

*FROM CURSE TO COVENANT*

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**COVENANT**



**BY JIM O'CONNOR**

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*If you are tired of wishing and hoping to get lucky one of these days, perhaps it is time to understand there is a way to bring supernatural power into your life in the area of prosperity. Curse to Covenant will offer you new insight into the plan and purpose of giving and the relationship God desires between Himself and you. As it takes you into solid doctrine*

*You will find a new day opening through Scripture and the author's personal experience.*

*The reality of the relationship between the believer and God, concerning giving and receiving, is clearly explained as you enjoy this book. The biggest surprise is how it will forever change your image of God and His concern for you in your daily life.*

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# SHOULD WE TITHE?

One crisp fall evening, as I was preparing to start the weekly Bible study in Montana, USA, a Christian who loves the Lord and has served God faithfully for many years asked me a question. She shared how she and her husband had gone to church the past Sunday, and as the pastor proclaimed they owed God their tithe, she became uncomfortable with this. She then asked me why this troubled her inside and asked me to explain the tithe in relation to the New Testament. I knew she was a mature Christian who solidly understood who she was in Jesus Christ. She was not trying to find an excuse not to give but had honest questions about what she had heard about giving.

A month or so later, I was in the Philippines at a training session for pastors, where I observed the offering being taken. It was proclaimed without apology that we owe God our tithes and offerings. Referring to Malachi 3:10, the Pastor collecting the offering told everyone that withholding the tithe was to rob God. The pastors, who were all men of the Scripture, by inference, also knew that the verse proclaims a curse when we do not.

Upon returning to America, I was invited to lunch by another couple in my church. While waiting for the food to be served, the wife said, “My friend called and told me she doesn’t think tithing is in the New Testament.” I was then asked what the truth was. As I sat there, my mind returned to a morning so many years before when I had asked myself this same question. I remember confronting this as I moved from sleep to consciousness beneath borrowed blankets. I was sleeping on a concrete floor in an unfinished basement. A Christian woman had been kind enough to let us stay and eat her food while I tried to find work and support my family. As I lay there that cold morning and reflected upon a life of tithing and giving, I remember being so painfully aware of the tender young lives of my children sleeping close by. They were enduring the consequences of my beliefs.

We had just left the pastorate of a church I had successfully pioneered in Valier, Montana, USA. We had raised up a church and school and saw God’s grace and anointing do mighty things. During this same time, I also experienced a Christmas in which the children had no presents. There were times when we had nothing but the government commodities that people gave us to eat; they had been given by others who would not eat them. During these periods of financial crisis, I faced the fact that there was more to tithes and offerings than I had been taught. Either God is a harsh father who demands a tithe from his people and sends the curse when we don’t, or I was missing something.

From this place of desperation, I began shifting and searching for the reality of God and the proper understanding of tithes and offerings.

The unique thing that separated my situation from that of other poor believers was that I had given beyond the tithe and even above and beyond what others would consider generous offerings. I had sold a successful business and given the money to the work of the Lord. From there, I continued to give beyond the amount traditionally considered satisfying to God.

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Over the past forty-some years, I have seen God bring me from poverty to abundance in business, ministry, and writing.

I have continued to seek the reality of a financial relationship with my Lord in study, prayer, and daily living.

From that cold, harsh morning as a poor young minister until today, I have lived in faith, seeking biblical truth and the proper perspective concerning tithes and offerings.

I am convinced that God desires to be real with us in our financial situations today, just as He desires to be real with us in spiritual things.

# WHERE, WHEN, HOW

Everyone knows we are to give. But from what perspective and for what reason? The where, when, and how seem to remain a mystery to many believers. Nowhere in the body of Christ can you find more confusing doctrine and teaching than in this area of tithes and giving.

**B**elievers going to church and attending special meetings, as well as watching ministry on TV, are amazed at the paradox of teaching that's out there. While one preacher is saying, "You shouldn't give so you can receive," the other preacher is telling you to "give to their ministry" and believe God wants only prosperity for you. Sometimes, we hear suggestions that it is more spiritual to be poor than wealthy. At other times, we get the impression that the preacher is saying that if you are poor, there is something wrong with your faith. The local Pastor tells you that the storehouse in Malachi 3:10 can only mean the local church, and you are being disobedient to give your tithe anywhere else. The next preacher is saying give where you are being fed. The next minister proclaims he has a direct revelation from God that if you give to his ministry, you will be blessed a hundred or even a thousand-fold.

No wonder so many are skeptical and turned off by the ministry's mere mention of money.

As New Testament disciples, some giving is required, but many of us today are confused about what that means and how it applies to the believer. We are not sure where the precise flow of God's divine will and blessing can be found.

I know Pastors and teachers who would rebuke openly anyone who would even suggest anything other than the blood of Jesus Christ justifies us before God, who will then proclaim, "You owe God your tithe." They read Malachi 3:10 as they prepare the people for the morning offering and reiterate the promise of blessing upon those who give and the curse of God upon those who don't. The believer sitting there, being full of the Spirit, senses something is wrong, but after hearing this for so many years, seeks to escape, so they dutifully tithe. They agree that they owe God their tithe to be accepted before Him. The believer responds to being told that God relates to them on the basis of their works. They have just been told this is true and that they owe the tithe to God. This dear one of God has just fallen from grace! They have moved from faith to fear! From covenant to curse! They have left their walk of faith and returned to the Law of Moses, where God has proclaimed that everyone who doesn't continue therein is cursed.

The well-meaning person up front, preaching that you must give your tithe (you owe it to God), is taking the believer out of the New Covenant of grace and returning them to justification by works of the Law.

It is a tragic reality that countless believers live with residual guilt in this area of giving. Instead of understanding the truth, they are now sealed into Christ. They live with an image of God, the scorekeeper, who they must come to with their money, or He will distance Himself from them. They spend their lives believing that God is not entirely pleased with them because they have not satisfied Him with their giving. This issue influences every aspect of their relationship. If God is relating to them based on works in this area, then He also must relate to them in other places based on performance.

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I realize that by now, many well-meaning ministers of God are becoming alarmed and perhaps even angered by the heresy that is sure to follow this kind of nonsense. In Jesus' name, I pray the wineskin of your previous teaching will be able to stretch enough for you to continue reading as we look at the proper Biblical perspective of tithes and offerings and bring this vital area of our lives from curse to covenant.

Before you put this book aside as being unscriptural, this book is a balanced, correct interpretation of Biblical giving from the proper perspective. Obedience to Scripture is both serious and imperative to those who want to live with the blessing of God in their lives. To those reading this book hoping to give less, you will be disappointed.

Once we have the proper perspective and begin giving in covenant, there is no limit to resources that will pass through us as we walk in communion with the Lord and His vision for us.

# THE LAW OF THE TITHE

**A**ny time we build, we must begin by clearing the rubble away from where we will start construction. This is necessary so we will have a solid foundation to build on. In nature, this is dirty, tiring work that is not as much fun as building the new.

Nonetheless, it is important work and needs to be done. So, let's begin removing some of the rubble of bad teaching and misunderstanding so we can build a balanced life of obedience and faith concerning our giving.

We will start by looking at the tithe under the Law of Moses.

In studying the Law of the tithe, we find in Leviticus 27:30-34 KJV that the tithe of the land and the herd belongs to the Lord and is holy to the Lord.

*And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord. And, if a man will redeem any of his tithes, he shall add the fifth part thereof. And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passes under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the Lord. He shall not search whether it be good or bad, neither shall he change it: and if he changes it at all, then both it and the change thereof shall be holy; it shall not be redeemed.*

*These are the commandments that the Lord commanded Moses for the children of Israel in Mount Sinai.*

We read in Numbers 18:24-28 KJV that God gave the tithe to the Levite.

*But the tithes of the children of Israel, which they offer as a heave offering unto the Lord, I have given to the Levites to inherit; therefore, I have said unto them, Among the children of Israel they shall have no inheritance. And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, thus speak unto the Levites, and say unto them, when ye take of the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them for your inheritance, then ye shall offer up a heave offering of it to the Lord, even a tenth part of the tithe. And this, your heave offering shall be reckoned unto you, as though it were the corn of the threshing floor and as the fullness of the winepress. Thus, ye also shall offer a heave offering unto the Lord of all your tithes, which ye receive of the children of Israel; and ye shall give thereof the Lord's heave offering to Arron, the priest.*

At this point, we could almost say, "I think I can live with this." But before doing this, we must remember that we cannot pick and choose which part of the Law we want to apply to ourselves.

It is an all-or-nothing covenant. In the area of finances, we still have to consider the temple tax, the offering of first fruits, the payment of vows, and the redemption of those things offered as holy unto the Lord. In fact, we are not finished with the tithe yet.

We find the next reference to the tithe in Deuteronomy 12:10-19, where God instructs the children of Israel that they are not to eat their tithe within their gates but only where He chooses to place His name.

*But when you cross over the Jordan and dwell in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to inherit, and He gives you rest from your enemies roundabout, so that you dwell in safety, then there will be a place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide. There, you shall bring all that I command you. Your burnt offerings, sacrifices, tithes, heave offerings of your hand, and all your choice offerings which you vow to the Lord. And you shall rejoice before the Lord your God, you and your sons and your daughters, your male and female servants, and the Levite who is within your gates since he has no portion, nor inheritance with you. “Take heed to yourself that you do not offer your burnt offerings in every place that you see; but in the place which the Lord chooses, in one of your tribes, there you shall offer your burnt offerings, and there you shall do all that I command you. You may not eat within your gates the tithe of your grain or your new wine or your oil, of the firstborn of your herd or your flock, or any of your offerings which you vow, of your freewill offerings, or the heave offering of your hand. But you must eat them before the Lord your God in the place which the Lord your God chooses, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, and the Levite who is within your gates; and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God in all to which you put your hands.*

*Take heed that you do not forsake the Levite as long as you live in your land.”*

This is again repeated in chapter 14, verses 22-29. Verse 28 seems to narrow this to every third year.

