with our Father God. All God is asking us to do is to obey and serve Him because He knows what is best for us. He led the path of Jesus through this earth, and Jesus was a total success.

God knows the pitfalls along our way. The Bible says He will show us things to come. (John 16:13.) He knows how to lead us through

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this life if we are willing to obey and serve Him.

Quickly and Quietly

In the third chapter of 1 Timothy the Apostle Paul gives some instructions about the office of bishop. One of the requirements is that he rule " *well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.*" (v. 4). *The Living Bible* says: "*He must have a well-behaved family, with children who obey quickly and quietly.*" That's an attitude of obedience. Quickly and quietly. My kids have heard that so much. In fact, now when we tell them, "You should obey . . .," they say, "Yes, we know—quickly and quietly." That's the attitude there should be in obedience. That's the kind of attitude God wants us to

have. He wants us to obey Him, not when we get around to it, not when we finally decide that He knows best, not after we've tried everything else, but the moment He says it. Quickly and quietly. That means without argument, without hesitation.

Let me give you an example from my own experience to illustrate what I mean. A number of years ago, I was getting ready to go to Memphis, Tennessee, for a meeting. While I

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was packing, God spoke to me and said, "Son, I want you to send Joe (a minister friend) some money."

I said, "I'll do that, Lord, just as soon as I get through packing."

But I got busy and forgot about it. As I was driving toward Memphis, the Spirit of God spoke to me again, "I told you to send Joe that money."

"Lord, I forgot. But I'll do it just as soon as I get to Memphis." And I just kept on driving. Joe was believing God for a need he had right then, and God was wanting me to help meet that need—but I was too busy. They were both doing their part. Joe was praying and believing; the Lord was moving—but I wasn't

doing my part. The sad thing about it was that Joe lived less than twenty miles from my home, but I was going to wait until I had driven all the way to Memphis before I sent him that money. It might have taken a week to get to him. I got to Memphis and checked into my hotel. As I was lying in bed asleep in the middle of the night, suddenly I woke up. God said, "I told you to send that money to Joe."

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"God, I'll do it just as soon as I get back home."

"That's not good enough. Call you wife and tell her to get that money over to him right now."

"But, Lord, it's the middle of the night."

"He needs it now; in fact, he needed it hours ago. He is standing in faith, believing Me to meet his need. I've talked to several people today about meeting his need and all of them have responded like you." Then He added, "The next time you're in need and your help doesn't come when you need it, don't say a word."

When I heard that, I wanted to get in my car and drive back home right then! I called Carolyn and said, "Get that money over to Joe. Don't hesitate. God said to do it now!" She got it

to him as quickly as she could.

God taught me something in that experience. He said, "Son, there is a spiritual law that you released in your life when you acted that way. I said, ' *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*' That's why your needs sometimes go days before they are met. It's not My fault. I spoke, but you caused Me to
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have to speak to people who delay, who won't obey quickly and quietly, who hesitate and put it off. You set the pattern in your own life because of the way you act. Is that the way you want to live the rest of your Christian life?"

I said, "No, Sir, I'm going to correct that. From now on when You tell me to give, I will do it right away. I'm going to allow You to order my steps and lead me in the way I should go. I'm willing to obey and serve You.

Whatever You tell me to do, I'll do without argument, hesitation, or delay."

The attitude in obedience is quickly and quietly. It does not bring delight or pleasure to you as a parent when your children argue with you about something you've told them to do. If they get around to doing it in a week, that's not pleasing either. What is pleasing to you? It

pleases me when my children do what I've instructed them to do without argument, especially in the presence of others. It is embarrassing when you ask your children to do something for you in the presence of others and they make excuses or act like they didn't hear you. That's not pleasing.

Neither is it pleasing to God when He says,

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"Go to the pastor's house and give him a day off; clean his house for him," but we answer, "If I do that, who's going to clean mine? Besides I didn't like what he preached last week." If you act that way, you will rob yourself of that day's prosperity.

Suppose you go to the grocery store, and God says to you, "Sister Jones is in dire need. Buy her some groceries." But you say, "But, God, I only have \$40. You know I can't do that."

If God tells you to do something, He is big enough to help you carry it out. Our problem has been that we just haven't been willing to obey. We come up with all these excuses and rob ourselves of that day's prosperity.

God says, "Go tell your pastor that I don't want him sweeping the church floor anymore.

You go down there and sweep it."

We have to learn to obey God. It may not always be easy, but it always pays!

Serve and Obey

I'm going to tell you something very important. To prosper the way God wants us to, we must be willing to obey and serve.

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People willing to serve are people who are exalted. Everybody wants to be number one. But Jesus said, " *Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.*" (Mark 10:44). The chiefest of all are those who are willing to serve. Men and women who are willing to serve will be exalted by God. He will bring them to honor and prosper them.

Let me show you an example of a man in the Bible who wasn't willing to obey. In the fifth chapter of 2 Kings we see a man who almost robbed himself of his prosperity because of his attitude toward obedience. He was not willing at first to obey God's instructions because they didn't line up with what he thought he should do.

Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honourable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a

*mighty man in valour, but he was a leper.
And the Syrians had gone out by
companies, and had brought away captive out of
the land of Israel a little maid; and she waited on
Naaman's wife.*

*And she said unto her mistress, Would God
my lord were with the prophet that is in
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*Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy.
And one went in, and told his lord, saying,
Thus and thus said the maid that is of the land of
Israel.*

*And the king of Syria said, Go to, go, and I
will send a letter unto the king of Israel. And he
departed, and took with him ten talents of silver,
and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes
of raiment.*

*And he brought the letter to the king of
Israel, saying, Now when this letter has come
unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman
my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him
of his leprosy.*

*And it came to pass, when the king of Israel
had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and
said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that
this man doth send unto me to recover a man of
his leprosy? wherefore consider, I pray you, and*

*see how he seeketh a quarrel against me.
And it was so, when Elisha the man of God
had heard that the king of Israel had rent his
clothes, that he sent to the king, saying,
Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him
come now to me, and he shall know that there is
a prophet in Israel.*

*So Naaman came with his horses and with
his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of
Elisha.*

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*And Elisha sent a messenger unto him,
saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and
thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt
be clean.*

2 Kings 5:1-10

At this point Naaman must be willing to obey, or he won't be healed of leprosy. Many times what God tells you to do will not make sense to the natural mind. I've had God tell me to do things that, had I asked people's opinion, they would have said, "That's crazy!" But I didn't ask people, I asked God and He said to do it. So I did it, and it worked!

Here the messenger of God has told this man what to do. The instructions, inspired by God, were very simple: "Go jump in the river."

But Naaman got mad. The *King James Version* says, " *But Naaman was wrath.*" (v. 11). That's understandable.

Suppose you were deathly ill and went to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to have Oral Roberts lay hands on you and pray for your healing. When you got there, he wouldn't even come out. He just sent out a message that you were to go jump in the Arkansas River. How would you feel? Would you do what the messenger said to

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do?

I had an experience similar to this while I was working as associate minister for Kenneth Copeland. It was my responsibility to take Brother Copeland to this hotel room after each meeting and attend to his needs. Also I was supposed to answer any questions the people might have. One night in Kansas City, Brother Copeland and I were sharing a room. We had just returned from a meeting and Brother Copeland was physically drained from ministering to the people for hours. He had just gotten settled in bed for the night, when suddenly there was a knock at the door. When I opened it, there stood a young man who wanted to see Brother Copeland.

I said, "I'm sorry, sir, but he's in bed asleep."

"I don't care. I want to see him."

"Well, I'm sorry, may I help you? I'd be glad to help you, if I can."

"You won't do."

"Well, there's nothing we can do for you tonight. Come to the meeting in the morning."

"I want to see him now."

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"Sir, I'm trying to be as nice as I can, but you can't see him now. He is asleep and you can't come in."

"I'm coming in," he insisted, and pushed me down. When I hit the floor, it woke up Brother Copeland. He got up and told that man in no uncertain terms, "Whatever this fellow tells you, you'd better believe what he says!" I was just following Brother Copeland's instructions. Some people won't obey God if He doesn't conform to their preconceived notions. Naaman was like that. He should have rejoiced over the instructions. Who cares what God tells you to do, as long as it works?

Some people think, *But, Lord, that's not the way you told Brother Hagin to do it. Why do I have to do it this way?* Because you're not Kenneth Hagin! You had better not try to do something

a certain way just because God told Brother Hagin to do it that way. You need to do what God wants you to do. Get rid of all your preconceived ideas and listen to God's instructions to you. Then obey those instructions without question or hesitation.

Notice what Naaman did:

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But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought... (Right there is one of our main problems—wrong thinking.) ... He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.

v. 11

This guy had it all figured out, didn't he? He had the whole script written in advance. This thing was going to be dramatic. Sometimes God's instructions are very simple, so simple that some people miss them.

Naaman was not willing to obey and simply follow God's instructions. He was mad, and finally left. But one of his servants came to him and asked:

My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he

saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

v. 13

In other words, "Listen, if the prophet had told you to do something really hard, wouldn't you have done it? Then why don't you do this? All he's asking you to do is to dip yourself in that river seven times. He said you would

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recover from the leprosy. Why not do it?"

Thank God, he did do it and the Scriptures tell us his "*flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.*" (v. 14). But do you see how his disobedience, his attitude of hesitation and delay, his unwillingness to do it the way God said, could have cost him his healing?

Do you remember the situation with Peter in the boat? Jesus was preaching one day and a crowd of people had gathered around Him and were about to push Him into the water. He saw a fisherman, Peter, who had been out fishing all night long with his partners, James and John, and their father. They were all on the shore washing their nets, but Peter was still in the boat, just coming in to shore. When Jesus saw Peter, He asked if he could stand in his boat and preach from it.

When He had finished His sermon, Jesus turned around to Peter and said, " *Launch out into the deep, and let down your net for a draught.*" (Luke 5:4).

Peter replied, "*Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing*" (v. 5).

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That attitude almost cost Peter the best day's fishing he ever had. "Lord, we've been out there all night long and haven't caught a thing." But then his whole destiny for that day was changed with these words: ". . . *nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.*" (v. 5).

That's how Jesus wants us to respond to His instructions. When He says to do this or that, to go here or there, to give something, or to make ourselves available for some particular work, He wants us to answer, "Yes, Lord, at Thy Word I will do it."

When we create that attitude of obedience in our lives, God will lead us in the way we should go and everything we set our hand to will prosper. We will spend our days in prosperity and our years in pleasures.

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Nature of Faith

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In the fourth chapter of Romans we read that Abraham is known as the father of faith, " *the father of all them that believe*" (v. 11). Verse 3 tells us that " *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*" Because Abraham believed God, the Lord referred to him as His friend. (Is. 41:8.) Because God knew Abraham would believe Him and be obedient to Him, God chose him to be the man through whom He would establish His covenant of blessing for His people, and indeed for all people who will accept it by faith. In this covenant (contract, agreement) God promised that if Abraham (and his seed) would obey and serve Him, God would abundantly bless him (and his seed).

Verse 13 tells us:

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The promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not (given) to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

God promised that Abraham (and his seed) would inherit the world. But that promise did not come because of the Law (which would come some 430 years later). It came because of

Abraham's faith in God.

Galatians 3:9 tells us that "*they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham,*" and verse 29 assures us that "*if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*"

**That means everything God promised
Abraham belongs to us! We are Abraham's
seed, and the blessings of Abraham are ours!**

Abraham was the father of faith. Verse 11 of Galatians 3 declares that "*the just shall live by faith.*" If we are going to live in accordance with the way God has ordained (that is, by faith), then we need to understand certain things about faith. We need to understand how to live it and how to fully consecrate our lives to God so that they are pleasing to Him and so that there will be no hindrance to His blessings

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coming upon us as they did upon Abraham.

I would like to be called the friend of God. I would like to be so intimate with God that He would not do anything without first revealing it to me. That's the way it was with Abraham.

God had such an intimate relationship with Abraham that He would not destroy Sodom and Gomorrah until He had first talked it over

with His friend. (Gen. 18:16-22.) In fact, it was Abraham who dictated the conditions for that destruction. (vv. 23-33.) Now that is intimacy with God.

We have the ability to walk that closely with God. But to do it, we need to know something about how Abraham got into that favored position. We need to know what he did to be able to enter into that kind of blessing and prosperity, how he entered into that life of faith.

Faith Works

Let's look again at the fourth chapter of Romans where the Apostle Paul is describing Abraham's life, using him as an example of the life of faith:

And he (Abraham) received the sign of

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circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

Romans 4:11,12

Notice that phrase: ". . . *who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham.*" God is instructing us New Testament believers to walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham, the father of faith.