*You shall truly tithe all the increase of your grain that the field produces year by year. And you shall eat before the Lord your God, in the place where He chooses to make His name abide, the tithe of your grain and your new wine and your oil, of the firstborn of your herds and your flocks, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always. But if the journey is too long for you, so that you are not able to carry the tithe, or if the place where the Lord your God chooses to put His name is too far from you, then you shall exchange it for money, take the cash in your hand, and go to the place which the Lord your God chooses.*

*And you shall spend that money for whatever your heart desires: for oxen or sheep, for wine or similar drink, for whatever your heart desires; you shall eat there before the Lord your God, and you shall rejoice, you and your household. You shall not forsake the Levite within your gates, for he has no part nor inheritance with you. At the end of every third year, you shall bring out the tithe of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates. “And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand that you do.*

We now have a contradiction of Scripture concerning the use of the tithe.

In reference to the tithe in Numbers 18:24, God clearly indicates that the tithe was given to the Levites. Yet in Deuteronomy chapters 12 and 14, the people are instructed to eat the tithe and share it with the widows and orphans in the place God has chosen. This leads us to ask how many tithes there were.

Easton's Bible Dictionary tells us,

**EVERY JEW WAS REQUIRED BY LAW TO PAY THREE TITHES ON HIS PROPERTY**

- 1) One tithe for the Levites.
- 2) One for the use of the temple and the great feasts and
- 3) One for the poor of the land.

Fausset's Bible Dictionary says, "The general first tithe of all the animal and vegetable increase for maintaining the priest and Levites is taken, for granted; what is added in this later time is the second additional tithe of the field produce alone." "In the jubilee year, there was no tithe as the land enjoyed its Sabbath."

In the book of Tobit 1:7&8 (120-200 BC), we read they gave a third tithe to the poor.

Josephus, Ant. 4:8, section 22 (a 1st-century Jewish historian), also mentions a third tithe; so does Jerome (a 3rd-century historian).

Maimonides (1138-1204) denies a third tithe (which would be an excessive burden) and represents the second tithe of the third and sixth years as shared between the poor and the Levites. (See Selden on Tithes, 2:13).

Heinrich Ewald (German biblical historian, 1803-1875) suggests that the tithe was virtually voluntary for two years and compulsory in the third year. Thus, there was a yearly tithe for the Levites and a second yearly tithe for two years for the festivals, but the Levites shared this second tithe every third year with the poor.

Matthew Henry (1662-1714) taught only the first and second tithe.

Were there two or three tithes? Was the second one used the same every year? What about the third tithe? Some say there was, and some say there was not.

I think the answer to this is best said in The Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary: "Confusion exists about this, even among Hebrew scholars themselves."

When studying the Old Testament tithes law, we find ourselves unable to answer what exactly is required of us. This being true, we are in good company. These great scholars have never been able to agree on what is necessary to fulfill the commandment of the Law concerning tithes. There have always been differences in what is needed to bring us to a place of acceptance before God in this area.

As we study the rest of the Old Testament Scriptures concerning the Law of the tithes (not tithe), we see that God demanded that the people obey His commands to be in the right standing before Him.

It was a practice the nation Israel embraced in belief yet struggled in concerning practice. With this as our background, we can now put Malachi 3:9-12 in the proper context.

Let us correctly analyze what this Scripture is saying and to whom it was being said.

The book of Malachi was written to the nation of Israel, or to God's people, who were under the Law of Moses at that time. The curse referred to by the prophet concerning the tithes is the curse of the Mosaic Law. We find this recorded in Deuteronomy Chapter 28.

The prophet Malachi confronted the nation of Israel by stating that they had ceased to serve God under the Law as they were required to do at that time. One law requirement was for the people to give their tithes and offerings.

There are problems with taking this verse and saying we owe God our tithe. By giving a tithe, we haven't addressed the second and maybe even the third tithe required.

Another problem is what we imply; we do not owe God the other ninety percent.

The next issue is that we are separating giving from the rest of the law's requirements, which is simply not Scriptural.

If we don't continue in everything the law commands, we are guilty of all and under the curse. Galatians 3:10 says, For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, cursed is everyone that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

If we are going to be honest and correct, we must admit that if this verse of the law applies to us, the rest of the law must also apply.

Without even considering the rest of the Law, when we try to be correct and obedient to God and give the amount He requires and try to do so from the basis of tithe, we become increasingly confused and condemned. This leaves us insecure about whether we are being obedient, which in turn causes us to feel we are probably not pleasing God. The harder we try, the less we feel accepted.

**Yes! Yes! Yes!**

It has done what it is supposed to do! It ends our attempts to relate to God based on who we are and what we are doing.

Galatians 3:24 says, "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ."

We will never relate to God and find His favor or disfavor based on what we give or don't give. No matter how perfect we try to be and how much we give, in the end, we will fail and be condemned.

Under the Law of Moses, man's relationship with God is related directly to what he did or didn't do. If he did right and was obedient, then the law said he would be blessed; when he did wrong, he was under God's curse. Thus, we see a contract, or we could call it a bilateral agreement. If man was obedient to every requirement of the law, he remained in the right standing with God; if he was disobedient to one of the commands, he was then judged guilty of the entire Law and was under the wrath or curse of God. (Deuteronomy 28:15-68).

In some regions of the world, when you move there, it is not long before you are visited by a member of the local gang, the mob, or as they are called in America, the Mafia. It is then explained to you that if you give them a certain amount of money each week, they will leave you alone and not harm you. The people of the area live with a particular fear, knowing these people are in the area and they have the power to hurt you any time they choose.

Many of us have this concept concerning our Lord. When we first begin going to church, we are led to believe that the scriptures in Malachi still apply to us today. As we read them for ourselves, we find that we are cursed because we have not given God our weekly payment by paying our tithes.

From this point forward, we live with the tragic concept that this is how God is. He keeps track of how much we give; if it is not the right amount, He may punish us or teach us a lesson.

We are no different than the pagan religions of the world. We come to the altar with the tithe, or as they would call it, their sacrifice, so the angry God will not hurt or punish us.

Many of us carry within ourselves this concept of an angry God who lives with a negative image of us, and in His heart, He can never be fully appeased. Any time we hear an appeal for us to surrender and follow Jesus, we shrink back. In our subconscious inner man, we fear drawing near because we know when someone is angry, the further you stay away from them, the better. We feel if we stay low and do not do anything to upset Him further, we will be able to live without Him noticing us and hurting us.

Many believers live a life of torment. Not wanting to get too close to angry God or too far away, for fear He may visit them with punishment. This incorrect concept of our giving carries over to all other areas of Christianity.

We live with this being the basis of our relationship with God.

We need to correct our image of God and His attitude towards us. When talking to believers, it is amazing how many will confess they have a lingering impression that God is not completely satisfied with them.

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# OUR GOD OF JUSTICE AND MERCY

**W**hen Moses met with God on Mount Sinai, God proclaimed Himself, “the Lord God, merciful, and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty.”

God is perfect in love and perfect in justice. When Christ appeared before the throne of God in Heaven with His own blood (Hebrews 9:8), perfect justice was achieved. Jesus’s blood on the Cross paid in full the punishment of our sins and iniquities.

God eternal, our creator, has now looked upon the blood sacrifice of Jesus and is satisfied. Perfect justice has now been fulfilled.

We who have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior are now reconciled with all enmity forever removed! Our sins are forgiven, and our guilt is all gone! We now can say, *“There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear”* (1 John 4: 18.)

We are free to live without torment! We are reconciled to God!

Our Heavenly Father proclaims Himself merciful and gracious. We are now His children. He loves us more than we can ever know or understand. The All-Powerful Almighty God, who shows us kindness, love, joy, and peace beyond everything we can ever know, has taken us for His own.

Scripture tells us, “No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.” If we delight ourselves in the Lord, He will give us the desires of our hearts.

Our heavenly Father truly is a God of love and mercy. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross is the only way we can be accepted and pronounced clean in the eyes of God. We are free to quit adding our works to the finished work of Jesus. We will go again to the book of Galatians and ask ourselves, as Paul asked them, *“Are you so foolish having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?” No! We will never again relate to God from the basis of our performance, but rather, we will “stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Jesus Christ has set us free.”*

We now embrace the New Testament Covenant of Grace. Here, we repent of our own works and trust only in the finished work of Christ’s sacrifice. We rest in this place of total acceptance, which we now abide in through the blood of Jesus Christ.

A good example of the old and new covenant in relation to our giving can be seen in the example of a poor man and his master. Under the old covenant, the poor man goes to the rich master with his tithe, and after proving he has indeed paid it in full, he escapes the master’s anger, allowing him to labor another week. Under the new covenant, the master adopts the poor man as his son. The master then transfers all his wealth to a joint account and tells the poor man (now his son) that he has access to all the master’s riches (now Father) by faith. Romans 5:2 says, *“We have access by faith into this grace that we now stand in.”*

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# GRACE

**T**he new Covenant of Grace is not about what man must do to be right with God; instead, it is about what God has done for man to be right with Him! Romans 5:17-18 speaks of the gift of righteousness that brings us to the justification of life. In other words, the only righteousness we can ever have before God is that which we receive through our faith in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross. Our attempts to be righteous are no more than filthy rags. The Cross not only brings us to the place of being forgiven and redeemed, but it also imputes or transfers the righteousness of Christ Himself upon us.

Our righteousness or right standing is now sealed by the blood covenant. We are now the sons and daughters of God!

We must cease trying to become right with God and start living in the truth of who we already are.