To some people living by faith means "quit thy job." It does not. You can live by faith and have twelve jobs, just as long as you don't make them your source. Living by faith does not mean quit your job. In fact, if you're going to quit your job, then you had better know how to live by faith first, or you will starve.

Living by faith does not mean you can quit work. In fact, the opposite is true. My Bible says, "*faith worketh.*" (Gal. 5:6.) Some people believe that the life of faith is a life of laziness.

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But Jesus lived by faith, and He said, "*My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*" (John 5:17). In another place He said, "*I must work the works of him that sent me*" (John 9:4). Jesus was sent into this world by the Father to work, and He told us, "*As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you*" (John 20:21).

When you live by faith, you will never work so hard nor enjoy life more. I don't work less

now that I live by faith. I work more, and I enjoy it more.

Faith Obeys

We are to walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham. But what was it about Abraham that caused God to bless, honor, and esteem him so much? His faith, of course.

Let's look at the eleventh chapter of Hebrews—the greatest faith chapter in the entire Bible—and see if we can pinpoint what it was about Abraham's faith that God liked:

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed

Hebrews 11:8

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You ought to underline that word **obeyed**.

Remember Job 36:11—the key to divine prosperity: "*If they obey and serve him, they shall spend their days in prosperity, and their years in pleasures.*" Faith is essential to receive God's blessings. That is undeniable. Without faith we cannot please Him. (Heb. 11:6.) But faith without works (corresponding actions) is dead. (James 2:26.) Faith is necessary if we are to be blessed by God, but obedience is the key to the miraculous. Obedience is the door-opener to

prosperity.

Faith Trusts

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

Hebrews 11:8

There are some people who won't act on God's Word and do what God says unless they have absolute proof that it is going to work. "If I knew this was going to work, then I wouldn't mind obeying God."

I answer that by saying, "Well, I'm glad that all you need is some indication that this will

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work. Here it is: *It is written!*" You see, that's all the proof we need. What else should we want?

"Well, if I just knew someone that it has worked for."

If that's all you're looking for, read Hebrews 11—the hall of fame of faith, people who exercised faith and won. Not only that, there are a few around today for whom it has worked.

Now I understand human nature. I understand why people want to be assured that it will work before they go out on a limb with it.

But as Christians, our attitude ought to be,
"Bless God, I'm going to act on God's Word
whether anybody else does or not! I'm going
this way because God said it would work, not
because some other person said it would. If I
never see someone it has worked for, I'm still
going to act on it, and it's going to work for
me!"

**Some people will tell you that whatever it
is you are trying to do can't be done!** Did you
know that according to the laws of
aerodynamics, it is impossible for the
bumblebee to fly. His body is too big for his
wings. It is scientifically impossible for a

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bumblebee to get off the ground. The only
problem is, the bumblebee doesn't know that.
You see, bumblebees don't read scientific
journals. They don't listen to what the scientists
say, and if they did, they wouldn't believe it.
The bumblebee believes he can fly, so he zooms

right over the heads of those learned men of science who stand earth-bound and shout up at him, "Come back down here. It's impossible for you to do what you're doing!"

That's what I like about being a believer.

While the world stands around saying, "It can't be done," we just keep on flying. That's what the life of faith is all about. When the world says we can't do it, that ought to be like "sic 'em" to a bulldog!

Faith Is Patient

Abraham was called of God to go into a place he knew nothing about. He had no evidence in the natural that such a place even existed. God just told him to get up and leave, so he obeyed.

He went out, not knowing whither he went.

By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles

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with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise.

Hebrews 11:8,9

Let's look back at Hebrews 6:11,12 to see a beautiful example of how this man entered into the blessings of God, into divine prosperity:

*And we desire that every one of you do shew
the same diligence to the full assurance of hope
unto the end:*

That ye be not slothful ...

*The Amplified Bible says: "That you may not
grow disinterested and become [spiritual]
sluggards." Don't be lazy.*

*... but followers of them who through faith
and patience inherit the promises.*

Notice, they **inherit** the promises. That
should give us some idea of how we receive
God's blessings.

But it is not enough for us just to have faith;
we must also have patience. We must "*let
patience have her perfect work, that (we) may be
perfect and entire, wanting nothing*" (James 1:4),
"*... for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*"
(Gal. 6:9).

We inherit the promises " *through faith and
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patience.*" (Heb. 6:12).

Faith Knows

*For when God made promise to Abraham,
because he could swear by no greater, he swore
by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless
thee.*

Hebrews 6:13,14

Everybody is looking for a sure thing. Well, this looks like one to me. God didn't say He might bless us or that there was a strong possibility He would bless us. He said, "*Surely blessing I will bless thee.*" Surely. We don't need any other evidence than that. *Thus saith the Lord* ought to be evidence enough for any Christian. If God says you are healed, then you *are* healed. If God says you are blessed, then you *are* blessed. If God says you are an overcomer, then you *are* an overcomer. If God says you are more than a conqueror, then you *are* more than a conqueror. If God says no weapon formed against you shall prosper, then no weapon formed against you shall prosper. If God says it is His will that you prosper, then it is His will that you prosper!

Why? Because God said, *Surely*. And God is *Nature of Faith*

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not a man that He should lie. (Num. 23:19.) Some people seem to think that living by faith is a life of being insecure. But I'm not stumbling. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and though he fall, he will not be cast down. (Ps. 37:23,24.) The Lord will grip him by the hand and lead him on. His Word is "*a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*" (Ps.

119:105). I'm not walking insecurely. I'm not walking in darkness.

If anybody is walking in darkness, it's the world—people who don't know my God. I walked in darkness before I met God, before I had developed this relationship with Him. But now I walk in the light. I don't walk in uncertainty. Like the Apostle Paul, I'm confident, I walk by faith and not by sight, I know in whom I have believed, and I am fully persuaded that He is able to perform that which He has promised.

Somebody has said, "But those people who live by faith never know what's going to happen."

Yes, we do. I know what's going to happen in every area of my life. When I'm believing God and standing on His Word, then the

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fulfillment of His Word is going to happen. I don't know how God will do it, and I learned long ago to quit trying to figure it out. That's not my responsibility. My responsibility is to walk in obedience to Him, one step at a time, to listen to Him, to follow what He says, and to believe He is able to perform His Word. God's responsibility is to confirm His Word with signs

following. How He does it is His business.

When I walk in the light of God's Word, I'm not walking in uncertainty.

The Apostle Paul said, "*I am confident*" (Phil. 1:6). That doesn't sound like an insecure man to me. Living by faith is not living in uncertainty any more than living by doubt is living in assurance.

Faith Receives

Abraham was a man who obeyed God, and the Bible says great blessings came upon him. God promised Abraham that if he would walk in the light of His Word and do all that he was commanded, He would bless him (and his seed!) abundantly. Abraham entered into that covenant with God. He walked in the blessings of the Old Covenant.

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Thank God, we are Abraham's seed! We are heirs according to the promise, and we have a right to live in those blessings!

When Jesus gave Himself at Calvary, He did not do away with the blessings of Abraham —He enlarged upon them. They are still ours today. God promised to bless Abraham, and the Bible tells us that "*after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise*" (Heb. 6:15).

Do *you* want to obtain the promise? Then let's walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham. To help you do that, I would like to share seven factors of Abraham's life, seven steps that will lead you into the blessed state which Abraham enjoyed with God.

5

Seven Steps to the Life of

5

Faith

Now the Lord 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 shew 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.

So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him

Genesis 12:1-4

The first thing we notice is that God's call upon Abraham's life demanded absolute confidence in and obedience to the Word of

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God. The same call is upon our lives today. If we are to reap the blessings of Abraham, we must display the same absolute confidence in and obedience to the Word of God that Abraham showed.

But how do we do that today? After all, God may not speak to us audibly, as He seems to have done with Abraham. God may not tell us to physically pack up and leave our home country, to move to some unknown Promised Land, as He instructed Abraham to do.

If we are to follow the example of obedient, faithful service to God which Abraham set for us, there are seven things we must do.

Step 1: Separate Yourself from the Ties of this World

Abraham's call was a call of separation from the ties of this natural world. You cannot be blessed by God if you try to live in the world and in God's system at the same time. God's system and the world's system are in direct opposition to one another. They do not agree. If they did, there would be no need for preaching.

We would already be living God's way naturally. But the natural world does not live

Seven Steps to the Life of Faith

God's way.

The natural world tells us, "There's a big headache out there waiting for you!" That's not what God says in His Word. God says, "Jesus bore your big headaches." That's a Savelle paraphrase of 1 Peter 2:24: "*Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.*"

The world does not say you are healed. On the contrary. If you listen to the television, you will soon discover that you're either sick or about to get sick.

"As long as there are winters and husbands," the television pronounces, "there are colds!" And then they set in to sell you something for the cold they are trying their best to talk you into.

Then there's this one: "How do you spell relief?" I always want to jump up and shout, "J-E-S-U-S!" I'll be so glad when Christians get some 24-hour-a-day Word TV stations to put out the Gospel. Then we can start doing our own "commercials" for the Lord, picking up where the world leaves off: "How do you spell relief? J-E-S-U-S!"

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It should be obvious to anyone with any spiritual perception at all that the world and God do not agree. The world says, "Watch out! There's a famine in the land. Hard times are coming. Depression is upon us. Recession is here. Hold on to what you've got. Don't let it get away from you. Things are going to get worse!" But God says, " *Give, and it shall be given unto you*" (Luke 6:38).

My friend, it is time we get both feet out of the world and into God's Word. Let's quit hanging onto the world's way, using it as an alternative in case the Word doesn't work. God called Abraham and said, "Leave your home country, your relatives, and your father's house. Go to a land which I will show you, and I will make of you a great nation." Abraham's call demanded absolute confidence in and obedience to the Word of God. It was a call of separation from the ties of the natural world. We are to walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham. His call expresses to us the starting point of the life of faith, and the first requirement of that life of faith is separation from the world.

The Apostle Paul says, "*Be not conformed to Seven Steps to the Life of Faith*"

this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2). We have to separate ourselves from the World. We have to get rid of the world's attitude about life and take on God's attitude. Second Corinthians 6:17 tells us to *"come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."* Verse 14 says, *"What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"*

You can't keep mingling in the world's ways and expect to be blessed of God. You have to separate yourself from the ties of the world. Get rid of the world's attitude. Quit hanging on to what the world taught you. Decide once and for all that you are going God's way.

The Church does not need to be worldly.

We should not have the same passions and desires that the world has. I don't have that nature anymore. I am a new creation. My desire should have changed. If I catch myself still craving the things that the world craves, then I'd better go spend some time with God. I need to separate myself from the ties of this world.

Now, I didn't say that you're not supposed to have the material necessities of life. And Jesus didn't say that either. In fact, He said that

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if you will seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, *all these things* will be added unto you. The things He was talking about were food, clothing, and shelter—material things.

God wants you to have the material things of life. God doesn't want you to live below the world. He wants you to be more prosperous than the world. In fact, He doesn't even want you to be less fashionable than the world. If anything, He wants you more fashionable! Where did we ever get the idea that God has no taste, no eye for beauty?

Some people are still hung up on whether a Christian woman should wear earrings and lipstick. "Did you see Brother Savelle's wife on that platform this morning? Did you see that lipstick on her lips? She can't be holy and wear that stuff!"

It doesn't make any difference if a woman comes to church wearing Lucite house paint on her face! That's between her and God. My wife's lipstick has never stopped the anointing in our meetings.

When God says we are to separate ourselves from the world, He is not talking

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about going around in sackcloth and ashes. He is not opposed to our having nice things. What God is opposed to is our following after the lust of this world, having the same ungodly desires that the world has. If your ambition and goal in life is to be rich, then you haven't separated yourself from the world. Your motivation and life's ambition should be to know God more intimately than any other personality in this universe. If it is, then He will see that you prosper every day and that your years are filled with pleasure.

Step 2: Forsake All to Follow God

God said to Abraham, "*Leave your country, your kindred, your father's house.*" He insisted that Abraham leave them and follow Him. This commandment signified that God required a totally consecrated life. He demanded that Abraham be willing to forsake all to obey Him. Many people want to obey God, but they want it to be on their terms. Somebody always wants to play "Let's Make a Deal" with God. It won't work that way. You either play by His rules, or you don't play.

You see, God is smarter than you and I. He

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isn't trying to be hard. He knows how to make

life work at its best. If you are willing to forsake all to follow Him, He will lead you into an adventurous and exciting life.

There is a price to pay, and not many people are willing to pay it. But God is not trying to take anything away from you. He is not trying to squeeze you into a mold and make you into a robot. It is not His intention to deprive you of any good thing. Psalm 84:11 says, "*No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*" All He wants from you is total dedication to Him.