For us to believe God relates to us through our works, such as giving, we must turn from our belief in the finished work of the Cross and “fall from grace.” Paul explains this in Galatians 5:4: *“Christ has become of no effect to you, whosoever of you who are justified by the law; you are fallen from grace.”*

God will never again relate to us based on what we are doing but only based on what Christ has already done. We have received the gift of Jesus Christ’s righteousness, and never again will our place before God be determined by our works. True righteousness that God accepts can never be earned or found outside of faith in Christ. Once we are in Jesus, we know that if God ever received anyone and declared them clean and received, He has also done the same for us.

Hebrews 9:12 tells us that Jesus appeared before the eternal courtroom in Heaven. There, before almighty God, He presented His innocent blood and provided eternal forgiveness and adoption for us as sons and daughters forever.

Isaiah 53:11 tells us that God looked upon the sufferings of our Savior Jesus Christ, and He was satisfied.

We can now rest in faith, knowing we are perfect in God’s eyes.

We no longer wonder what God’s heart or attitude toward us is. We will always be loved and received as God’s sons and daughters! Our faith now justifies us!

We must change the image we have of who we now are.

We can never again see ourselves from a natural perspective. Second, Corinthians 5:16 tells us, *“Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh.” Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, we know Him thus no longer. We must not look at ourselves from the natural but only from the Scriptural place we now inhabit in Jesus Christ.*

The same as it would be wrong for us to try to relate to Christ as a baby in a manger, a man among men, or as someone hanging on the Cross, so it is wrong for us to see ourselves as anything other than who the Scriptures tell us we now are in Christ.

This continues as we read verse seventeen: Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

The old man who relates to God based on what he is doing or not doing is now dead.

Colossians 1:13-14 tells us that once we are in Christ, we are qualified to be partakers of the saints' inheritance in the light.

He has (past tense) conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love. Almighty God, creator of the heavens and the earth, our eternal judge, now looks upon us as a new creation in Christ.

The work of the one man. Adam brought condemnation and judgment upon all men. Now, the work of one man, Jesus Christ, has brought forgiveness and reconciliation.

We must believe that God will never again look at the works of men, only the finished work of one man, Jesus Christ

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*THE CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST IS A FINISHED WORK*

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Ephesians 2:6 tells us we have been raised together and made to sit in heavenly places in

Christ Jesus. Revelation 1:6 tells us that Jesus's blood not only washes us from our sins but also makes us kings and priests to God and His Father.

In our minds, we want to protest this and say, "*I know, but that is when I die and go to heaven.*" Oh, how our minds and natural man want us to disbelieve what is now true.

When we go to the original manuscripts, we find these are spoken of in the past tense. In other words, these are finished events. Here! Now! We will know no man after the flesh. We will rise up and be who we are in Jesus Christ!

My mind, my logic, my flesh, and my memory can no longer dictate to me who I am.

I must submit to Holy Scripture and believe I am who the Word tells me I am—a new creation in Jesus Christ.

God will never again see us as anything other than the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:16-17 tells us The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. We are now members of His household, as we are told in Ephesians 2:19: *Now. Therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners but fellow citizens, saints, and members of the household of God.*

The same as a young child comes in from play and joins the family for the meal; we, too, are now seated at the table of God the Father. We are a family with and in Jesus Christ. Sons and daughters of God! Joint heirs with Jesus! Children of the King!

Can you imagine the child sitting at the table wondering if his father was mad at him for not giving the right amount? Actually, the setting there questions the father's heart of love and whether the relationship is secure.

Today, we will know ourselves no longer after the flesh, but we will understand and live in the place Christ has lifted us to in Him.

Hebrews chapter four tells us we must labor to enter this place of rest: this place of security where we no longer wonder if we are justified and accepted before God.

We now know God loves us unconditionally, far beyond anything we can imagine.

The Cross of Jesus Christ is not our ticket in so our good deeds can keep us there. The Cross is the beginning of living a life of acceptance and relationship with the living God. We are now free to live, no longer wondering who we are, where we fit, or whether anyone can love us.

We are children of God!

We are members of His family!

He loves us with everlasting love and deems us precious in His sight! We now rest secure, embracing the one true God. We are children of our heavenly Father, who has promised intimacy and personal involvement with our daily lives.

Yes, this involvement even includes our finances.

We are now in Christ. Galatians 3:13 says, "*Christ has redeemed us from the law's curse, being made a curse for us.*"

This is a great moment because we are now ready to look at who God is and our relationship with Him. Galatians 2:20, I am Crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not frustrate God's grace: if righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

There is something in each of us that is forever trying to take the love and relationship that is ours in Christ Jesus and twist it into a life of performance and structure. We cannot do this. We must live and believe in who we are in Christ. 1 John 4:17 tells us that as He is, so are we in this world. Ephesians 5:30 says for we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

Let me repeat: From this moment forward, we will know no man after the flesh. We will replace our understanding of who we are here and now with the Biblical truth concerning our position in Christ today.

Oh, the unsearchable riches that belong to us now that we are in Jesus Christ! There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

We are forever justified!

Never again will we confuse justification with sanctification.

Justification is a finished event.

As we grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, we will continue in the process of sanctification. This is the same as a young child who is growing up. They have much to learn and change, but this has nothing to do with their birthright or relationship with their

Father. Justification of the spirit happens at the time of our conversion when we are saved. The sanctification of our souls occurs daily as we grow in grace and knowledge and are changed from glory to glory.

Under the Old Testament Law, God separated a group to be ministers between Him and the people. These were the Levites or the men from the tribe of Levi. They were set apart for the work of the ministry. In other words, there were two classes of people: priests and those who were not.

In the New Covenant, priesthood is obtained in the same way. We can only be priests by birthright. When we are born again in Jesus Christ, we become the High Priests of the New Covenant. We read in Matthew 27:51 and again in Luke 23:45 that as Jesus died on the Cross, the veil in the temple was torn in two, and the way into the Holies of Holies (the presence of God Himself) was purchased for us by Jesus' blood. The same is true when God chose the High Priest to enter the Holy of Holies once a year, so now we are chosen by God to enter His presence any time we choose freely. By the blood of Jesus, we now come boldly unto the throne of grace and find help in our times of need. This is known as the high priesthood of every believer.

In the New Testament, there is only one class of believers.

Scripture is very plain: We are all one in the body of Jesus Christ. It is also very clear in Scripture that Jesus is the head of the body. How tragic the church today so often reverts to the Old Testament pattern and operates as clergy-laity rather than as the functioning body Christ calls us to be.

The order of our priesthood is so clearly revealed when Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in the midst of them."

We are born through Christ into the highest priesthood that man can ever know. When we are gathered in His name, we are accepted and received as the high priests of God in the Holy of Holies.

# SEED FAITH GIVING

Okay! Okay! So, Malachi 3:10 is from the law, but what about Matthew 23:23 and Luke 11:42, where Jesus told the Pharisees when speaking of the tithes, *“These ought you to have done.” He was commanding us to tithe, wasn’t He?*

I will answer that at the risk of upsetting some of you.

**I**f we want to truly examine these verses, we need to be correct in our exegesis (interpretation). Here, Jesus is speaking to the Pharisees in the context of their time and place. At this time, the law was still God’s covenant with man. Jesus, in His ministry, always encouraged obedience to the law. In Matthew 23:3, Jesus encouraged the people to do what the Pharisees told them to do. We also find in Mark 1:44 and Luke 5:14 where Jesus instructed the healed man to go and offer the sacrifice to the priest required by the Law of Moses. To say we can apply the Scripture concerning tithing and not the one concerning obeying the Pharisees or the law relating to cleansing is to violate the correct exegesis of the Scripture. It was not until the Cross at the end of Jesus’ life here on earth that the Law was fulfilled.

I am not suggesting that Jesus was against tithing; I am simply being correct in interpreting these Scriptures.

Now that we have removed the law’s condemnation, we are ready to study everything Scripture says about tithes and giving.

Before we do this, I would like to share some of my testimony about my experiences with you.

When I was first a Christian, I was very bigoted towards any believer who had a lovely home or any number of possessions. How can anyone who says he loves the Lord live in a big house when the world needs food and the Gospel? In my pride, I was convinced that being poor was far more spiritual than being rich.

There were two things the Lord brought into my life that started me towards correction in this area. The first was when the Lord instructed me to purchase a home for my family. In looking at properties, the salesperson showed us a house much nicer than I had ever lived in or my parents or grandparents. I immediately felt like a witness to the fact that I was going to buy this house. The problem was that it went against my beliefs and image of myself as a poor man. In the coming days, every time I went to pray, the Lord would instruct me to buy this lovely home. I would argue with this and refuse to be like those other “less spiritual” people who lived in their nice houses. One night, the Lord would not let me move past this. After prayer and argument, I finally gave in and said, “All right, Lord, I will buy this house, but you know my finances, and I will have to use my tithe to pay for it.” My attitude toward the Lord’s process of blessing me was very negative. The following day, after saying yes, my phone rang, and a man I had talked to over six months before called me and hired me to manage the senior citizen bus. This paid the payment on the house for as long as I owned it.

The second thing that happened during this time concerned my Pastor. The church was in the city, and he lived in a lovely big house outside the city. I was very critical and judged him as less spiritual than me. I judged that God indeed wanted him to be more available to the people. One day, he shared with me the story of his house.

He said the Lord asked him one day why he had never asked for a home. He told the Lord he was okay living in the church and that he did not need his own house. The Lord then instructed him to ask for a home, so he did. Within a few days, some people from the church called him and invited him to their house. They then gave him the land his house was now sitting on. As time passed, a man dug the place for the basement, and then a man came with the cement. This continued until the home was built without him paying for anything. He said the only thing he paid for was the pretty rocks he purchased as a gift for his wife that were used to decorate the fireplace.