When I was growing up, my greatest ambition in life was to operate my own auto paint and body shop. I grew up around wrecked cars. My dad was an auto body man with a reputation as one of the best in the state of Louisiana, and he taught me everything he knew. My goal in life was to be a better body repairman than my father and to one day have my own business. In fact, when I was just a little fellow, my dad and I would talk about it at the breakfast table almost every day.

"Dad, one of these days we're going to have our own shop."

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"Yes, when you finish school and get your

college education, we're going into business and have our own shop together."

"I can just see it now," I would say, "with a big sign out front that says, SAVELLE AND DAD PAINT AND BODY WORKS."

After Carolyn and I got married, I worked at different jobs for a while until finally I couldn't stand it anymore. I didn't want to go to college. I wanted to work on cars. So after three and a half years, I quit college and started working on cars.

Then one day my dream came true. I finally got my own shop. I had arrived! That body shop became my god. It consumed my life. I was willing to spend twenty hours a day in that shop to make it go, because it was my god.

God had called me to the ministry when I was only twelve years old as a result of seeing Oral Roberts on television. But I rebelled against God's call on my life. I had my shop. It had become my god—and I was dying inside.

Then Kenneth Copeland came to my home town and I went to one of his meetings. He preached the message of faith. I didn't

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understand everything he said that night, but the next morning I went to my shop, walked

through the office into the shop area, and went into the tiny restroom of that shop. I locked the door behind me, sat down on the floor, and cried like a baby. I said, "God, I can't take this anymore. I don't want to live like this. I'm tired of running. I want to do what You want me to do. I don't know how to do it. I don't know what to say. But I'm tired of this kind of life. I'm giving my life to You. If You want me to preach, I'll preach."

I made up my mind that day to forsake all and obey God. At that moment I cut the strings that linked me to everything I had lived for. I had served the Devil diligently for the past few years, so I was going to be no less diligent in serving God.

When I made the decision to forsake all and obey God, I didn't care what anybody said or thought about me. I didn't care whether or not they understood what I was doing—and most of them didn't.

I made up my mind: "I'm forsaking all. I don't care what anybody says. I'm going to obey God, even if it means severing my
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relationship with my own family." You see, they didn't understand me. They thought I was

nuts. But it made no difference to me whether they understood or not. I was going for Jesus. The Holy Ghost spoke to my heart and said, "Lock yourself up for the next three months, and I'll teach you the Word."

When I came out of that bedroom after being locked up for three months with the Word, I was on fire inside to do the work of the Lord. I didn't have a congregation to preach to. I didn't have people inviting me to hold an evangelistic meeting for them. So I went out into the streets and hung around outside bars and lounges, waiting for someone to come through the door. I would grab some drunk, set him down, and unload the New Testament on him. He had no choice but to get saved! I forsook all to obey God, and everything I gave up to serve Jesus, He has given back to me more than a hundredfold! **My friend, there is a price to pay. There is a commitment to make. But it's worth it.**

Some people in this faith movement today are just dabbling around in it. They are playing games, learning to talk the talk, but they don't

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know what real commitment is. They have no root, no solid foundation.

My friend, it is time to get in all the way—
both hands, both feet, head to toe. We must be
willing to forsake all to follow God.

"But you don't understand what I'd have to
give up to do that."

Anything you give up for the sake of the
Gospel is well worth the giving, I assure you.
There is much in store for you when you do,
such as life more abundantly.

Step 3: Don't Turn Back Under Pressure

*And Abram journeyed, going on still
toward the south.*

And there was a famine in the land

Genesis 12:9,10

Abraham decided to obey God; but the
moment he left his country, he walked right
into a famine. He probably thought, Oh, my
God, I wish I had never left my country. Do you
suppose that was really God talking to me, or
was it just something I ate?

Many people decide, "I'm going to live by
faith" But when the Devil slaps them in the

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face a time or two, they quit. They say, "I want
to start giving. I want to obey God and tithe."

But then the car breaks down and they quit
giving. Do you know what this reveals? A lack

of real commitment.

Some people are committed as long as everything is going well. But the moment things start getting a little bit uncomfortable, their commitment weakens.

It is very easy to be committed to God while you are sitting in church hearing the Word and experiencing the anointing of God. But commitment really counts when the meeting is over and you walk out the door by yourself. It is out there, not in church, that commitment is really measured.

When it looks like the world has caved in on you, your commitment will really pay off. You will be able to stand in the midst of adversity and say, "I will joy in the God of my salvation. I will not fear what man can do to me. I'm not letting depression attack me any longer. I know this doesn't look like the time to do it, but I'm going to rejoice in the Lord."

There will be plenty of opportunities to turn back under pressure. I will never forget the day

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I found out from God's Word that I was healed by the stripes of Jesus. I came out of my bedroom like a bolt of lightning and said to my wife, "Carolyn, did you know we're healed by

the stripes of Jesus? My days of sickness are over!"

Before that day was over, as I was sitting in my living room, I heard a voice in my mind say, "You're getting the flu. In just a moment your eyes are going to start watering, your nose is going to start running, and you're going to get chills. You'd better go to bed."

When I heard that voice, I believed it. God confirms His Word with signs following, and so does the Devil. If you believe what the Devil says, he will confirm his word with signs following too. My eyes started watering, my nose started running, and I got cold.

The voice said, "You'd better get in bed." So I got up and went into the bedroom.

"Get under the blanket. You're going to get cold."

I got under the blanket and was sitting there in bed shaking. Then the voice informed me,

"Your muscles and joints are beginning to

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ache." And, sure enough, I began to ache all over.

About that time Carolyn walked in and saw me. She said, "What are you doing in bed? I thought you were healed and that your days of

sickness and disease were over."

I said, "I thought so too, but I've got the flu."

Right then I had an opportunity to turn back under pressure. What Carolyn said made me so mad, but she was right. As I was lying there with the symptoms of the flu, I knew I didn't have any business being mad at her. She had told me the truth. I needed to channel that anger against the Devil. He was the one who had lied to me and got me into that condition. Instead of turning back under pressure and saying, "Aw, that healing stuff has passed away. It doesn't work. After all, I'm sick!" I stood on my feet and said, "Satan, in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, I resist you. I am healed by the stripes of Jesus, and you can't keep these symptoms on me. I command you to flee." So he fled and took his lying symptoms with him.

When you get an opportunity to turn back

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under pressure is when you will find out how committed you really are.

When you say, "From now on, I'm going to walk in love, just like God said," brace yourself, because somebody mean and ugly will cross your path. You will have a golden opportunity

to get into strife!

"From this moment on, I'm going to be a giver." Brace yourself, friend, because that attitude is dangerous to the Devil. Once you truly decide to make giving the essence of living, you become a threat to him and his kingdom. He will attack your finances like never before. He can't afford for you to operate the principle of giving. It will change your life and the lives of others all around you. He must try to stop you. But he can't stop you unless you let him.

There have been times when I have given a large amount to some Christian endeavor. Immediately the Devil set in on me. I would think, *Oh, dear God, I wish I hadn't given that much. I could sure use that money right now.* That thought was nothing more than an attempt by Satan to force me to turn back under pressure. One of his favorite weapons is fear.

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The moment some people put their offering in the plate, Satan puts his fear in their minds: *Oh, God, I hope nothing bad happens.* The Apostle Paul said, *"We are not ignorant of Satan's devices, lest he get the advantage over us."* (2 Cor. 2:11.) We must realize that the Devil comes

immediately to steal the Word. But when he comes, we can take the same Word he is trying to steal and defeat him with it.

Don't turn back under pressure. Slap him on the head with the sword of the Spirit! Keep banging him around with that sword. He will finally leave you alone.

Step 4: Walk the Life of Faith One Step at a Time

Don't try to figure out the life of faith for next month. Take it one step at a time. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.

Don't try to be Oral Roberts, or T. L.

Osborn, or Kenneth Hagin, or Kenneth Copeland. Don't try to be your pastor. Walk on the level of your own faith, not someone else's.

Let the lives of such great men of God be a testimony and an inspiration to your faith, but don't try to do what they have done because

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they did it. Let their faith-filled actions inspire you to get close to God as they did, to devour His Word as they did. When you have developed the kind of relationship with God that they have, you will begin to accomplish the kinds of things they have accomplished.

Many people are trying to be somebody

else. They hear a person say, "I gave my car away, and God gave me a better one," so they think, "I need a new car; I'll give mine away too." If their only motivation is to do something because someone else did it, they will be sadly disappointed. It won't work.

I thank God for the inspiration Kenneth Copeland is to my life, but I don't do things just because he does them. I do what God tells me to do.

Kenneth Copeland has done things in faith that stagger my imagination. But before he attempted such audacious things, he spent hours meditating the Word and fellowshiping with God. He gradually developed his faith so that it would not be shaken. I would be crazy to try to do what Brother Copeland has done without having my faith on the level of his faith.

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The things that great men of faith accomplish should not inspire us to take risks, to act foolhardily, to gamble with our own lives and the lives and wellbeing of our loved ones.

" *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Rom. 10:17). Spend the time with God that these men spent, develop your own faith in

the Lord and in the integrity of His Word, then will come the time when you can act in obedience to Him and do great things as these men have done.

When God tells me to do something, I can do it without doubt, without hesitation, and without unbelief. If necessary, He will perform miracles in my behalf to confirm His Word.

Don't try to live somebody else's faith. You need to walk the life of faith one step at a time, just as you climb or descend a flight of stairs one step at a time. To try to skip steps and jump directly up or down is risky business. If you try it, you will get hurt.

I realize that taking one step at a time is slow. It may seem that you will never get there, but keep at it long enough. You'll make it. It may not be the quickest way, but, believe me, it's the wisest.

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"I'm too impatient! I want it now!" That's not faith. Faith is patient. God tells us in His Word to be "*followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises*" (Heb. 6:12).

Don't try to imitate what others are doing.

Follow God's leadership. Get to know Him.

Develop your own faith. Take it one step at a

time.

Step 5: Honor God with your Substance

If you follow these principles, God's blessings will come on you. When they do, honor Him with your substance.

Remember, the Bible says in Genesis 13:2 that Abraham was rich as a result of his obedience to God. In Genesis 14 we see him immediately giving God tithes of all. (v. 20.) God made Abraham rich, so Abraham honored God with his substance.

Many times when the pressure is relieved, people start giving God less instead of giving Him more. When the blessings of God start coming in, they should honor Him all the more because of His blessings.

Notice what God says in Deuteronomy 8:7-

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14:

For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil, olive, and honey;

A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a

land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.

When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.

Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day:

Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

Notice first of all that God says, "When— not if—you begin to prosper, don't forget to honor
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Me." **God believes that these principles work.**

He knows that if you believe and put these principles into practice in your life, you will be prospered.

Secondly, God knows there is a danger that when His people begin to reap His blessings and abundance, they will become lax in their

worship and obedience. He has promised us great abundance, but He also cautions us about forgetting to praise and honor Him "from whom all blessings flow."

God is telling us here, "When My blessings come upon you, honor Me, remember Me.

Remember, I am the One Who got you out of bondage. Remember, it is I Who delivered you from poverty, from sickness, from defeat, and set you on a solid rock."

When God's blessings come upon us (and they will if we will be obedient) we should not honor God less, we should honor Him more. If you were a giver when the pressure was on, don't quit giving because the pressure is gone.

If you were in bondage and God has set you free, honor Him. Never forget that it is He Who delivered you from the house of bondage.

Now let's read the rest of this passage. God

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reminds us that it was He:

who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna,

*which thy fathers knew not, that he might
humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do
thee good at thy latter end;*

*And thou say in thine heart, My power and
the might of mine hand hath gotten me this
wealth.*

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

Deuteronomy 8:15-18

Abraham was blessed of Almighty God.
God made him very wealthy. He walked in the
blessings that are outlined in Deuteronomy
28:1-14. He was blessed coming in and blessed
going out, blessed in the city and in the field.
Everything he set his hand to was blessed. He
was the head and not the tail. He was above
and not beneath.

When his enemies came against him one

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way, God caused them to flee from him seven
ways.

Abraham walked in the blessings of
Deuteronomy 28. If we are to walk in those
same blessings, we need to follow the steps of
faith of our father Abraham. One of the things

Abraham did when those blessings began to overtake him was to honor God with his substance. He gave God tithes of all.

Now I am a blessed man. God has delivered me out of bondage. I don't give God less of my life now, I give Him more.

If we were to take a survey of the people who attend our meetings across the country, we would probably find that more are under the circumstances of life than on top. But, thank God, that ratio is changing as we keep feeding on the Word.