I was a Christian for many years before I came to the correct understanding of God's covenant with me in the area of blessing. God has a never-ending supply of everything, which is now available to us through our faith.

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*POSSESSING GOOD THINGS HAS NO EFFECT ON THE SUPPLY GOD STILL  
HAS AVAILABLE FOR EVERYONE ELSE.*

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God has a never-ending supply and has created us to live in abundance.

It was only after Adam sinned that man experienced need, oppression, sickness, and poverty.

Christ has come to destroy the works of the devil and to break our chains!

After leaving the church in Valier, I went through a time of being tempted to become bitter towards God. I found myself accusing him in my heart of being uncaring. Knowing the Word, I dared not voice this, but in my heart, it was there. From confronting myself with this wrongness and asking God to forgive me and cleanse my heart, I then turned my attention to the people. How could the people I was bringing to the Lord and ministering be so uncaring and insensitive to my family and our needs? Rather than becoming bitter towards the Lord, I found myself wanting to shift my anger and unforgiveness towards the people of the pastorate I had just left. In the following season, as I read the Word and prayed, I moved through the process of forgiving them because they were new to the faith. This was neither quick nor easy. I next found myself turning my bitterness and anger towards the church we had been sent out from and where we had returned. Even with me ministering and seeing good fruit, why were they unaware of my family's lack of the most basic daily needs? What was I missing, and why was I so alone with all of this? Through the process, I learned forgiveness and love and settled into the unscriptural acceptance that God may not be that involved in finances.

When I was asked to minister, I found myself preaching, "I want to know my bread and butter, Jesus," or as they would say in the Philippines, I want to know my fish and rice, Jesus. I did not need to hear more about the one who saved me because I was already saved. I did not care to hear about the one who would return and take me to Heaven; it was not my time to go yet. I wanted to know the God

who meets my needs and cares about me today. I felt guilty for not preaching the great things I had before, but I was not hypocritical enough to be dishonest and not confess where I was in my relationship with my Lord.

At that time, I was an assistant pastor for minimal pay, and also a salesman, and not a very good one. I was struggling with my legitimate daily needs. My children's needs for food and clothing were beyond the money I had at times. Such things as gas for my car and its license and insurance were huge. I still went to church, served the Lord, and gave my tithes and offerings, but I could not escape this place of never having enough.

I never realized our Christian life can be divided into two parts: the first, we receive by faith, and the second, we release through our faith. They sound so close, but there is a difference. Let me give you an example.

If I were to adopt you, I would invite you to come to my office, and there I would give you all my riches. So, by faith, you would knock on my door, and I would let you in. I would greet you with open arms, and we would sit and eat at my table. We would have fellowship and share our love. We would communicate and talk about our life together as we moved forward. Here, you would be received and perfect in my eyes by your faith in believing and accepting me as your Lord. This would be good, but you would have noticed I had invited you to come here and receive all my riches. In time, you would ask me where the riches you promised me were. I would like to remind you that I did not say they were in my house but rather in my office. You might ask me, aren't they the same? Isn't this the address you gave me? I would then tell you this is the correct address, but my office differs from my house. To enter my office, you must go through my house, out the rear door, and cross over to my office, which is a separate building from the house. You can only get to the office by joining me at my house. Then you can go through this door, and the same as you entered my house by faith, you must now, through faith, obtain my blessings found in the second place of my office.

We can read this through Romans Chapter 4, which tells us how our Father Abraham was justified by his belief in God and that God is who He proclaims Himself to be. His faith meant righteousness was imputed (transferred) to him, and he was justified before God.

In Hebrews Chapter 4, we read that we must struggle to enter this rest—to be seated in our hearts as accepted and justified by our simple faith in Jesus Christ.

Once we are in this house or position of rest with God, we are free to leave the house and, through our Faith, proceed to the office.

We read in Romans 5:1 that now, being justified by our faith, we need to pass through this second door where, through releasing our faith, we begin to walk by faith in obtaining what is now ours and freely given to us by grace. The chapter continues to inform us of the Tribulations we will go through as we fight the good fight of faith. It then brings us again to the perfect work of Christ and tells us in verse 17 that through our faith, we will know this abundance of grace, and we shall reign in life through the riches of Christ.

Entering the house is a gift freely given; obtaining the riches now is a gift that must be released.

Only kings reign in life. Thus, Revelation 1:6 tells us that He has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father. It does not tell us He will; rather, He has already done it.

You see, this power does not automatically come and change our life, but rather it comes as we, through our faith, apprehend it and release it.

When we read Ephesians 3:20, it tells us, *“Now unto Him that can do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.”*

It does not come to us; rather, it works in us as we release it through our faith.

I once spent over one year hardly having enough to eat or pay my bills. I lived in the house with my Lord and fellowshiping in love daily as I cried out to Him, “Please come meet my needs.” I did not realize I must go through the door and, by faith, receive God’s blessing and grace.

During this process of struggling, I traveled to another city for business. While I was there, I went to the Salvation Army thrift store to see if I could find some used clothes to buy. I was ashamed to do this in the place where I lived, for fear someone who knew me would see me. I was concerned they would realize how bad it was for my family and me. While in this store, I saw a used book titled Seed Faith Commentary of the Holy Bible by Oral Roberts. I purchased it for fifty cents (25 pesos) and took it home.

As I read this book, God started a new work in me. I was first confronted with my concept of who God is in relation to me and my daily needs. When I read the part about how a person will never fully follow God until they have settled the issue of God caring for them in the area of personal need, I realized this was my problem.

For the first time, I realized that God creates us with needs that can only be met when we learn to release our faith.

I now understood that through my giving, God had created a way for me to have a personal connection with Him regarding my needs. This brought me back to life.

The same as the bank has a process you must follow to withdraw from your savings account to obtain your money, so has God provided a way for us to have a living way for our every need to be met.

As we give our seed and release our faith out of our need, God has made this way for our needs to be met.

Through faith, we can give our tithes and offerings as seeds to the Lord and receive the supply for all our needs according to Christ’s riches in glory.

Through our faith and obedience, we can control our finances. We are no longer victims alone in life; we become the masters.

This book taught me how to give in faith and live without fear of my life’s provision.

As I read the book repeatedly, it changed my entire concept of who God is and how He desires to love and bless me.

**The three keys challenged me to give.**

1. **God alone is my source.**
2. **Out of my need, I will give it as a seed.**
3. **I will release my faith and expect an increase from God, even if it takes a miracle.**

The first and most important thing we must know and believe if we are to enter this living relationship with God and money is to understand that there is one and only one source of our supply: God through Christ Jesus. When we look at our job, church, family, or anyone else as the source of our financial provision, we will be disappointed.

There are many avenues and instruments God may use, but God alone is the source of all everything.

We must give in faith. The Scriptures tell us that which is not in faith is sin.

When we give, we must give, releasing our faith in the provisions already ours through Christ Jesus.

Instead of telling ourselves, “I don’t even have enough to pay my bills; how can I give?” We tell ourselves, “I will give God my seed from out of my need. I will release my faith and believe the living God of Heaven will manifest His power and reality to me in providing for my financial needs.”

We give as a seed and release our faith that God is going to keep His promise to us, in causing the good measure to be pressed down and running over.

After giving in faith, we watch for our Lord to appear at the point of our need with His deliverance, even if it takes a miracle!

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

**1 CORINTHIANS 8:9**

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

**PHILIPPIANS 4:19**

In the same way, we take a seed and plant it in the ground, so we must plant this seed into the Lord. Once we put a seed in the ground, it will never again be good for anything unless God brings it forth in new life. So, it is with the money we give to God; it is gone now and forever. We cannot use it for food or sale. Once the seed is in the ground, it is never again good for anything unless new life comes forth. So it is with our giving. The God of the sowing is also the God of the rain, the earth, and the harvest. The same God who causes the wheat and the rice to grow is also the God who causes our seed faith-giving to grow. One is in the natural and takes the rain and sun to grow. The other is in the spiritual realm and takes our faith and our prayers to grow. Both require faith and patience and, in the end, bring forth the bounty of harvest.

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

**GALATIANS 6:7**

Let's read 1 Kings 17:8-18 and see the pattern of giving our seed out of our need and receiving God's miracle supply.

*“And the Word of the Lord came unto him, saying, arise get thee to Zarephath which belongs to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain you. So, he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold the widow woman was there gathering sticks: and he called to her, and said, bring me. I pray you, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. As she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, Bring me; I pray you a piece of bread in your hand. She said, as the Lord lives, I have not a cake, only a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a pitcher: and behold, I am gathering two sticks, so I can go in and prepare it for me and my son, so we can eat it and die. Elijah then said to her, Fear not; go and do as you have said, but first make me from it a little cake first, and bring it to me, and afterward make for you and your son. The Lord God of Israel says, the barrel of meal shall not empty, neither will the pitcher of oil fail until the day the Lord sends rain upon the earth. She went and did as Elijah had asked her and she and he and her house did eat many days. And the barrel of meal did not cease, neither did the pitcher of oil become empty, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke by Elijah.”*

We see here that the woman had a great need. She needed help outside of herself and the natural realm around her.

Her only hope was a miracle from God.

When she released her faith and planted her seed out of her need, God gave her the miracle supply.

We must know and believe God has created a way for Him to meet our every need and far beyond until we live our lives in the good measure and running over that Jesus promised us.

We believe in the reality of our living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the One God who created the heavens, the earth, and everything in them.

This God in which nothing is impossible to those who believe.

We believe He sent His Son to die on the Cross, and whatever we ask in Jesus' name, we receive.

There is only one time when God challenges us to test Him and see if He is real, which is in the area of finances. In Malachi, God challenged the people to prove Him in this area.