Many people who come to our meetings are hurting. The flood has already struck. They are living under pressure and stress. When they learn these principles, they make up their minds to put them into practice in their lives. They do so, and miracles start happening. Their blessings start coming in. Then they start thinking, *There's no need to be so diligent now. The Seven Steps to the Life of Faith*

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Lord has blessed us. We have money in our pocket and a nice car to drive. We gave our way out of that mess. Now things are looking up. We don't need to keep giving like we were before. The pressure is off. Now we can start taking it easier.

The Bible says, " *Happy is the man that findeth*

wisdom ... and happy is every one that retaineth her" (Prov. 3:13,18). Don't ever get less diligent. Become more diligent.

When Carolyn and I first started out, we were just having to believe God for our own needs. All I had to be responsible for was my family. Today I am the president of a corporation with a large staff. I must be concerned not only for my own family but also for the finances to run a ministry. I have people who must be paid. I can't afford to become less diligent now that I have more responsibilities. I must stay on top of things.

If Jesus of Nazareth were to walk up to you in the flesh and work a miracle in your finances so that you suddenly had unlimited resources, God would still demand from you total dependence upon Him!

You will never reach the place where you don't have to believe God. You will never quit

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operating in faith. Some people think that when they get to heaven, they won't have to use their faith. But they will! God is a faith God. It is impossible to please Him without faith. We will use our faith in heaven. The only difference is, there won't be any resistance to our faith in

heaven. The Devil won't be there to interfere with it.

God has delivered us out of bondage. We are blessed, and blessed people honor God with their substance.

Step 6: Recognize God as your Absolute Source of Supply

Abraham recognized and acknowledged God as his absolute Source of Supply. In the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, Abraham's nephew, Lot, had been taken captive by a band of marauders. Abraham took three hundred of his own servants, caught up with the band of thieves, and did battle with them. He defeated them soundly and brought Lot and the others out of captivity. The Word of God says:

And the king of Sodom went out to meet him (Abraham) after his return from the slaughter ... And the king of Sodom said unto
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Abram, Give me the persons (you have liberated), and take the goods to thyself. And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing

that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich.

Genesis 14:17,21-23

Abraham made up his mind that his absolute source of supply was God, not the world or man or natural means. He said, "I don't want so much as the shoestring out of your sandal. I don't want it ever said that a man made Abraham rich, but Almighty God."

We need to walk in the steps of the faith of our father Abraham and make God our absolute Source of Supply.

Step 7: Don't Pursue Riches, Pursue the Creator

Don't make riches the ambition of your life. Make knowing God and being His instrument the ambition of your life. If you will do that, God will see to it that you are provided with all the things you need for yourself and to meet

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the needs of others. After all, you can't give what you don't have.

God places the same kind of call on our lives today that He did on Abraham's life, a call of dedication and separation unto Him.

In the tenth chapter of Mark, we read the story of a man who was not willing to make a

wholehearted commitment to God because of a wrong attitude about things:

And when he (Jesus) was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

Mark 10:17-20

Why was this young man wealthy? Because he obeyed God. God had said in the Abrahamic Covenant that if His people would serve Him and do all that He commanded them, they

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would be blessed. This man had done that. That's why he was rich. God made him rich because he honored Him and kept the commandments.

Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the

*poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven:
and come, take up the cross, and follow me.
And he was sad at that saying, and went
away grieved: for he had great possessions.
Mark 10:21,22*

This young man's problem was not his possessions; it was his attitude toward those possessions. He was not willing to separate himself from them. He was not willing to dedicate himself to a life of consecration to God. He was sad and grieved because he was not willing to forsake all.

*And Jesus looked round about, and saith
unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that
have riches enter into the kingdom of God!
And the disciples were astonished at his
words.*

Mark 10:23,24

Jesus did not say it was impossible for the
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rich to be saved. He said it was hard for them to enter into the Kingdom of God. Why? Because of their attitude toward their possessions. But notice that the disciples were astonished at what Jesus said. They were taken aback. Why? Because they weren't poor men. Peter, James, and John weren't poor fishermen, as we

so often see them portrayed. They were businessmen, partners in a thriving commercial fishing operation.

Let me remind you that Jesus called Peter to follow Him on the day of Peter's miraculous catch. Peter caught more fish on the day that Jesus called him to the ministry than on any other day in his career as a commercial fisherman. Peter experienced the most prosperous day of his career the day Jesus called him.

Do you know what thrills me about Peter? His dedication. He wasn't perfect, he made some mistakes. He was impetuous, always "shooting his mouth off." But that day he was faced with the opportunity of realizing the greatest ambition of his life—to be the best fisherman in the land and produce more fish than anybody else—yet he turned his back on it

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all to follow after an itinerant preacher. That took nerve.

He didn't know where he was going or what he was getting into. But he left it all and followed Jesus. That's dedication. That's consecration to God.

This rich young ruler was faced with the

same choice. He was put to the same test as Peter, yet he failed. He said, in essence, "I can't do it. I can't turn my back on it all and leave it behind to follow Jesus." So he went away sad. That's why Jesus said it was so hard for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God. (It is hard for them, not hard for God.) But Jesus' statement alarmed Peter. Why should Peter be concerned about the rich getting into the Kingdom?

Because he had riches. He asked Jesus, "*Who then can be saved?*" In other words, if it was hard for the rich to be saved, then to Peter it seemed that Jesus was pointing His finger at him and saying he couldn't be saved. That's why he immediately said, "*Lord, we've left all to follow You.*" (v. 28.)

Peter and the other disciples must have had possessions, or they could not have "left all" to follow Jesus. If they were poor, they wouldn't

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have had anything to leave.

In verse 24 Jesus explains to Peter why it's hard for some rich people to enter the Kingdom of God. It's not because of their money, but because of their **love** of it.

And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith

unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

Mark 10:24

Jesus didn't say it was hard for those who have riches to be saved. He said it was hard for those who **trust** in riches to enter the Kingdom. You can have riches without trusting in them. But most people who have riches trust in those riches. I have spent time with millionaires, teaching them how to trust in God rather than in their riches. They've trusted in riches so long that they don't know how to trust God.

There are many things that riches can't produce, but faith can. Some things that money can't buy, our faith can get. No amount of money can buy healing for an incurable disease. But faith can get it. The same faith that can heal your physical body can also meet your financial needs and put food on your table.

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Jesus said it is hard for people who trust in riches to enter the Kingdom of God. You may say, "I'll never have that problem. All I have is \$14."

Has God ever talked to you about giving away that \$14?

"But, Lord, this is the only money I have.

What am I going to do if I give it away?"

You may not have very much money, but you have a lot of trust in it! There are people with only 25 cents who are committing the sin of trusting in riches!

Jesus said the rich young ruler lacked only one thing. He lacked commitment. When Jesus put him to the test to see if he would make a commitment, he failed. It wasn't what the rich young ruler **had** that kept him out of the Kingdom—it was what he **lacked!**

He had done what Deuteronomy 8 said **not** to do. He had taken God's covenant principles and become a rich man. Then he had turned his trust from God to his riches. Pride had entered into his heart. Jesus was only trying to deliver him of his trust in riches. He wasn't trying to take anything away from him.

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Jesus said it is hard for those who trust in riches to enter the Kingdom. This prompted Peter to say:

Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the

gospel's,

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

Mark 10:28-30

Here Jesus issues a challenge to the disciples. He is telling them, "I challenge you to find a man, any man, who has made this kind of consecration of his life to Me with integrity and sincerity of heart, forsaking all to follow Me, who did not receive a hundredfold in this life."

Some men today are preaching against the hundredfold principle. They are doing it because people have taken it out of its setting. They have given money without giving their life; then have expected to receive a

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hundredfold return. That is not what Jesus was talking about. He was emphasizing the fact that they did not have to be afraid of losing if they followed Him, that God provides bountifully for those who are truly and totally committed to Him.

Prosperity belongs to us, but it is not to be

sought after. Riches and wealth belong to us, but they are not to be pursued. Jesus said, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*" (Matt. 6:33).

Prosperity belongs to us, but in the minds of some people, this thing has gotten distorted. All they are after is things. The only reason they attend our meetings is to try to learn a formula for getting things. They think that the faith message is a get-rich-quick message. It is not! It is a success story, but it is not a get-rich-quick message.

The life of faith does not involve taking a formula from God's Word and using it to fulfill the lust of the flesh. The life of faith is a life of total consecration to God. If we will seek first God and His righteousness, He has promised that we will not lack any good thing. If we

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serve Him, we will not want, or suffer, or live in bondage.

I serve God. He has first place in my life. I'm not in bondage to anything—morally, physically, mentally, spiritually, or financially. I'm not seeking riches; I'm following God. Because I'm following Him, He's going to

prosper me. Why? So I can be a blessing to humanity. The more I am blessed, the more I can do for God.

The more blessed we are, the more of a blessing we can be. That's what God told Abraham: "*I will bless thee and make thee a blessing.*" That's what life is all about, being blessed of God so that you, in turn, can be a blessing. God wants you to have your needs met and much left over so you can be an instrument to help somebody else.

There is no greater joy on earth than to be able to help somebody out of a misfortune.

There is no greater thrill than being able to keep someone from losing their home. There is no greater delight than to give to someone who is hungry and to see them fed. That's life! That's living!

This message is not designed to teach you
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how to get all the things you have wanted for so long. Its purpose is to set humanity free. God wants His people free from bondage so we, in turn, can be His instrument to "set at liberty them that are bruised." God, help us to see that truth.

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Prosperity

Total consecration to God is definitely the key to divine prosperity. If there is not a total dedication of your life to God, you may experience a temporary prosperity, but it will not be real or permanent.

Many people today are considered prosperous from the world's viewpoint, but I don't call a person prosperous whose stomach is eaten up with ulcers or cancer, regardless of how much money he has in the bank. How can any person be called prosperous whose health is ruined, whose family life is in shambles, or whose mind is tormented by doubt, fear, worry, or stress? That's not prosperity.

God's estimation of prosperity includes not only money to meet our needs and to help

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others, but also peace of mind, success in marriage, physical health and well-being, honor and favor with others, long life—the list goes on and on. Real Bible prosperity, as defined in Proverbs 3 is **total** prosperity—physical, mental, social, material, and spiritual. It is

prosperity produced by the wisdom of God that involves all of the aspects of human existence. Money is just a part of God's prosperity. God wants us to prosper in every way—spirit, soul, and body, socially, and financially. The key to that divine prosperity is total consecration to God.

This is where we have missed it. We've had the mistaken idea that we were in this thing to see what we could get out of it. But we are in this to please God. That should be our motive. I delight myself in the Word of God, not because it will produce something for me, but because it is His personal love letter to me. I don't read it to learn how to acquire things, but to learn more about my loving heavenly Father, to become more like Him and more pleasing to Him, to better serve Him.

The things that come as a result of such consecration and dedication are just "fringe
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benefits."

Jesus said, " *What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*"

(Mark 8:36). Someone may say, "I'd rather serve Jesus and be broke than be rich and go to hell."

Well, you can serve Jesus, miss hell, and still

not be broke.

God wants us to prosper. If we are going to prosper and live in divine prosperity, according to God's system, then we must seek God first, not things.

Be Trustworthy

Many times people have not prospered as they should, and never will enjoy a great degree of prosperity, because they can't be trusted with it. As soon as life begins to get a little easier, they forget their God.

I hear people say, "That's the reason God never gives me much. He knows if I had anything, I would become proud and forget Him." Change your attitude, then God can trust you. God isn't interested in keeping things from you so you will stay out of sin. He wants to see you mature so He can trust you, and bless you,

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and use you!

It isn't hard to change your attitude and lifestyle. Second Timothy 2:21 tells us: "*If a man therefore purge himself from these (sins), he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.*"

All you have to do is to spend time in God's Word, fellowshiping with Him. He will

cleanse you of that sin and remove that evil thinking from your heart. He will make you into a vessel of honor, meet for His use. Then He can entrust you with His riches.

At times God has told me, "I can trust you with a greater anointing and with more finances now." At other times I have had to prove I was ready for more.

The day I left Kenneth Copeland's organization to launch into my own ministry I wasn't preaching before crowds of 5,000 to 15,000 people as I do now. Thank God! I wasn't immediately made responsible for hundreds of thousands of dollars. I couldn't have handled it. That's why some preachers go bad. God begins to advance them, they begin to progress, then they get their eyes off God and on things. That's when they start going downhill. I have learned *Consecration—Key to Prosperity*

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from others' mistakes. I have watched what has happened to those people and learned how to avoid those pitfalls.

I didn't enter the ministry to get rich. I'm not preaching for wealth. I'm preaching because I have compassion for humanity. I am a messenger of God, and I want people to know they don't have to live in bondage. Anything I

get as a result will be God's doing, not mine. I couldn't care less about being a millionaire. You see, I know my heart. And that's the key. You need to search your heart and find out what your motives are. If you have a pure heart and are sincere before God, you will prosper because God can trust you.