I like how the King James Version refers to the people's giving in 11 Corinthians 9:13, which says, “while by the experiment of this ministry, they glorify God.”

God wants to be real with us in our lives and finances. This is where we have our now-living relationship with Him.

He wants to be involved with you and me.

Yes! God again desires to come to the garden in the cool of the day and to have fellowship with us!

The following year, my income increased by over ninety percent after I changed my giving from duty to faith. The following year, I saw another increase of almost fifty percent. The following year, again, I saw fantastic growth. In the third year, I made nearly four times as much as I was making when I first started giving in faith with proper understanding.

I have never forgotten when the woman handed me the record of my year's income and said, "Do you realize your income is more this year than the Governor of the State of Montana is being paid?"

Maybe that does not do anything for you, but I knew this had come by means that were not of my abilities but because of my seed faith giving.

The same man, with no college degree, has the same job and lives in the same city, but now he has the right understanding and has miraculous results.

To God be the Glory



# ABRAHAM'S TITHE

**T**he first mention in the Bible of tithe is recorded in Genesis 14:18-20 KJV. Here, we read as Abraham returned from rescuing his nephew Lot and the others taken captive, he was met by Melchizedek, king of Salem, who blessed him and Abraham's God. The most-high God who possesses all the heavens and the earth.

And Melchizedek king Salem brought forth bread and wine: he was the priest of the most-high God. And he blessed him and said blessed be Abraham of the highest God, possessor of heaven and earth: and blessed be the highest God, which has delivered your enemies into your hand, and he gave him tithes of all.

Hebrews 7:3 helps us understand that this priest Melchizedek was without Father, Mother, or Family Ancestors, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God and remains a priest continually. Bible scholars believe this was an early appearance of Christ. If that is true, then we could say Abraham tithed to Jesus. We also find in Hebrews 5:6, in reference to Jesus, Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Be it as it is. We have no other explanation or details of this event anywhere else in the Bible. In agreement with all other Scripture, we know that Abraham did it in faith. We can see the tithe was given in reverence and the minister's acknowledgment. It seems it was done from the heart and without command from God. We can only speculate whether this was the first time Abraham tithed or whether it was a part of his lifestyle.

It is also apparent that Abraham lived in willingness to sacrifice what was his, to go and bring deliverance to those who are snared in the chains of their captors.

He again displays his faith in God and his lack of concern for himself as he refuses to take any of the spoil.

There is no mention of the tithe regarding Abraham's Son, Isaac. When we read that he planted in the land and received a hundredfold harvest, the Lord blessed him. I personally believe that he did. The other reason I believe he did is when we read in Genesis 28:16-22 of his Son Jacob, where he had the encounter with God:

And Jacob awoke out of his sleep, and he said, surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid and said, how dreadful is this place? This is none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, took the stone that he had put for his pillow, set it up for a pillar, and poured wine upon the top of it. He called the name of that place Bethel (house of God), but the name of that city was Luz at first. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on so that I come again to my Father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that you give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.

It is apparent that Jacob was very aware of the tithe and his need to give from his increase to God. I believe he lived with a father and grandfather who had given tithes. We have no record of who the tithes were given to, but I still believe from Isaac's harvest and Jacob's response to his encounter with God that this was a part of their legacy.

Reading this reminds me of when I first met the Lord in a very real way. Like Jacob, I was aware of God but had never seen Him as real and almighty before that time. One of the first things I saw in the words of Jesus was that you cannot separate your heart from your money. Jesus said that where your heart is, so will your treasure be there also. I immediately began to give, and at the end of the year, when I did my taxes, I saw I had been giving a tithe and much more in offerings. I did this out of desire rather than obligation.

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SEALED INTO THE COVENANT OF ABRAHAM

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I was sitting in my pastor's office one afternoon, and as I read verses 13 and 14 of Galatians 3, I suddenly saw their complete meaning clearly for the first time.

Christ has redeemed us from the Law's curse, being made a curse for us, for it is written, "*Cursed is everyone that hangs on a tree (Cross).*" That the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

I realized that never again would God reject me because of what I was doing or not doing, and from the time of my receiving Christ forward, I was delivered from the curse of the Law and sealed into the covenant of Abraham.

This truth came to me with a mighty impact.

For the first time, I saw clearly that God's grace had completely taken the Law and commandments out of my life and returned me to the covenant blessing of Abraham. I remember that as the Holy Spirit swept over me and filled me with this wonderful truth, I could only sit and weep. The power of the Lord's presence remained long as I cried and praised God. I realized I was not only saved but also sealed into Christ. I had not only escaped hell, but the blood of Christ now sealed me into the covenant of Abraham. We read in Hebrews G:13-19 NIV

*For when God promised Abraham because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, saying surely, blessing I will bless you and multiplying I will multiply you. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men truly swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end to strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly, to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two undeniable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters into that within the veil.*

Oh, Glory to God! As I continued to verse twenty-nine of Galatians, chapter three, I read, “And if you are in Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed and heirs to this promise.” Suddenly, it was so clear to me. My life was now resting on a covenant given to Abraham. This same covenant is now mine by the blood of Christ. God of all eternity, possessor of the heavens and all the earth, has made a covenant with me. He has decreed and will never change; He desires to bless me with the same blessing He gave Abraham. This means I am blessed more than all the other people on the earth.

Sure, He causes it to rain on the just and the unjust, but for those in Christ, we are to be blessed far above and beyond this.

Those who are outside of this covenant are simply excused.

First, God has promised to do this for us, and our God cannot lie.

Second, when God could vow by no one higher, He promised by his own name He would bless us.

This unchanging covenant is limited to Abraham and his descendants. You and I are those descendants now that we are in Christ. In the same way that the anchor holds the ship in place during the storm, I can endure every hardship, knowing that if I have faith and patience as Abraham did, I will inherit the promises. I can endure everything life brings against me because I now live knowing that in the end, I will be blessed the same as Abraham was.

How sad it was and is for a pastor like me to labor as a hired servant or a believer to doubt God’s desire for them in the area of blessing. We must know and understand that all of us stand within the veil, in the presence of God, and we are now sealed into covenant blessing with Abraham. This is now ours through Jesus Christ!



# NEW TESTAMENT GIVING

**D**id Jesus tith? Yes. As I mentioned, Jesus instructed the people to obey the Law. The Law was still the covenant between God and man during his lifetime. If He commanded others to follow the Law of Moses, we can be sure He was also obedient. We now stand under the new covenant of Grace; to correctly relate to God regarding our money, we must first understand what is required of us. We have been called to a personal relationship with Jesus, and in this new relationship, we are being called beyond obedience to abandonment.

*The love of Christ compels us because we judge thus: if one died for all, then all died, and he died for all. Those who live should live no longer for themselves but for him who died for them and rose again.*

## **1 CORINTHIANS 5:14 -15**

*I tell you the truth: unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates it in this world will keep it for eternal life.*

## **JOHN 12:24-26**

*Do you not know your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, which you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price.*

## **1 CORINTHIANS 6: 1 9-20**

*Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against God's knowledge and brings every thought to Christ's obedience into captivity.*

## **2 CORINTHIANS 10:5**

If we choose to live as Christian disciples, we must realize and accept that God now owns everything: our spirit, soul, body, mind, desires, plans, future, and yes, even our money. He does not ask us for part of it. He tells us he owns us and everything concerning us.

*If you are now risen with Christ, seek the above things, where Christ sits on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For you are dead, and your life is hidden with Christ, in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, you shall also appear with him in glory.*

## **COLOSSIANS 3:1-4 KJV**

The Law is now replaced with the perfect Law of liberty, spoken in James chapter two, verse twelve.

FROM CURSE TO COVENANT

*Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like unto it, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets.*

**MATTHEW 22:3, 7-40**

When we look at the first mention of the tithe in the Old Testament involving Abraham, we find that before the mention of the tithe, God told Abraham to get up and leave his country and go to the place He was calling him to. You see, even Abraham abandoned everything to God before even considering tithing. It is the same with us.

The simple truth is that the New Testament, without an apology, tells us that if we are to know this covenant, we must first make an unconditional surrender of everything. We surrender all we are, all we have, and all our future holds to the Lordship and authority of Jesus Christ.

When we have the correct Biblical image of our Heavenly Father, the God of love and mercy, who delights in blessing and prospering His people, we freely surrender our all to Him. Once we understand that the place of the greatest blessing we will ever know is in the will of God, we begin to desire this above all other things. We are delighted to see this life of walking with the God who has taken us as His children. Our kind and loving Father watches over us and brings us blessings and peace as we live, move, and have our being in Him!

Those who are sailing their ship across the sea of life, going wherever they choose, and doing whatever they desire without surrendering to God's plan and purpose for their lives, the Bible tells us they are deceiving themselves. When a believer thinks he can be the captain of his own ship and send a tithe to the next port, where he will pick up the silver and gold he needs to continue his selfish journey, this person is in for a terrible surprise when he reaches the end of his days.

# NEW COVENANT CHANGE

In the Old Testament, man heard from God directly or through the prophet. The Spirit was with man but not in man. In the New Covenant of Grace, we no longer have the Spirit with us; beyond this, we have the Spirit in us.

*I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts and will be their God; they shall be my people.*

## **JERIMIAH 31:33**

*Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it does not see him or know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.*

## **JOHN 14:17**

When we come to Jesus, He transforms us from individuals into members of His body, the Church. As New Testament believers, we are no longer a two-class group of people, separated into those who minister and those who don't.

*But you are a chosen generation, a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*

## **1 PETER 2:9**

*As God has said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord,*

## **2 CORINTHIANS 6:16-17**

Together, we, the believers, are now the body of Jesus!

*I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God is. For I say, through the Grace given unto me, to every man among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. As we have many members in one body, not all members have the same office. We are one body in Christ, and every member is one of another.*

**ROMANS 12:1-5**

**T**his new place we have been transformed into now takes first place in our lives. The most essential thing anyone born again will ever do is find the place, grace, and ministry God has ordained for them in the body. This Scripture tells us we are to present our bodies, which means our life must be given as a living sacrifice, or, to say it another way, our physical involvement. This has become the most essential thing in our lives. As we continue reading chapter twelve of Romans, we find God has gifted each of us with a gift of grace, of which we are stewards. We must now die to ourselves and submit to this calling. Every believer is to be a minister within the Church. Nowhere in the New Testament can you find one who is more responsible for their gift of grace than the others. We now must think in a new way concerning ourselves. We must be willing to change our goals, location, and even our jobs and lifestyles to pursue and fulfill this expectation of our God. First and before all other things, we must know and serve as living sacrifices in this place He has called us to: beyond called us to, where He has created us to be in service to Him.

Now, from this place, we are to consider our giving. We no longer give from our minds because of commandments but from our hearts as we abandon ourselves to God and His desire. Now filled with the Holy Spirit, we submit and join in the right relationship with His body. We are now able to be led by the Spirit with our giving.

Let's look at the first incident of New Testament giving:

*And with great power, the apostles witnessed the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the prices of the things sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according to his need. And Joses, who by the apostles has surnamed Barnabas (which is, being interpreted, the son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira, his wife, sold a possession and kept back part of the price, his wife was also privy to it, and he brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men but unto the Lord.*

**ACTS 4:32-37, 5:1-4**

The New Testament Church is peculiar; these royal priests are genuine children of destiny. Those who have forsaken their desires and dreams only know and follow the Cross. They have genuinely surrendered all they have with only one desire: to know Jesus and to be His disciple.

We need to see what Peter said to Ananias while it remained. Was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your control? In other words, Peter explained that God isn't demanding that you do

this. The others are doing this voluntarily. There is no command or demand for you to sell anything. It must be from the heart out of love and done for God's glory.

God's soldiers are all volunteers.

The call of God is an invitation to our hearts, which we are to answer with love and faith.

The maid's life is within her control: love causes her to abandon everything to know and be with her husband.

So it is with us once we truly see Jesus. We forsake all to know and be with Him.

Barnabas is mentioned here for the first time as he sells his land, brings the money, and lays it at the apostle's feet.

As we follow the life of Barnabas, we find he soon left Jerusalem. He was the man who endorsed Paul's ministry to the apostles. Barnabas proved himself a faithful disciple and was trusted by the apostles to go to Antioch when they received word of the Lord's work. After ministering to them, he brought Paul where the Lord continued to use them, and the Bible designates him in Acts 14:14 as an apostle. The Holy Spirit sent him with Paul on the first missionary journey. On the second missionary journey, Barnabas refused to reject the young man Mark and sailed with him to Cyprus instead of going with Paul. We hear no more of Barnabas, but we know the young man Mark was to continue in the faith after being restored by Barnabas. He later would come to spend time with Peter and write the Gospel of Mark under the apostle's direction. Mark would later be endorsed by Paul as "profitable for the ministry."

Barnabas not only gave his land, he gave his total life and being to Jesus Christ.

We read in Acts 15 where the Apostles in Jerusalem, after meeting with Paul, Barnabas, and other leading men from among the brethren, sent a letter to the Gentile believers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. Quote:

*Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, you must be circumcised, and keep the Law: to whom we gave no such commandment:*

**ACTS 15:2**

We see in reading this that the apostles and elders in Jerusalem terminated the Law of the tithe and all the requirements of the Law. (29 For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that you abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from this, you will do well.

The Law, the priest, and the temple were gone.

Nowhere in the New Testament can we find the people giving a tithe to build a temple or re-establish the priesthood of the old covenant.

Stand fast in the liberty where Christ has set us free and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

All that is left is the love of God revealed through the Savior, and now to be revealed through you and me without separating our money from this new life of grace and mercy we are to live and be.

No tithes will be mentioned by our Lord as He says to you and me, “That which you have done to the least of these, you have done it unto me.”

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father are this: to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and keep himself unspotted from the World.

The taking of offerings found in Acts 11:27-30 and 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 was for the poor.

As we continue reading the New Testament, we find the next mention of giving in I Corinthians 9:6-14, where Paul instructs that the Lord’s plan for those who minister is to be supported while doing so by those who are receiving their ministry.

Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? Who goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who tends to the flock and does not drink the milk of the flock? Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does the Law not say the same thing? For it is written in the Law of Moses, You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.’ Is it oxen God is concerned about? Or does He say it altogether for our sake? No doubt, this is written for our sake: that he that plows should plow in hope and that he that threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we share spiritual things with you, would it be good if we were able to share your material things? If others are partakers of this right over you, are we not rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this right, but we will endure all things lest we hinder the Gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple? And those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? Even so, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.

We find this reiterated in Galatians 6:6, which says, Let him that is taught in the word communicate (share with) unto him that teaches in all good things. Again, this is spoken in 1 Timothy 5:17-18 where we read, Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. The scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn.’ And the Laborer is worthy of his hire. “The laborer is worthy of hire” is taken from the quote of Jesus found in Luke 10:7 KJV.

Scripture clearly shows that teachers and ministers are to be supported by those they minister to. The exact amount is not mentioned in the New Testament, which leaves us to consider the principles and patterns of the rest of the Bible and follow the Spirit in this.

I know of many among us who give far beyond the tithe and offerings to further take the gospel to the uttermost ends of the earth.

When we spend time with the Lord, the love that caused the Father to send His only begotten son to die on the Cross begins to find its place in our hearts. We come to live with the burning desire of everyone worldwide to know the love we have found in Christ.

As we read further in 1 Corinthians, we find that Paul wrote them concerning the collection he was gathering to be taken to the poor Christians in Jerusalem. He instructs the believers in Corinth to take a portion of their increase, lay it aside, and bring it to the meeting on the first day of the week. The Corinthian believers would choose a delegation, and upon Paul's arrival, they would take the money to Jerusalem. He also notes to them that he has instructed the churches in the region of Galatia to do the same.

This is mentioned again in 2 Corinthians 8:5. Paul tells how they first went to the Lord and received confirmation from the Holy Spirit of God's will before giving their gifts.

Your money belongs to you, as Peter told Ananias. It doesn't belong to the Church!

*So, I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to visit you in advance and finish the arrangements for the generous gift you had promised. then it will be ready as a generous gift, not as one grudgingly given. Remember this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. and God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written: "They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the Sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your seed store and enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us, your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service you perform not only supplies the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the Gospel of Christ and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you, their hearts will go out to you because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!*

### **2 CORINTHIANS 9:5-15**

The first thing we notice here is that Paul relates the amount of return to the giver to the amount that he sows, the same as with the farmer. The more he desires to harvest, the more seeds he plants in the field. The amount given is left to the individual as they purpose in their heart. The one who plants generously will reap generously.

Here again, the believer's attitude toward selfless release is commended. Then, God promises to release the blessing so that the giver of the seed will receive a harvest so large that they will have all they need at all times.

God will increase every seed that we sow!

You will be increased in every way until you have enough to give generously to everyone.

We plant our seed out of our need. We trust the Lord of the harvest, and He gives us miracles unto abundance!

This, in turn, brings God glory, honor, and praise.

From our seeds of faith comes the release of our provision, and the needs of the Church are satisfied.

The next mention of giving we find in Philippians 4:10-20 KJV

*But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak with respect to want, for I have learned, in whatever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also that in the beginning of the Gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me concerning giving and receiving, but you only. For, even in Thessalonica, you sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift but fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all and abound. I am full, having received Epaphroditus, the things sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, and a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Now unto God and our Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Here, again, we see the same pattern. Paul speaks of giving and receiving: the seed time and then the harvest. The same result: all needs are supplied. The needs of the Church are first met by the seed being sown, and then the needs of the one giving are met by God's never-ending supply.

This supply is now ours according to Christ's riches in glory!

Jesus paid for everything we need in full on the Cross. We now release it by giving through faith.

# MAMMON

Sometimes, we get the impression that there is something wrong with having money. I don't know why we sometimes feel this way. There is nothing, either good or bad, in money itself. It is like your hand. Your hand is simply an extension of you. The same hand can be used to touch, comfort, and bless or to strike and wound. As we are in our heart, so will we, in the end, reach forth and do with our hand. It is the same with your money. As we are in our heart, so will we be over time with our money. The two cannot be separated.

It is true that the love of money is the root of all evil. It is also true that money is the instrument God uses through us to bring great blessings to others and glory to Himself.

In Genesis 13:2, we see that Abraham was very rich in cattle, silver, and gold. The one man God chose to come to and make a covenant with was incredibly wealthy. As we study Abraham's life, God tells him He will bless the nations from his seed. Abraham lived a life of abundance and prosperity all his days.

The blessing of Abraham is not all about being rich, but it isn't about being poor and not having enough, either.

As I have meditated on this, I believe it is about walking in faith as we release God's grace and "reign in life through Jesus Christ," as it tells us in Romans 5:17 we can now do by our Faith.

The opposite is when we are self-centered and allow the love of money to dominate our lives, trusting it to bring us the happiness that only God Himself can bring. This is the root of all evil and leads to covetousness, which is the same as idolatry (Colossians 3:5).

We are to be a people of faith who put God and our relationship with Him before everything else. Possessing wealth and giving God thanks for providing it brings God the glory He is due.

We are to leave a legacy behind us of possessing all things and using them for others' deliverance and God's glory.

When we die, we must be able to answer the question within ourselves, "With my money,

have I loved the Lord my God with all my heart, and have I loved my neighbor as myself?"

How often have we heard it said, "You can't take your money with you when you die!" This sounds good and seems correct to someone who hasn't read their Bible, but for those of us who have, we know it simply isn't true.