Some people have been suppressed financially over the years, but in that suppression they have proven themselves honest before God. God will not let such folks remain suppressed. Then there are others who have had all they wanted of this world's goods. They have been selfish and greedy with them. They will find themselves becoming abased, being brought down. Why? Because it's law: "*Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted*" (Matt. 168

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23:12).

The rich young ruler had this kind of wrong attitude toward things. His trust had turned from God to riches. He could not let go of them to follow Jesus. He had become a slave to his wealth. That really constitutes idolatry. Money can become an idol—a god—to people. You see, God is the Most High God. The Bible says He is

a jealous God. (Ex. 20:5.) He will not allow Himself to be shared with any other god. He will not accept a divided heart from His people.

Trust God's Laws of Abundance

When Jesus instructed this man to dispose of his possessions, He did not intend for him to remain poor after he had given everything away. In fact, for that man to have remained poor after obeying Jesus' commands would have violated the laws of God. Proverbs 19:17 says, "*He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again.*" He would have gotten it all back again because it is the law of God. In Psalm 89:34 God said, "*My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.*"

Jesus wanted that man to put his trust in

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God, not in riches. Evidently his trust in riches was so strong that the only way to break it was to have him give it all away. Jesus knew what it would take for this man to put his trust back in God. He required that he sell what he had, give the money to the poor, and follow Him.

Jesus is not asking us to stay broke. He is asking us to leave all and serve Him. If we do that, He won't allow us to remain in need. For

Him to do so would violate God's law. Jesus was offering this gentleman the greatest financial venture (and adventure) of his entire life. If he had done what Jesus commanded, putting his trust in God and not in his riches, God would have seen to it that he got back exactly what he had given away. And he had great possessions. All of it would have come back to him. But that's not all. God has an even better deal for those who are obedient to Him.

Jesus said, "If any man will forsake all for My sake and the Gospel's, he will receive a hundredfold in this life." But this fellow was shortsighted. All he could see was what he had right in front of him. He blew the best deal he could ever have been offered.

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Perhaps you have done the same thing. It's regrettable, but it's not unalterable. It can be changed. The moment you prove to God that your trust is in Him and not in your possessions—the m o m e n t y o u demonstrate that your heart is sincere and pure, that your life is totally dedicated to Him, that you can be trusted ". . . because you are pursuing Him and not things . . ."—God will begin to pour out His

blessings upon you. He will continue to pour them out on you, more and more and more.

Seek First the Kingdom

I know businessmen all over the country who were once striving to become wealthy. Their life's goal and ambition was simply to be a success. Their business became an obsession with them. It became their god.

Then they met the real God and made Jesus the Lord of their life. Their attitude changed. They decided, "I'm not going to let this thing give me ulcers. I will do what is necessary to run this business, but I'm going to serve God first." They started serving God, and God began to bless their business. God could trust them. They would take that increase and invest it

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wisely in the poor, in the needs of the saints, and in the ministry. So God keeps blessing their business, and it keeps growing.

The more God can trust a person, the more that person is going to get. That's the way it works.

But we have to give trust if we expect to be trusted. If we want God to trust us with His riches, then we have to trust Him with ours. If we want God to bless our business, then we

have to "be about our Father's business."

It stirs me to put my trust in God. It stirs me to keep Him in first place, to keep my heart pure, to keep myself in a position where He can always trust me. As long as He can trust me, I'll never go without. My God will supply all my needs from His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

(Phil. 4:19.)

How I wish my critics would read this book, all those who criticize me and this message of divine prosperity! How I wish they could realize, once and for all, that we "faith teachers" are not preaching a "get-rich-quick" scheme. We are not trying to trick people out of their money, or to teach them how to acquire things for themselves. That isn't God's message,

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and it isn't our message. Principles like the hundredfold return are not set up by God to be used to fulfill the lust for things. Too many of God's people are violating God's laws, trying to make this thing work for them in a way that God never intended it to work. If we don't do it God's way, it won't work. God is not seeking a greedy, selfish, "get all we can" people; He is seeking a peculiar people, a royal people, a people who have their minds on Him

and not on things.

Be Willing to Learn

Jesus never implied that those who follow Him are to live in poverty and lack. He didn't require that of any who followed Him when He walked this earth in the flesh. It was not His intention to deprive the rich young ruler of his wealth. Neither was it His intention that the disciples live as paupers. He was careful to point out to them that anyone who had given up anything to follow after Him would receive that thing back a hundred times over.

Why

w e r e n ' t t h e d i s c i p l e s

immediately rich? Because they didn't learn everything overnight. Peter had a hard time

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getting all this straight, and I'm sure the others did too. Even Abraham didn't learn everything in one night. Abraham was brought up in a home which knew about Jehovah, but his father was an idol worshipper. That's one reason God told him to leave his kindred and his father's house. Abraham did leave, but he took his father and Lot along. They moved to another city and stayed there five years. Abraham didn't leave his own country, as God had told

him to do, until his father had died.
Abraham didn't know much about the
Jehovah God. It was in Genesis 12 that he set
out, but it wasn't until Genesis 17 that God
revealed Himself to Abraham as *El Shaddai*.
Abraham had to learn about God. He didn't
know anything about faith. He had never lived
this way before. The beautiful part of the story
is that Abraham was just like us, yet he became
the father of faith. He made mistakes, he failed,
yet *God vindicated him when he*
consecrated his life to Him. God called
Abraham His friend, the father of faith. If
Abraham, with all of his mistakes, could become
the father of faith and the friend of God, surely
you and I can become something in this world,
if we will do what he did.

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Abraham had to learn, just as Peter had to
learn. And he did! Abraham was very rich, very
blessed. Genesis 24:1 says, "*And Abraham was
old, and well stricken in age: and the Lord had
blessed Abraham in all things.*" In all things.
Because Abraham learned, because he was
obedient and faithful, God blessed him in every
way. That same blessing is ours today if we will
be obedient and faithful disciples (learners) of

Jesus Christ.

Like Abraham, the disciples didn't learn it all overnight. But, thank God, they learned it. They dedicated themselves to God. It thrills me to read about Peter in the book of Acts. He acted just like Jesus. He did the same works Jesus did, with the same results. God blessed Peter, even with all of his blunders, mistakes, and failures. Why? Because Peter was willing to learn.

Receive God's Blessings

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

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Mark 10:29,30

There is a key word in this scripture. The word is **receive**. Notice that the blessings of God are received, not pursued. If your desire is to become rich, you are headed for trouble. If that's your goal, you are headed down a hard road. Those who seek to simply please their God receive wealth and riches and blessings. Such people don't strive after riches; they are conferred upon them.

If you will learn this simple fact, it will remove the struggle from your life. Have you ever been in need of things, and it seemed that you just struggled and struggled trying to get them? Well, I want you to do something. **Over the next thirty days, don't try to get anything else you need; just be a blessing every moment that you possibly can. At the end of those thirty days, write and tell me about the blessings that have come upon you. Tell me about the struggles you *didn't* have.**

Blessings are received, not pursued. Jesus said, *"But he shall receive"* That's affirmative. Jesus is teaching us here that our trust must be in God, not in riches. Even though riches belong to us, God wants our trust in Him. Jesus

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said in Matthew 6:24: *"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon (or riches)."*

You cannot serve both God and money. You will either serve one or the other. If your allegiance is to riches, it's not to God. If your love is toward riches, it's not toward God. Your carnal mind will try to reason away your love

for money, saying, "You don't love money, you just need it. You really love God." Your mind will justify evil, but your heart won't go along with it. Your heart will convict you.

The voice of the heart is sometimes called the conscience. The Bible even talks about the conscience being seared as with a hot iron. You can go against the convictions of the Holy Spirit in your heart for so long that you can actually sear your conscience. You can negate the voice of your conscience so that it won't even talk to you anymore.

Some people have done wrong and have justified it for so long that they have seared their conscience. They don't even hear from their spirit anymore. It takes a supreme act of *Consecration—Key to Prosperity*

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God to get such people straightened out. But, even then, all they have to do is to say, "Lord, I'm through. I'm inviting You to take over." He will be there in a moment to do so.

Pursuing riches will only hinder us from enjoying real Bible prosperity. I want to give you an example of a man who had prosperity on his mind and what happened to him as a result.

Then all the people of Judah took Uzziah,

*who was sixteen years old, and made him king ...
And he did that which was right in the sight
of the Lord ...*

*And he sought God in the days of
Zechariah, who had understanding in the
visions of God: and as long as he sought the
Lord, God made him to prosper.*

2 Chronicles 26:1,4,5

Notice that last sentence: "As long as he
sought the Lord, God made him to prosper." Some
people say, "Just because you serve God is no
guarantee you are going to prosper!" Is that
what the Word says?

*And he went forth and warred against the
Philistines, and brake down the wall of Gath,
and the wall of Jabneh, and the wall of Ashdod,
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*and built cities about Ashdod, and among the
Philistines.*

*And God helped him against the
Philistines ...*

*Also he built towers in the desert, and
dugged many wells: for he had much cattle, both
in the low country, and in the plains:
husbandmen also, and vine dressers in the the
mountains, and in Carmel: for he loved
husbandry.*

Moreover Uzziah had an host of fighting men ...

The whole number of the chief of the fathers of the mighty men of valour were two thousand and six hundred ...

And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones.

And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong.

But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God.

2 Chronicles 26:6,7,10-12,14-16

Not only was Uzziah prospered, he was Consecration—Key to Prosperity

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very strong " *for he was marvellously helped*" by the Lord. He received honor and glory. His name was spread far abroad. Yet by reading the rest of the story, we see that Uzziah turned his trust from God to his own strength, to his own riches, and ended up in a sad condition. In Deuteronomy 8 God warned the children of Israel that when they had settled in the

Promised Land and were prospering, they were to remember the Lord their God, that it was He Who had given them power to get wealth.

Uzziah didn't do that. As a result he was struck with leprosy, cut off from his throne and his family, and died in shame and agony. (v. 21.)

In chapters 25 through 35 of Genesis, we read about Jacob, the grandson of Abraham. He was already entitled to blessings because he was the seed of Abraham. However, he had an older brother named Esau. As the eldest son, Esau had a birthright. Jacob desired to be rich. He had seen the prosperity of his grandfather Abraham, and he wanted to be like him. The only problem was that Jacob didn't want to do what his grandfather had done to receive that prosperity. He didn't want to consecrate his life to God. Jacob put riches and prosperity above God. He sought them first. Because of his lust

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for wealth, he would do anything to obtain riches.

Jacob bargained his brother Esau out of his birthright and deceived his father Isaac into bestowing Esau's blessing upon him. As a result of his deception and his cunning ways, Jacob was forced to flee from his enraged brother. He

had to leave home, never to see his mother again. (Seeking the wrong thing will get you into trouble.)

Later Jacob settled down in a certain area of the country. There he saw a woman he desired. Her name was Rachel. Her father said Jacob could have her in marriage in exchange for seven years of labor. So Jacob worked that seven years for Rachel. When the time was up and the bride was given, it was Leah, not Rachel, that Jacob got. Jacob was tricked into working seven long years for a woman he didn't want. Then he had to agree to work seven more years for Rachel.

While he was working that fourteen years for his father-in-law, his wages were cut back ten times. Jacob was learning a hard lesson about deception: "Deceive, and thou shalt be deceived." He had to pay dearly for the trickery

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he had practiced against his father and his brother. You see, dishonesty won't work. Impurity of heart won't work. Deception has a way of falling back on the head of the one who practices it. Jacob had wanted riches, but he ended up working for a man who deceived him and reduced his wages continually.

It was not until Jacob had an encounter with the Lord and wrestled with the angel that he began to prosper. The only reason he was wrestling with that angel was because he was fleeing for his life. He had heard that his brother Esau and a company of 400 men were out to kill him. You see, this fellow had hard times. He had to learn commitment the hard way.

After he had met that angel and wrestled with him, Jacob became a new man. He was changed. To mark that transformation in him, God gave him a new name. *Jacob* means "deceiver," so God called him *Israel*, "the prince of God." Jacob had an experience with God. But it was not until he had put God in first place in his life, as his grandfather Abraham had done, that Jacob became a prosperous man.

Later in his life when he was returning to

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his own country laden down with possessions, he could say to his brother Esau: "*Take, I pray thee, my blessing that is brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me, and because I have enough*" (Gen. 33:11).

Jacob had made a vow unto God, and God blessed him. God increased his substance and

prospered him. What kind of vow did Jacob make to be so blessed by God? The Bible says in Genesis 28:20-22: "*And Jacob vowed a vow, saying ... of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.*"

Can you see the key to prosperity here? It's total dedication to God. Seek God, not riches.