*And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.*

**REVELATIONS 14:13**

You see, what we do for God goes to heaven with us.

When we read Paul's explanation of his ministry to them, we find:

*For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel! For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will a dispensation of the Gospel is committed unto me. What is my reward, then? I make the Gospel of Christ without charge, that I abuse not my power in the Gospel.*

**1 CORINTHIANS 9: 1 6-18**

Paul is saying here that the reward he will receive is from his having the money to come and preach to them without pay.

I was in a pastor's meeting one time when a religious man who had a large church in the area commented that it was shameful for someone to work and pastor at the same time. This is the opposite of what the Bible says. Scripture tells us there is a reward for those who earn the money to preach and support themselves.

Yes, in heaven, you will receive a reward for the money you have spent on others. Acts of generosity and service to others will be rewarded. Even a cup of cold water given will be noticed and rewarded by God. How much more will the money we give to the poor and the money used to reach the lost be rewarded in heaven?

*Jesus looked upon him and loved him. One thing you lack, "he said. "Go sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then, come follow me."*

**MARK 10:21**

Jesus told this to the rich young ruler to reveal what was in the man's heart. Jesus was saying. First, we must put God's plans and purposes ahead of our own, and second, there is a treasure in heaven for those who do.

Money used today to serve others is transferred to our account in heaven!

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**YOU CAN HAVE TREASURE IN HEAVEN! JESUS SAID SO!**

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*Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. Sell your possessions and give them to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys.*

***LUKE 12:32-33***

I remember when I was much younger and seeking to be a true disciple of the Lord. I asked Pastor Creed, “Does this mean I must live without owning anything?” I have never forgotten his answer. He said, “No, this simply means we must always be willing to give everything He asks of us each day as we walk with Him.”

Yes, what you do with your money and how much you give away will impact your eternal life. We can transfer as much money to heaven as we choose. We can also discipline ourselves to put our money away and have it meet us when we get to heaven. Oh, what a glorious day for those of us who do.

*FROM CURSE TO COVENANT*

# TESTING

**H**ave I ever been tested? Yes, many times, but even in times when it looks like I will not have enough, I no longer live in fear. I will never again see my God as uncaring and distant from me and my needs. No matter what my needs are, I can continue planting my seed, releasing my faith, and, ultimately, receiving my miracle supply. I now live each day expecting to see God's involvement in my life, releasing me and blessing me. I am no longer afraid or confused. I am no longer alone with my needs.

And so, after he (Abraham) had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. Hebrews 5:15

*When they had preached the Gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the disciples' souls, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must enter the kingdom of God through many tribulations."*

**ACTS 14:21-22**

I have seen people become discouraged and sometimes even leave their faith when circumstances move contrary to what they thought they were going to. Sometimes, life does things in a way that seems to suggest God's promises are simply not true.

Sometimes, people allow their present circumstances to cause them to question God's existence and reality in their personal lives. Has God really said that? Maybe God doesn't love me and care for me. Logic cries out, attacking our faith as it seeks to overcome us. If it can't defeat us, it will then try to at least cause us to manipulate and, by our own strength, obtain the blessing.

*You will remember all the ways that the Lord your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that he might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.*

**DEUTERONOMY 8:2**

God is building us to be a people of faith and not a people of sight, a people of pure motives, those who the Spirit leads, and not of the flesh.

*When you ask, you receive not because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

**JAMES 4:3**

God will have a people who walk in obedience by faith, not by sight. Let me give you a couple of examples.

In Genesis chapter twelve, verse seven, we read that God appeared to Abraham (the father of our faith) and told him He would give the land to him and his descendants. As we continue reading, we find in verse ten, "And there was a famine in the land: and Abraham went down into Egypt to stay there."

Wow! That is only three verses from the promise to the testing. Yes, we must understand the thief comes to steal the seed.

In the book of Exodus, we read that God heard the prayers of Abraham's descendants as they cried out to Him for deliverance from the hard bondage, they were subject to. The Lord then sent Moses to Egypt to deliver His people from the hand of Pharaoh and lead them to the promised land. They greeted Moses and his message of God's promise with gladness and great expectation.

As we continue to read the account, we find that the first step to God's promised deliverance went in the opposite direction. Instead of being delivered, their taskmasters withheld the straw they needed to build the bricks and then whipped them for not making as many as they had before. Instead of deliverance, they experienced increased hardship and suffering.

The thief had come to steal the seed!

There was a time after I started living by seed faith that I was severely tested. My finances went from bad to worse until I could not pay my bills, and I was in danger of losing everything. It seemed my prayers, my giving, and everything else were of no effect. I was at a desperate and critical point not only in my finances but also in my life with my Lord. I asked God to show me my sin because I knew this would bring the Lord's chastening hand. He did not show me anything.

One day, I was sitting at my desk with a pile of unpaid bills in front of me. As I sat there, I was suddenly overcome with the Scripture from Ephesians 1:15-23 NIV:

*For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father; may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you will know him better: praying also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the Church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.*

Suddenly, I was filled with the understanding of God's true hope and purpose for me. I realized how completely unlimited His power is towards me and for me, as I believe.

In the resurrection, Jesus Christ received dominion and authority over all other powers, now and forever. All the works of the devil, his devices, and his authority must now submit to the name and authority of Jesus Christ.

After His resurrection, Jesus was taken to heaven and is now seated at the Father's right hand.

He was also placed as the head of the Church. As a member of His Church, I am now a member of his body.

All other authorities have been placed under His feet.

If I am rightly related to the Church, I am now of His body, and I, too, share this authority, with all other powers being beneath my feet also.

Oh! Glory! Glory! Glory!

As I sat there, it was like ocean waves of the Lord's presence and revelation swept over me. I was no longer in doubt. I reached out with my arm and swept those unpaid bills off the desk and onto the floor. I sat down and removed my shoes. I took my pen and wrote Jesus on the bottom of my shoes. I confessed to me, and to the devil, and to everyone close enough to hear me shouting, "I am in Jesus Christ, and He is in me, I am now in His body, and I have authority over these things." I started walking and jumping on those unpaid bills, and I began to weep, sing, and praise my God. I went from sight to faith. I went from being a defeated turkey to being an eagle. I was back on the wing with my God! I was winning my fight of faith! I was moving to higher ground!

*For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timothy, was not Yes and No, but in Him was Yes. For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.*

**2 CORINTHIANS 1:19-20**

I continued to give as seed and believe, and God brought me great deliverance.

Within a few short months, I sold that house and moved to one in the country with forty acres (20 hectares) of ground around it.

Scripture tells us to fight the good fight of faith. If it weren't a fight, it would not take faith. When we are confronted with testing, we must continue focusing, continuing to give, and continuing to believe. It is by our faith, many times with fasting and prayer, that we see the glory of our God.

It is God's plan for our faith to move our mountains, not for the mountains to move us.

*Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and makes manifest the flavor of his knowledge by us in every place.*

**2 CORINTHIANS 2:14**

As I have remained steady in my faith and seed-giving, God has always brought miracles of release and increase. When I give, I place my seed in the hands of my Lord and release my faith in His promises.

Do I believe in miracles?

Yes! And beyond that, I expect them!



# COVENANT RELATIONSHIP

**F**rom our perfect place of total acceptance as God's children, we give in faith. It is our faith that provides us with access to the miracle supply. God's riches in glory means everything God possesses. Through Jesus Christ, we now have an open door between us and all the riches of Christ, not only in heaven but today!

Out of our need, we are giving our seed of faith money and stepping from natural to supernatural.

When God becomes real to us in our relationship concerning finances, we believe Him to be real in everything else.

I have now found my God of the covenant I can trust.

Let me give you an example of this. Three years ago, I was impressed by the Lord to go to the Philippines and minister. I did not have the money to go as the time approached. When Sunday came, I went to Church and more than doubled my weekly giving. I knew I had to move myself from hope to mountain-moving, faith-releasing faith. After I gave and released my faith, I continued to pray and thank and worship God for His provision. I can now testify that I have had someone stop me in my car, come up to my window, and hand me the money I need.



Allow me to share Dolly's Testimony:

## DOLLY

I was 47 years old when my first husband died in a motorcycle accident. The following year, my house burned. My life was sad and very difficult. My house was in a squatter's area in the Philippines, which means someone else owned the land. With the help of others, I was able to rebuild in the same place. I was seeking God because I felt I really needed Him. It so happened that my coworker invited me to a prayer meeting, and when I heard the word of God, it struck my heart, and I was saved. I cried and cried at that time as if I felt that God was talking directly to me. Since then, I have attended the Church and have not stopped going. I have been so very on fire for the Lord. I begin by telling many others about Him. Sometimes, when it was time to go to the Bible Study or the meetings, I did not have the pesos to pay for the ride. When I would go to the prayer meetings early in the mornings, I would have to walk three kilometers. I witnessed to many people, and I would have to bring them to Bible Studies. God was so good at helping me because He always gave me the pesos to pay for them to get to the meeting. Every week, we had our meetings, and many times, others would give me the fare to ride the Jeepney. I used to tell them to pray that God will provide us with our own Jeepney someday. Even with my many needs, I was faithful in giving and never complained. I know God is my source and that blessings follow obedience. I had many needs but always gave and believed God would make a way. I used to ask God for a big house in a subdivision. When the airplanes flew over, I would say, Lord, will I fly in an airplane before I die? I knew that only God could do these big things and bless me. Now, God has given me a lovely home in a subdivision, I own the van that is taking everyone to the meetings, and I am flying to different countries to share the Gospel. God is faithful if we will only believe and obey.

Does God really care about me? Does He really desire me to have good things?

Yes! Yes! Yes!

In Christ, you are now sealed into a relationship with the living God. The one who has sworn by His own name to bring you to blessing.

Will He truly enter my life and circumstances with His reality and power to meet my needs and fill my life with blessings?

Yes! Because God cannot lie!

Our belief in and understanding of God and His attitude toward us concerning wealth affects every other area of our relationship with Him.

We need balance and the proper perspective. Psalms thirty-five, verse twenty-seven, says, "Let the Lord be magnified, which has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant."

God is so kind and good that He wants you to know blessing and increase. He has chosen you to live a life that is more abundant (completely blessed) in Jesus Christ!

When we read the account of Jesus as He turned the water into wine at the marriage reception, we have to wonder. Why, of all the miracles Jesus could have done to reveal the heart of the Father, did He choose this one first? What was the “will of the Father” trying to say through this act of his Son? Was this done so the preachers could spend countless hours arguing over whether this was wine or only grape juice? What was God showing us? What was the first thing Jesus wanted us to understand as He began his earthly ministry?

I believe He was trying to show us that God delights in blessing his people above and beyond their basic needs. This is confirmed in III John 2, Beloved, I wish above all things that you would prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers. This is so plain to us when we read that He spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all. *How shall He not be with Him also freely give us all things?* (Romans 8:32) Jesus said, *But I have come that you might have a life that is more abundant.* (John 10:10).

God not only allows, but beyond this, He desires for you and me to know a life of plenty. Yes, God takes His eternal power and love and appears in our lives with blessings in real and everyday ways!

He is alive and creates blessings in our circumstances beyond us and the realm of this World.

God will bring us an increase beyond our every need being satisfied, to the point where we have the extra running over.

He truly is the God of love, who turns our water into wine!

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*OH! IF GOD BE FOR US WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?*

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# COVENANT GIVING

**T**here was once a young man who told me that after being saved, he went to the minister and asked him what he was to do and not do now that he was born again. The pastor said to him, “Go ask the Lord.”

I believe the Bible leaves the amount to give under New Testament grace somewhat unclear, so we will come to Him and learn the new relationship of walking in the Spirit.

Romans 8:14 tells us: *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*

I have made two things a part of my faith from the pattern of the law. The first is that I never offered a blemished offering or something that is damaged or less than perfect. The second principle I follow is the offering of the first fruits. Any time I start a new job or any new stream of income or increase, I always give the first portion to the Lord in thanksgiving, releasing my faith. I always try to practice these as seeds of faith.

Regarding how much to give, the most important thing is to give until we are standing in the arena of faith. In other words, I haven't given enough until I give to the point that I am moved in my heart to release my faith.

Does my faith in giving move the hand of God? Absolutely! Every Scripture concerning giving confirms this.

*FROM CURSE TO COVENANT*

# GOD'S POWER NOW

*For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are loyal to Him.*

## **2 CHRONICLES 16:9**

*I have shown you new things from this time, even hidden things, and you did not know them. They are created now and not from the beginning.*

## **ISAIAH 48:6, 7**

*And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So, God granted him what he requested.*

## **1 CHRONICLES 4:10**

*"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you an expected end."*

## **JERIMIAH 29:11**

*Call to me, and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things you know not of.*

## **JEREMIAH 33:3**

*If you, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!*

## **MATTHEW 7:11**

*And Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree but also if you say to this mountain, 'be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done. And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."*

## **MATTHEW 21:21-22**

*So, the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."*

## **LUKE 17:6**

*FROM CURSE TO COVENANT*

*Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in me, the works that I do he will also do; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. And whatever you ask in my name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

***JOHN 14:12***

*The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow to it.*

***PROVERBS 10:22***

# SEED FAITH LIVING

Once we come to a Biblical understanding of our new place of acceptance and perfection in Christ, we begin to live in a whole new way. Each morning, we get up knowing God has already sworn by His own Name to bless us today. His abundance and blessing have already been put in place by the Cross of Christ. They are now waiting for us to release by our faith and receive.

We now walk by faith and seed-faith, living/giving. If we are lonely, we will visit someone who is lonely and receive the miracle of love in return. If we are sick, we will go and pray for others who are ill, and we will receive our healing. This is true in all things in our life. As we give of our money, our time, our love, and all we are to Christ, we receive in return the life more abundant He has promised us.

Let me remind us again that Romans 5:17 tells us we can now control our lives as kings.

*“For if by one man’s offense, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of the grace of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ!”*

There is an old saying: Life doesn’t come to you; you must go and find it for yourself.

*I know your deeds. See, I have placed an open door that no one can shut before you. I know that you have a little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name.*

## **REVELATIONS 3:8**

*I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire; that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness does not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see.*

## **REVELATIONS 3:18**



# YOU HAVE BEEN CHOSEN FOR A REASON

**T**oday, this end-time world is in a desperate state of spiritual poverty. There has never been a more critical time for Christian disciples to rise up and make a difference. For the lack of a nail, the shoe was lost. For lack of a shoe, the horse was lost. For lack of a horse, the soldier was lost. For lack of a soldier, the battle was lost. From the loss of the battle, the war was lost. From the loss of the war, the people all perished. All for the lack of one nail.

No matter how much or how little you can do, it matters to God.

Sometimes, we must see how important we are to God and how much He values giving. It is through us that He expresses His heart, and we become His hands of love.

When we read the story of King David (the Bible calls him a man after God's own heart) in 1 Samuel 30:18-25:

*And David recovered all that the Amalekites had carried away, and David rescued his two wives. and nothing was lacking to them, neither small nor great, neither sons nor daughters, neither spoil nor anything that the enemy had taken from them: David recovered all. And David took all the flocks and the herds, which they drove before those other cattle, and said, this is David's spoil. And David came to the two hundred men, which were so faint that they could not follow David, who they had made also to abide at the brook Besor: and they went forth to meet David, and to meet the people that were with him: and when David came near to the people, he greeted them. Then answered all the wicked men and men of Belial, of those that went with David, and said, because they went not with us, we will not give any of the spoil that we have recovered, save to every man his wife and his children, that they may lead them away and depart. Then David said You shall not do so, my brothers, with that which the Lord has given us, who has preserved us, and delivered the company that came against into our hand. For who will listen to you in this matter? But his part is that goes down to the battle, so shall his part be that waits by the stuff: they shall have the same share.*

Seed faith giving is what Jesus was talking about when He said, whosoever gives a drink to one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, truly he shall in no way lose his reward. We find this again when Jesus said, "He that receives a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward, and he that receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward."

On the day we face our Lord in heaven, the Bible tells us the first shall be last, and the last shall be first. You see, your seed will then be far greater than that which you kept for yourself.

In the end days, believers will function as the Body of Christ and not as Clergy and Laity, priest and peasant. They will understand that we are the Body of Christ, and in love, we labor as one to bring forth Christ's kingdom.



## BIBLES *and* BOOKS

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# GOD WILL HAVE HIS PEOPLE

**T**he end-time release of finances to the Church will be one of the first signs of the end. Just as we see knowledge increasing and rumors of wars and earthquakes in many places, so will we soon see the mighty financial release to the Church during these coming days.

The release of finances is to be used by the Church in the final push to reach the ends of the earth with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Today, as never before, the world is open to the Gospel. Opportunities are everywhere for those who will answer God's call.

We read in Acts beginning in 2:17 KJV, on the day of Pentecost, Peter quoted from the book of Joel and said to the people.

*It shall come to pass **in the last days**, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and daughters will prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams. And upon my servants and on my handmaidens, I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy*

When we compare this with the Book of Joel, we see a difference in the introduction. Peter proclaims, "It shall come to pass in the last days, but when we go to the Book of Joel, Chapter Two, verse twenty-eight, we find a difference. There, it says, "It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh.

The prophet Joel speaks of afterward, or after these things I have just spoken of have happened, then the Spirit will be poured out. This causes us to ask ourselves what is supposed to happen before this so we might understand the afterward spoken of here.

So, we then read the verses immediately preceding verse twenty-eight.

*Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow*

*with wine and oil. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed. And ye shall know that I am amid Israel and that I am the Lord your God, and none else: and my people shall never be ashamed.*

**JOEL 2:23-27 KJV**

We can see from this that the afterward, Joel was speaking of is the return of wealth to God's people. I believe the Lord has revealed to me that one of the first signs of the end days beginning to happen will be the restoration and continuation of His covenant of blessing with the sons and daughters of Abraham. God will begin the latter rain by releasing His blessings and restoration in the area of financial release. The true Church at this time will be increased in wealth, which will be used under the direction of the Holy Spirit. His people will carry the Gospel to the remaining souls waiting to be reached before the end comes.

This end-time army will require a peculiar people who love not their lives unto death, whose affections are set on things above and not on what is beneath. They will run through the cities and climb over walls; great is this army that will carry out His word! A people of fasting and prayer, a people of spiritual power who do not break rank! Those who have learned the life of abandonment to themselves and live submitted and obedient to the Spirit.

These will be those who instruct the many among the nations. They will turn the people to righteousness as never before. This is a group of chosen soldiers who can discern the difference between the seed and the fruit. Those who maintain careful stewardship over their lives and put this ahead of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Those who ask God Where, when, and how, oh Lord, do you want me to use this dollar you have made me master over? Those who hunger for lost souls and the glory of God more than they do the comforts money can bring. People of faith! Led by the Spirit! Released in finances! Mighty in power! A people of miracles! Signs and wonders! They will go about as one body, destroying the works of the devil and turning many to righteousness.

Jesus is now asking you. Do you love me more than these? Will you now take up your cross and follow me?

God is raising a people to be like a golden cup, and He will take it in His hand. He will pour out the last great outpouring of His "new wine" from this vessel just before his return. Even so:

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*NOW COME LORD JESUS! AMEN!*

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*FROM CURSE TO COVENANT*