Be Not High-Minded

In 1 Timothy 6:9-11 the Apostle Paul warns the Body of Christ against pursuing wealth and riches and putting them before God.

But they that will be (want to be, try to be, desire to be) rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through Consecration—Key to Prosperity

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with many sorrows.

But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

We see clearly that those who seek after riches have erred from the faith and will pierce themselves through with many sorrows. But we are not to follow their example. We are to learn

from it and save ourselves from their unhappy fate by keeping our hearts pure, by following after righteousness, and by allowing the fruits of the Spirit to operate through us.

Some people think that God wants us to follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness—and be broke. But you will not be broke by following after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, and meekness. Let's look at verse 17 of 1

Timothy 6:

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches.

Notice that riches are uncertain. You can't depend on money. About the time you think, "I have \$5,000, I can buy me a car," they go up to \$12,000!

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Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.

Isn't that amazing? I don't love money. I don't pursue riches and wealth. I follow after righteousness, peace, love, patience, meekness—and God gives me richly all things to enjoy!

Richly all things. Does that sound like those who totally dedicate their lives to God will go without? No! God has said, "If you will serve Me, I will give you richly all things to enjoy."

Jesus said the same thing in Luke 12:

Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on ... Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things ...

Fear not little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Luke 12:22,30,32

If we put our total trust in God, our days of worry about prosperity and material necessities—food, clothing, shelter—are over.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded.

If you make up your mind to totally

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consecrate your life to God, then you will be blessed. Proverbs 10:22 says, "*The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich.*" So, I hereby charge you, rich person, don't get highminded!

That's what happens to some people after the blessings start coming on them. They get high-minded and begin to trust in the riches more than in God.

Verses 18 and 19 of 1 Timothy continue:

(Charge them) that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.

Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

The richer you get, the more God expects of you. I get amused sometimes by the people who come to me and say: "Brother Savelle, would you pray for me? I'm believing to have a prosperous business, and I'm really going to put some money in the Gospel when it all happens."

I ask, "How much are you putting in now?"

"None. I'm waiting for this to happen first."

"Then you won't do it then either."

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"But, Brother Savelle, if you'll just agree with me that God will bless this business deal, I'll really put some money in the Gospel. If this deal goes through, I'll have thousands of dollars, **and** I'll put the tithe into the Gospel."

Friend, if you had only ten dollars yesterday, but today you have seventy-five, you are richer than you were, and God expects you to do good with that increase.

God wants the rich to be rich in good works. That's why He made them rich. He doesn't want them to be highminded, going around with their noses in the air saying, "I got mine. Let them get theirs." God wants them to be rich in good works, ready to distribute. That is divine prosperity.

God wants us to be distributors. As we increase in blessing, we are to be ready to distribute and willing to communicate. In so doing, we lay up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come. As we give, we build up reserves for ourselves upon which we can draw in our times of need.

Be a Giver

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We are to be a blessing. We are to be generous givers. No matter how much or how little you have to give, be a giver. God will increase your substance so you can give more. Remember, **giving is the essence of living**. It's the basic element of life. When we are blessed, we are to give. Proverbs 10:22 says, "*The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it.*" As God's blessings come upon us and make us rich, we are to be rich in good works—ready to distribute, willing to

communicate. It's the law of God to give. Life is centered around how much of ourselves we can give out, not how much we can get.

In 2 Corinthians, chapter 8, we read about a group of people in the Church who were in deep poverty. They had tremendous trials and afflictions. The Apostle Paul said they didn't have anything to give, so they gave themselves for the ministry of the saints.

Never say, "I don't have anything to give."

There's always you. That's what God wants more than anything else—**you**. God wants you before He wants your money, your house, your car, or any of your possessions. You may not have any material things to give, but you can

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always give yourself.

"Well, what can I do?"

You can be a help to somebody who needs a helping hand. You can clean house, or fix a roof, or babysit children, or nurse a sick child, or visit with an old person who is lonely. There are a thousand ways you can give without giving money. You can do something. God will honor that giving just like it was money.

Sometimes we think that if we don't give money, God won't honor it. That's not true.

Give, and it **shall** be given unto you. "As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6:31).

Ephesians 4:28 tells us:

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Once again we see expressed the essence of living: giving. We are to work with our hands. We are to labor. The very motive for our laboring and working with our hands is that we may have something to give to those in need.

Somebody asked me, "What is all this

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giving going to do for me?"

People tell me all the time, "Well, Brother Jerry, you know I can understand how people would give to you, you're in the ministry.

People are used to giving to ministers. But I'm a businessman (or teacher, or housewife, or clerk, or salesman, or whatever). People don't give to me. I'm not a nonprofit organization like you are."

I'm not either. I'm a working man, just like you. I have a job just like you. The money we receive in offerings or through the sale of tapes

and books goes into a non-profit organization of which I happen to be president. I am not that organization. I just work for it. I am paid a salary just like any other working person. Most of the time that salary doesn't cover all of my needs. When that happens, I can't just go into the office and say, "I need ten thousand dollars, so I'm going to take it out of the ministry funds." That's illegal.

I'm not an embezzler. I have to believe God for my needs, just like you do for yours.

"What about all the money that comes into your ministry through offerings?"

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It goes into a corporation. We have a fairly large staff of people, and each is paid a salary, including me.

I conduct meetings. People have an opportunity to give free-will offerings. We sell tapes and books. But I don't receive one dime from any of these sources. All these funds go into the ministry. I don't get a "cut" or a "percentage" or royalties or a commission. Therefore, God has to do miracles for me personally, just as He does for you.

"Then how does God get things to you?"

In miraculous ways, unusual ways. The

only difference between me and some other people is that I believe He'll do it. They are convinced He won't because they are not in the ministry. I'm convinced He will do it for me, not because I'm in the ministry, but because I'm in His will! God is no respecter of persons. What He will do for one of His children, He will do for another if that child will believe. In Luke 6:38 Jesus said, *"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom."* Evidently God uses men to give to us.

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Jesus didn't say, "Give, and if thou art in the ministry, men shall give unto your bosom." I don't care what your job is or what mine is, both of us have to act on God's Word. I expect God to work miracles for me just like you do. *Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;*
With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:
Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Ephesians 6:6-8

Let's rephrase that a bit: "Whether he be Jew or Gentile, male or female, black or white, young or old, manager or laborer, owner or worker, preacher or layman." It doesn't make any difference what you are or who you are. Regardless of your social status, economic class, educational level, age, race, sex, or occupation, God says that whatever good thing you do for somebody else, you shall receive the same of the Lord.

Let me give you an example of how God gets things to people who need them. Have you

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ever been in a store to pick up something and think, *You know, Mary could use one of those too. I think I'll just get that and give it to her.* That's an example of your giving into someone's bosom.

You might say, "But nobody ever thinks of me like that."

Are you doing any good for anybody else?

Start doing good things for others. God has said that the same will be done unto you. If you help somebody, God will see to it that you get helped.

You are not doing good works to impress

God. **You impress God when you choose Him.**

You're not trying to do good works to win merit from God. You are already His. He can't love you more than He already does. All you are doing is the will of God from the heart. You're doing good because that is the nature of God, and He has promised, "I will see to it that every good thing you do, the same shall be done unto you."

This is what creates divine prosperity. If we totally consecrate our lives to God, quit pursuing riches and things, seek God with all our hearts, and do good to everybody around us (even our enemies!), then we will begin to

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enjoy divine prosperity.

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I don't know why the Lord chose to reveal Himself to me in such a special way. When He supernaturally visited me in my hotel room that day in October of 1981, the Shekinah glory of God so filled the room that there was nothing I could do but stand in His presence. As I was standing there, the Lord said, "Son, My people are in financial bondage, and I want them out. I've given them the principles in

My Word by which they can prosper. But because of their disobedience and rebellion, because they have allowed a spirit of lethargy to come upon them, they are not the head instead of the tail and they are not above instead of beneath."

Then He told me, "I don't have another 200 years to free them of that bondage." According
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to God's timetable, this thing is about to wind up. God needs us free. He doesn't need us bound up financially, because we are responsible for financing the great end-time revival, the greatest revival this world has ever seen.

God is going to supernaturally intervene on our behalf and provide us with the abundant prosperity we will need to accomplish His objective in this age. If you will receive this message as from the Lord Himself, it will affect you. If not, it won't. The choice is yours. My sole purpose in sharing this message with you is to be obedient to God. I'm doing what God instructed me to do. What you do with it is between you and Him.

This message is working for me, and it will

work for you if you will believe it and act on it.
The decision is up to you. You can take it or
leave it.

God is going to move on our finances as
never before. If you believe this message and
participate in this plan, you will see the power
of God in operation in your finances in a
phenomenal way. Since October of 1981 when
God supernaturally visited me and shared

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these things with me, when He gave me the
keys to deliverance from financial famine, I
have experienced the greatest financial miracles
of my entire life and ministry. Not only has
God brought in more money, He has enabled
me to give more than ever before. And it's not
over yet. Some of the most astounding miracles
have happened to me and to those with whom I
have shared this message. Testimonies have
come from people all over the country
documenting these miracles.

God told me, "Son, My people are in
financial famine, and I'm giving you the
assignment to tell them how to get out." And
that's what I've been doing. I've set up meetings
in obedience to God to share these principles
with others. I've had the privilege of sharing

this message before crowds of thousands and have seen the power of God released as never before.

If you will be faithful with what God gives you, He will see that you get the desires of your heart. But if you think, *God is finally going to do a miracle on my finances so I can spend it on the lust of my flesh*, it won't work. That attitude is why many are in the situation they're in right now.

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Their minds have been on getting things. Because of their selfishness and lust, God has not been able to bless them as He wanted. Their priorities have been all wrong.

But, praise God, all that is changing. I am going to be obedient to God and go throughout the land telling God's people how to be delivered from financial bondage.

We Must Take Control

God said, "There are many things that must be accomplished before Jesus can come, and it's going to take an enormous amount of money to get it done."

One of the things that will happen in the near future is God's take-over of every form of mass communication. God is "fed up" with men controlling things that were made for the

Gospel.

Colossians 1:16 says " *all things were created by him, and for him.*" Television wasn't made for pornography. It was made for the Gospel.

God's people are going to take it over. If we can't buy time on TV, we'll just buy the station, or the satellite, or the whole network, if

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necessary! The Body of Christ will control the means of communication because God has said so. It all belongs to Him, and He will see that it is put into the hands of those who will use it for His purposes.

God delivered His people out of the hands of one pharaoh, and He hasn't changed. He is fed up with the Body of Christ being on the short end. He is fed up with the Body of Christ not being able to do what needs to be done. He is going to take action to see that the situation is remedied. And Satan can't stop it, if we won't let him. The Devil can't keep us from winning. It's time we take our rightful stand as God's kids and grow up. We don't have another 200 years to play around. We have wasted many years playing church. We have built monuments, stained windows, filled our sanctuaries with pews and fancy carpets, and

produced Sunday school quarterlies with teaching so watered down it sounded like *Reader's Digest* instead of the Bible! No wonder our younger generation didn't want any part of Christianity. With the double standards the adults presented and the double standards the pulpit presented, it's no wonder the young

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people rebelled against the Church.

But that same generation is going to put the Devil under their feet like no other generation before. When this group takes hold of the truth, they can't be shaken. It can't be taken away from them.

When I went into the ministry in 1969, pastors who had been Christians longer than I had lived got mad at me for being so bold. They didn't like it because I wouldn't agree with their religious traditions, because I dared to say, "By His stripes I am healed. My days of sickness are over." They actually became angry at me because I said, "I am redeemed from poverty. It's God's will that I prosper." They would swell up like toads and say, "Well, I'll tell you one thing, young man, when you've been in this thing as long as we have, you won't be talking like that. You'll find out what it's all about." At

the time of this writing, I've been in it twelve years now, and I'm getting bolder all the time! It's working better now than it did then. It's not getting less effective—it's getting more effective!

Some Christians got turned on to the Lord when Carolyn and I did. They made the same *Sowing in Famine*

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decision to live by the Word that we made. But they have gotten under pressure and quit. Some of them are still mad at us for winning. They're jealous.

After one of my sermons, a great big guy grabbed me by the collar and nearly lifted me off the floor. He said, "I want to tell you something. I don't like it one bit! I spent four years of my life in the seminary studying God's Word. But now I'm selling life insurance to pay my debts. You've never been to the seminary a day in your life. You've only been saved about three months. But you are preaching and God is doing miracles. I'm not seeing God do anything. I want to know why!"

Then I told him, "You know a lot about the Bible, but I'm **living** the Bible."

It isn't enough just to know what the Bible says. The key is to live it. And the most

important place to live it is not in the church;
it's in the home. It's time the Body of Christ got
fed up with the Devil running our lives and
with carnally minded men dictating to us.
The Body of Christ needs to become Joshuas
and Calebs. It's time we quit running around
with negative reports, feeling sorry for

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ourselves, weeping and wailing about how
tough life is. That's the world's testimony! If
you're fed up with the Devil, then tell him
where to get off! Then see that he does it!
God is fed up with the Devil controlling our
finances. Unemployment is higher than it's
been in decades. Probably a large percentage of
those unemployed people profess to be
Christians. That ought not be. There is a
monster in this land called inflation. It is
destroying homes and creating havoc all
around us. The whole world is experiencing it.
Half of the Christians you talk to are affected by
it, almost to the point of giving up. That ought
not be.

My Bible tells me that nothing shall
separate us from the love of Christ, not
tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or
famine, or peril, or sword, or principalities, or

powers, or things present (inflation is present), or things to come, or any other thing! **Nothing** can stop us from winning! **Nothing!**

No matter what kind of onslaught the Devil brings upon this earth, it shouldn't stop the Church of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "*Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell*
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shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). Nothing shall prevail against the Church that Jesus is building.

We Will Be Victorious

The day has passed when the Body of Christ is in the minority. The day has passed in which the world dictates to us what we can and cannot do. We've already proven to them that when we join together, we can't be beaten. It is exciting to watch the movement of God and the advancement of the Church of Jesus Christ in these last days. Friend, God is taking over. The Devil is resisting, of course. That's to be expected. He's going to fight. He has his evangelists running throughout the world, preaching his propaganda and stirring up trouble everywhere he can. But he will never get ahead of God. He can't win. He that is in us is greater than he that is in the world. We are

victors!

In the past, the Body of Christ has suffered financially, but that is about to come to an end. God is ready to make His move. He is not pleased to hear His people saying, "I wish I could do more for the Gospel, but I can't. I don't

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have it to give." He wants them to be able to do what He wants done. He will see that they have the means to do His work, if they will cooperate with Him.

When God visited me, He said, "Son, My people are in financial famine, and I'm revealing to you the keys to deliverance. I'm giving you the assignment to go tell them how to be delivered." As a result, I had to release the church of which I was pastor in Fort Worth, Texas. I have been on the road ever since. We have launched our national television ministry to get this message throughout the country. We are going worldwide with this message. God is divinely intervening in our behalf.

God's People in Bondage

Every time God's people, as a whole, have gotten into bondage, the only way they got out of that bondage was through divine intervention.

*Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father
in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock
to the backside of the desert, and came to the
mountain of God, even to Horeb.*

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto

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*him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush:
and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with
fire, and the bush was not consumed.*

*And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and
see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.*

*And when the Lord saw that he turned aside
to see, God called unto him out of the midst of
the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said,
Here am I.*

*And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off
thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon
thou standest is holy ground.*

*Moreover he said, I am the God of thy
father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,
and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for
he was afraid to look upon God.*

*And the Lord said, I have surely seen the
affliction of my people*

Exodus 3:1-7

Are you aware that God can see the
affliction of His people? God isn't surprised

with anything. Hebrews 4:13 tells us:

Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

God knows everything about us, even the

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number of hairs on our heads.

He knows *everything* about His people. He can see the affliction and bondage of His people. Hebrews 4:15 says, "*We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.*" Jesus knows how we feel. He knows the situation we are in. He is a compassionate and merciful High Priest.

In this passage from Exodus we see that God's people were in bondage in Egypt because of their disobedience. Egypt was not the will of God for His people. Bondage has never been the will of God for His people. Being dominated by the world and Satan has never been God's will for His people.

God said, "*I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt ..*" (In our time, in our generation, God has surely seen the financial bondage of His people.) ". . . *and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I*

know their sorrows" (Ex. 3:7). When you are financially bound, you are full of sorrow. When you can't do what you desire to do, when you can't give the way you want to give, it's bondage. When you stay up all night worrying about how you're going to pay those bills, that's

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bondage.

Some husbands are afraid to face their families at the end of the day because they don't bring home enough to meet the needs. Some families are so tormented by financial bondage that it is destroying their household. Financial bondage is one reason many men are in jail right now, men who otherwise would never commit a crime. They get under pressure because they don't have enough to sustain their families, so they steal or cheat or gamble to get it. And they end up in prison. That's bondage.

When members of the Body of Christ sit up at night worrying about finances, we've missed something. Something is wrong. Jesus told us to take no thought for those things because our heavenly Father knows we have need of them. He said that if we seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, all those things would be added unto us. It isn't right for the

Body of Christ to be filled with anxiety,
depression, frustration, defeat, and worry.
God promised that the blessings of
Abraham are ours. In Deuteronomy 28:1-14 He
assured us that we are the head and not the tail,
above and not beneath. He said He would bless
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the work of our hands, that we would be
blessed coming in and going out, in the city and
in the country. These promises are ours **now**. It
isn't right that any member of the Body of
Christ be suppressed by financial bondage.

Deliverance From Bondage

*"I am come down to deliver them out of the
hand of the Egyptians"* (Ex. 3:8). There comes a
time when our heavenly Father won't put up
with a situation any longer. As a parent, you
may overlook some mistreatment of your child
once, or even twice. But if someone keeps
hurting your child, you will intercede on his
behalf. If your child is being unjustly treated,
you won't stand by and allow it to continue.
If we take action on behalf of our children
when they are abused, why should it seem so
unusual that our heavenly Father would do the
same for His kids? Where do you think we got
that kind of protective love? We get the

similitude of our fatherhood from the Father
God. When God's children are being hurt, there
comes a time when He cries, "Enough!"

At one time in the history of the children of
Israel, the people cried out, "God, forgive us.

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It's our fault that we got into this bondage, but
please forgive us!"

The Psalmist tells us:

*Then they cry unto the Lord in their
trouble, and he saveth them out of their
distresses.*

*He sent his word, and healed them, and
delivered them from their destructions.*

Psalm 107:19,20

When God's people get fed up with being
lorded over by the Devil, they will cry unto the
Lord, "Father, forgive us for getting into this
mess. Forgive us for letting the Devil run our
lives. Lord, deliver us." And He will deliver His
people out of their bondage.

God told Moses, " *I am come down to deliver
them.*" It was bad news for Pharaoh when God
came down on him. He wished he had never
heard of *El Shaddai*. God showed Pharaoh that
He is the Most High God. Pharaoh thought he
could stand up to God, but he quickly learned

that he was no match for the Almighty. Neither is Satan!

God's Messenger

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I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites ...

Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them.

Come now therefore, and I will send thee ...

Exodus 3:8-10

God said to Moses, "I've come down, and I'll send thee." The Psalmist says that God sent His Word and healed His people. How did God get His Word to them? How was His Word sent? By a messenger. God sent a man named Moses to take His Word of deliverance to His people.

God sent a man named Oral Roberts to bring healing to our generation. Religious-minded men had pushed aside the doctrines of the Bible saying that healing had passed away, that the power of God was no longer in

manifestation, that miracles had passed away with the disciples. God's people were dying of sickness and disease, so He called Oral Roberts and told him, "Take healing to your

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generation." It was not an easy job to stand before the world and say, "God sent me to bring healing to this generation." But, thank God, he did it.

I have the greatest respect for Oral Roberts and for men like Kenneth Hagin who will stand and preach what God said despite the opposition and antagonism of people.

Regardless of the consequences, these men kept preaching the message. Today this nation knows about the healing power of God, and Oral Roberts is directly responsible for that knowledge. God used him as a messenger. He stirred up other messengers, then people began to believe and to preach that message.

I am healed today because one man took healing to his generation. I believed the message he preached, and I walk in divine health today because of it. God told one man, "I'm tired of My people being sick and dying prematurely. I'm tired of seeing My people oppressed with sickness and disease. Take

healing to your generation." And he did it.

I asked the Lord, "Why are You telling me these things? Why am I involved in this?"

"Because I can trust you. You've proven to

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Me that you don't care what men say, that you'll be My man regardless of what they say."

I haven't always been that way. I remember praying one time, "Lord, give me a greater anointing in my life."

But God said, "You're not ready for that yet. You don't know the price it takes for a greater anointing. You're too easily influenced by people."

Then He went on to explain, "For a greater anointing you have to obey My commands without hesitation. At this point you aren't willing to do that. You are afraid of what people might say if they don't understand your technique."

I wanted to pretend that it wasn't so, but you can't play games with God. I knew what He was talking about. The first time somebody said something derogatory about the way God told me to minister healing, my feelings were hurt badly. But through time and experience, I have learned to do what God says the way He

says to do it, when He says it ought to be done.
When I am obedient to His instructions,
miracles occur. When I'm not obedient, fearing
people's reaction or opinion, I fail. It's that

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simple. We must always be more concerned
about obedience to God than about public
opinion.

Our Lord Jesus was misunderstood, but He
didn't care what men thought.

Because of His obedience, He was highly
anointed. God said He chose me to carry this
message because I don't care what people think
or say. The message is this: God is going to
deliver His people from financial bondage. He
is coming down to deliver us. He said, "I have
come down, now therefore I will send you."

Moses said to God, " *Who am I, that I should
go ...?*" (Ex. 3:11). That's exactly what I said.

That is one of the most humbling experiences of
my life. It is a tremendous responsibility to be
chosen as God's messenger. I treat that call with
the greatest respect and honor. I have vowed
before God that I will never let His call go to
my head, but I will humbly fulfill the
responsibility and trust He has given me.

God told Moses: " *Certainly I will be with thee;*

and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt.. " (v. 12). Notice God didn't say "if," He said "when." I have been anointed and sent by

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God to bring you a message of deliverance from bondage. If you believe and receive this message, you **are** coming out of bondage.

God's Message:

1. I Will Bring You Out of Bondage

Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.

And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them?

And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

Exodus 3:12-14

I AM sent me to you. He is going to deliver you just as He delivered those people out of the bondage of Egypt. He took care of Pharaoh once, and He will do it again. This time our

oppressor's name is Financial Bondage, but Financial Bondage is no match for God any more than Pharaoh was.

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And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.

Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt:

And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt... And they shall hearken to thy voice ... And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not by a mighty hand. And I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders which I will do in the midst thereof: and after that he will let you go.

Exodus 3:15-20

You can be sure that the Devil isn't going to take this lying down. But he can't stop it from

happening. Pharaoh didn't take it lying down either, but the children of Israel came out of bondage anyway.

Notice how God accomplished their deliverance: by a mighty hand and wonders. It

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will take a mighty move of God to get us out of financial bondage. But, my friend, God has not forgotten how to move with a mighty hand. He split the Red Sea supernaturally. He drowned the armies of Pharaoh supernaturally. And He has not forgotten any of His techniques. He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. (Heb. 13:8.) He can drown Financial Bondage in our midst just as He drowned the Egyptian army. He can do it with a strong hand.

And I will give this people favour in the sight of the Egyptians: and it shall come to pass, that, when ye go, ye shall not go empty (v. 21).

Do you remember the story? When Pharaoh finally let the Israelites go, he stood and watched as the people, formerly his slaves, marched out in triumph carrying all the gold and silver which rightfully belonged to the Egyptians.

We are coming out of financial bondage!

We are going to march into the enemy's camp

and take back what belongs to us. The Bible says the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just and that it will eventually find its way into their hands. (Prov. 13:22 AMP.)

We are going to take back what Satan has

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stolen from us. That money belongs in the Gospel, not in pornographic movie houses. It doesn't belong in jet planes full of prostitutes and ungodly men. It belongs in the Gospel.

We can't reach the masses in only meetings, cassettes, and books. We have to get to them where they live—in their homes. That's why we must take over television. It will take a lot of money to do it, but we will have it. We are coming out of this bondage!

God's Message:

2. I Will Command My Blessing Upon You

The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

Deuteronomy 28:8

In His supernatural visitation with me, the Lord said, "I am going to divinely intervene in behalf of My people, and I am going to command My blessing upon them." I want you

to realize how powerful the command of God is. When darkness was covering the earth, it took only a command of God to remove that darkness. When the earth was without form
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and void, and darkness covered everything, God said, "*Let there be light: and there was light*" (Gen. 1:3). All God had to do to change the condition of this earth was to issue a command. It didn't take years. God spoke the word, and it came to pass.

God said, "I will **command** the blessing to come upon My people." All it would take to wipe out every financial debt is for God to say, "Financial debt, go!" God is capable of changing everything with just one word. That's how powerful He is.

Let them praise the name of the Lord: for he commanded, and they were created.

He hath also ... made a decree which shall not pass.

Psalm 148:5,6

When God commands, neither Satan, nor evil forces, nor even man can negate it. When God makes a decree, it stands. It is established. God is going to **command** His blessing upon you.

I am blessed because God has commanded His blessing upon me. Every time I turn around, I am being blessed. In fact, in Charlotte, North Carolina, when He gave me this message

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for you, God told me, "Son, I'm going to use you as an example to prove to the Body of Christ that when I command the blessing upon My people, lack is a thing of the past." Since that moment, I have experienced some of the most tremendous financial miracles of my entire life. More than ever before, I have been able to give into good works and to families that are in need.

Thus saith the Lord, Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away.

Isaiah 50:1

God is saying to us, "Don't blame Me for your situation. Your transgressions put you in bondage." Now notice verse 2:

Wherefore, when I came, was there no man? when I called, was there none to answer? Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or

*have I no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke
I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness.*

Do you believe that God is just as capable of
redeeming a people today as He was in the
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days of old? My God's hand is not shortened.
He is still quite able to save us from our
situation. Notice how He connects deliverance
and redemption with words: "*At my rebuke I dry
up the sea.*" To reverse any situation, God only
has to speak the word and it is done. To be
redeemed from financial bondage, all we need
is for God to speak. If that's the case, then I
want God talking to my money, don't you? I
want Him to speak to my finances.

Friend, we've listened to the world long
enough. We've listened to the news reporters
and commentators long enough. We've read
*Time, Newsweek, U.S. News, and the Wall Street
Journal* long enough. Now let's find out what
God has to say about this situation. He says, "I
will command My blessings upon you. All I
have to do is to speak to the sea and it will dry
up." Anyone who is capable of doing that can
surely change my economic condition without
any trouble.

But the question is: Do you believe He will

do that for **you**? If you believe He will, then act like it. God can turn the tide of events with a word. Jesus proved that one night when His men were about to drown during a storm at *Sowing in Famine*

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sea. To change those circumstances, He simply stood up in the boat and said, "Peace, be still." The waves stopped roaring, the wind ceased, and the sea calmed. The elements knew better than to disobey the voice of Almighty God. People ignore God; the elements don't. Jesus spoke and the elements obeyed. The men with Him were astounded and asked themselves, " *What manner of man is this?*" (Mark 4:41). That is exactly what the world will be saying as God begins to command His blessings upon the Body of Christ. Our God **can** do it. Our God **will** do it.

God's Message:

3. I Will Rebuke the Devourer for Your Sake

*I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,
and he shall not destroy the fruits of your
ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit
before the time in the field, saith the Lord of
hosts.*

*And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye
shall be a delightful land, saith the Lord of*

hosts.

Malachi 3:11,12

God told me that afternoon, "Son, tell My

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people that I will command My blessing upon them, and according to Malachi 3:11, "*I will rebuke the devourer for their sakes.*"

Satan cannot withstand God's rebuke. As believers we have the authority to rebuke the Devil. When you rebuke the Devil, you get bolder. But you never rebuke him until you get totally fed up with what he's doing to you. You put up with his harassment until you got tired of it. Then when you have taken all you can stand from him, you started rebuking him. Do you know what the word *rebuke* really means? "To address sharply, to reprimand."

God said, "I'm going to command My blessings upon My people, and I'm going to rebuke the devourer for their sake. I'm going to talk to their finances and command blessings to come upon them. I'm going to take care of the adversary for them while those blessings are coming upon them. I'm going to address him very sharply. I'm going to reprimand him. I'm fed up with his controlling their finances."

It excites me to know that God is talking to

my finances and that He is rebuking the Devil for me. When God rebukes, all hell trembles. In the book of Revelation, the voice of Jesus is

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described " *as the sound of many waters*" (Rev. 1:15). Have you ever been to Niagara Falls? The roar of those falls can be heard for miles. That's how it is when God speaks. At one time God spoke to Jesus from the skies and everybody thought it thundered. (John 12:29.) When God says, "Satan, I rebuke you!" all of hell and the principalities and powers of darkness reel under the force of that rebuke. As long as our God rebukes the devourer and commands blessings upon us, there is nothing the Devil can do to keep us in bondage.

The word *devour* means "to eat up, to consume, to destroy, to absorb completely, to swallow up." You see, that's what the Devil has been doing to our finances. He has been swallowing them up, absorbing them completely, to keep us in bondage. God has said, "I will rebuke the devourer for your sake."

God's Message:

4. Sow in Famine

Even in divine intervention, there is always

a condition that must be met. When God moves with a strong hand to deliver His people, there

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are conditions which must be met to receive that deliverance.

The Lord dealt with me about this. He said, "Son, I will command My blessing upon the people, and I will rebuke the devourer for their sakes. I will change their financial condition **if** they will do what I tell them to do."

When people are in famine and in financial bondage, they tend to hold back what they have. Fearing that they won't get any more, they look around at circumstances and get stingy. In times of famine, people start hoarding up. They withhold, which is the worst thing they can do in that situation. That is totally contrary to the principles of God's Word. Proverbs 11:24 says, "*There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.*" *The New International Version* reads: "*One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.*"

A time of famine is not the time to hold on to the little bit you have. That is the time you need to sow out of famine. That's how you get

out of famine—by sowing.

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God told me, "Son, if people will do what I'm telling them, I will give them the blessing of Isaac when he sowed in famine."

Let's look at that story in Genesis, chapter 26:

*And there was a famine in the land ...
And the Lord appeared unto him (Isaac),
and said, Go not down into Egypt (in other
words, "Don't run away from the famine");
dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of:
Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee,
and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy
seed, I will give all these countries, and I will
perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham
thy father ...
Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and
kept my charge, my commandments, my
statutes, and my laws.*

Genesis 26:1-5

Notice that in the midst of famine, God told Isaac not to run or be afraid of it, but to stay where He had told him to dwell. He assured Isaac that He would be with him and take care of him, even in the midst of the famine.

Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received

in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord

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blessed him.

Genesis 26:12

Isaac didn't withhold in famine. He sowed

in famine. He gave in famine.

And the man waxed great, and went

forward, and grew until he became very great:

For he had possession of flocks, and

possession of herds, and great store of servants:

and the Philistines envied him.

Genesis 26:13,14

God told me, "If My people will give in the same spirit that Isaac gave, by sowing in famine rather than withholding, I'll give them the blessing of Isaac." Then He said, "You start, son, and I'll use you as an example."

I too was in famine at the time. I didn't have all I needed and was tired of it. That year had been one of the hardest periods financially for my ministry. We stood on the Word of God constantly. There was not one day that we could let up. We had to keep our faith against that mountain every day. It seemed that the more I received, the more it would take. There was never enough.

God said to me, "Are you fed up?"

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I said, "Yes, I'm fed up."

He said, "Well, I'm fed up too. I'm going to command the blessing upon you and rebuke the Devil for your sake. If you'll do what I'm telling you to do, if you'll sow in famine, I'll give you the blessing of Isaac—and in the same year a hundredfold."

Carolyn and I sat down together and took ten checks out of our ministry, one from each of the ten major departments that were in famine. We wrote each check for a thousand dollars, a total of ten thousand dollars.

You might say, "You gave away ten thousand dollars? That doesn't sound like famine to me." It is when you need millions. Now if you only need five dollars, then ten thousand is abundance. But when ten thousand dollars doesn't come close to meeting your needs, then you are in famine.

Success to one person may not be success to someone else. Someone may say proudly, "I made a hundred thousand dollars this year."

But to the person who normally makes five hundred thousand a year, that's famine.

I was in famine. And I was fed up with it.

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So Carolyn and I wrote out those ten checks for a thousand dollars each. We needed that ten thousand dollars desperately; but we sowed in famine, in obedience to God. God was going to command the blessing upon us and rebuke the devourer for our sake.

The blessing of Isaac was going to come on us.

Then Carolyn and I took a thousand dollars from our own personal account, the last thousand we had, and sowed it in famine. God had told me, "I will use you as an example to prove to the Body of Christ that I will do what I say."

Within one week (not one year, but one week—seven days), God gave me an airplane worth \$150,000 for which I owe not one thin dime! The next night I was given a check for \$100,000 for the evangelistic ministry. Then I received another check for \$10,000. And it has never stopped! In one week's time, over a quarter of a million dollars came to me!

Isaac sowed in famine and received a hundredfold return. God told me to tell you that He is going to give you the blessing of Isaac. You don't have to be a preacher for this to

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work for you. All you have to be is a believer.

I preached this message in a church in Oklahoma City. The people took it and acted upon it, sowing in famine, in their need. Later the pastor asked how many in the congregation had received financial miracles since they sowed in famine. Over 75% of his congregation stood to their feet! Over 75% of that church had received financial miracles because they had sowed in famine. That is a documented fact.

A woman called our office and said she had been trying to sell her house for months. She got tired of it taking so long, so she sowed in famine. Her house sold the next day. That, too, is a documented fact.

I could go on and on. My files contain a folder full of such documented testimonies. God is commanding His blessing upon His people!

Are **you** living in famine? Do **you** believe that God is no respecter of persons and that what He has done for me and for these I have mentioned, He will do for you?

In Exodus 35:4,5 we read these words:

And Moses spake unto all the congregation

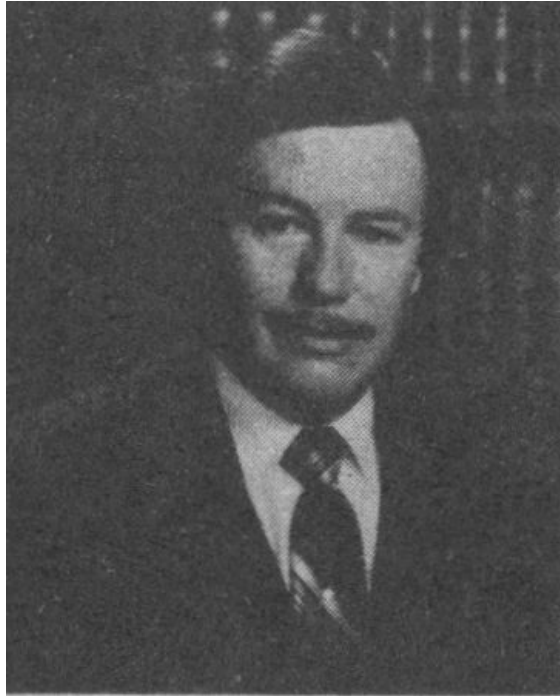
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of the children of Israel, saying, This is the thing which the Lord commanded, saying, Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord: whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord.

God wants a voluntary act of faith on your part. He wants you to be of a willing heart. If you will sow out of your need for the spread of the Gospel in these last days, God has promised that you will reap a bountiful harvest. Don't make this a one-time effort, but a lifestyle.

All God wants is an opportunity to command His blessing upon you and to rebuke the devourer for your sake. If you are of a willing heart and are ready to come out of your bondage, then sow, and sow, and keep on sowing. Your freedom is at hand.



Jerry Savelle is a noted author, evangelist, and Bible teacher who travels extensively throughout the United States. Jerry teaches the uncompromising Word of God with a power and authority that is exciting, but with a love that delivers the message directly to the heart. His down-to-earth approach and dynamic illustrations clearly present the absolute authority of God's Word.

At the age of twelve as Jerry was watching the healing ministry of Oral Roberts on television, God spoke to his heart and called him into the ministry. Several years later, on February 11, 1969, Jerry made Jesus Christ the

Lord of his life. Since that time, he has been moving in the light of God's calling on his life. Prior to entering his own ministry, Jerry was an associate minister with Kenneth Copeland Evangelistic Association.

The scope of Jerry Savelle Ministries is far reaching. Besides traveling throughout the United States, Canada, and other parts of the world, Jerry conducts a daily radio program, "Adventures In Faith."

The anointing of God upon Jerry's life is powerful, and people are set free as the Word goes forth unhindered.

For a complete list of tapes and books by Jerry Savelle, write:

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Jerry, for this is what the Spirit of the Lord would say to you, "You have supernaturally tapped into some laws of Prosperity that not many people know. YOU ARE A NEW TESTAMENT ABRAHAM AND YOU WILL WALK IN THAT. And remember this, it is God that gives you the authority, the right, the strength, the knowledge and the wisdom to obtain and walk in great financial blessing. I know your heart, Jerry Savelle, and because of it these great financial blessings will cause tens of millions of souls to come into the Kingdom of God, because of your unwillingness to compromise and your compassion for those that are lost."

Prophetic utterance given by Kenneth Copeland, Nov. 6, 1981
Philadelphia Victory Crusade

Jerry and Carolyn Savelle share the keys for deliverance from financial famine that God has revealed to them by divine intervention.



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