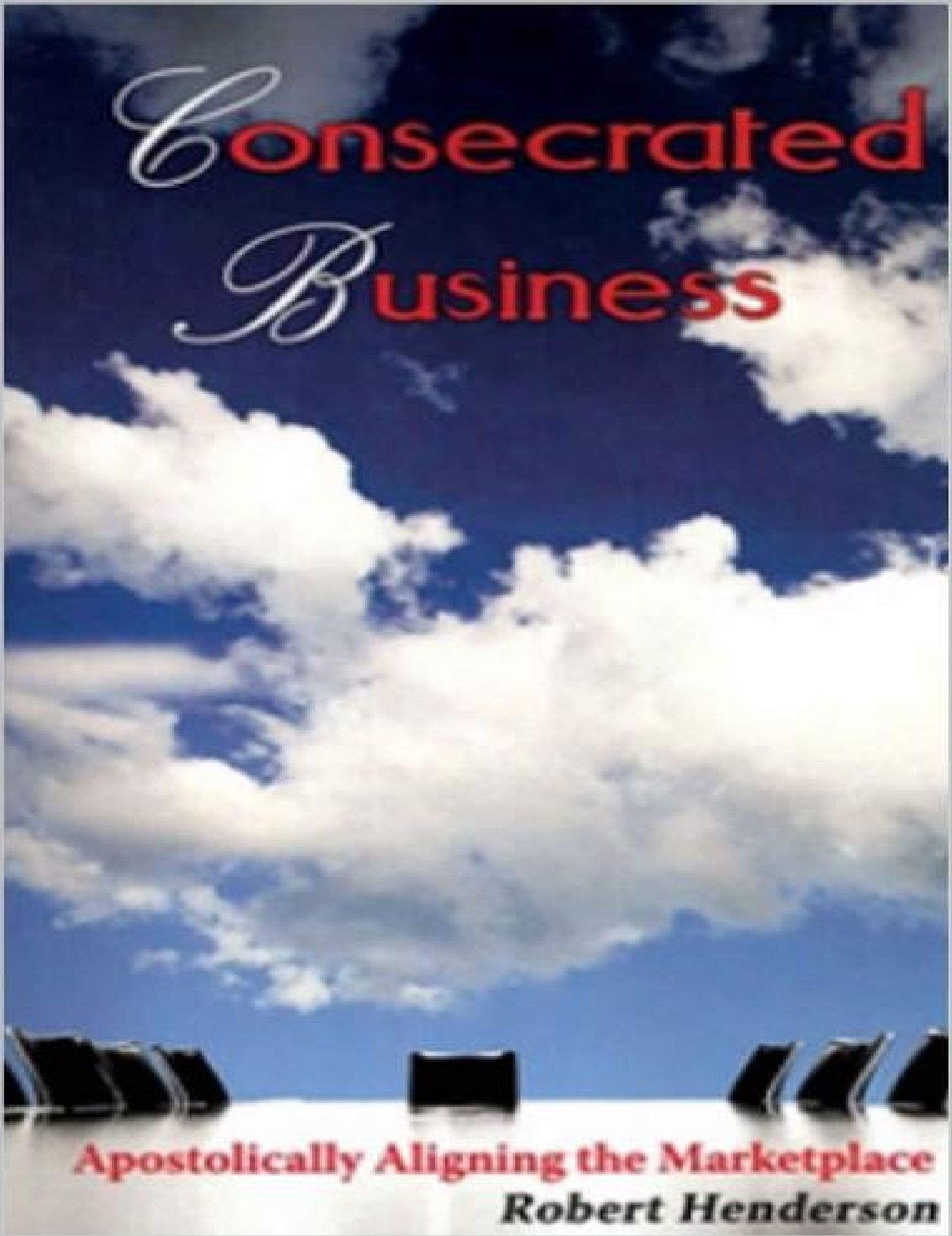
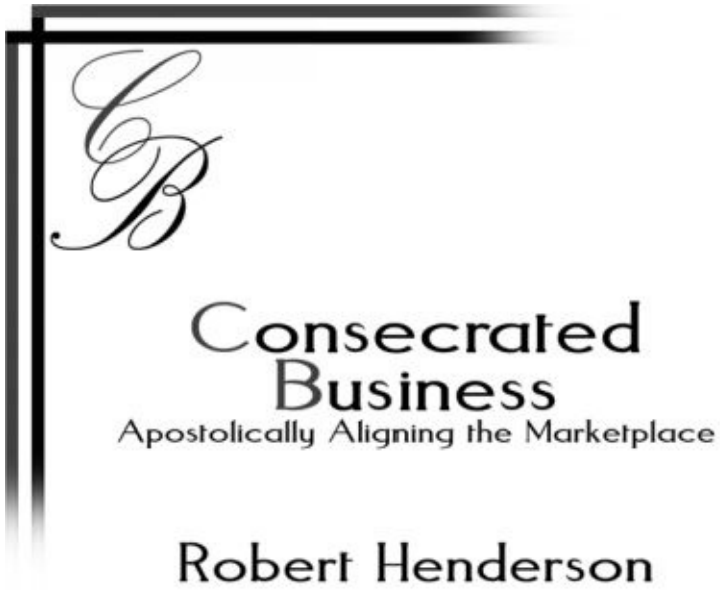

Consecrated
Business
Apostolically Aligning the Marketplace
Robert Henderson



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Consecrated Business: Apostolically Aligning the Marketplace

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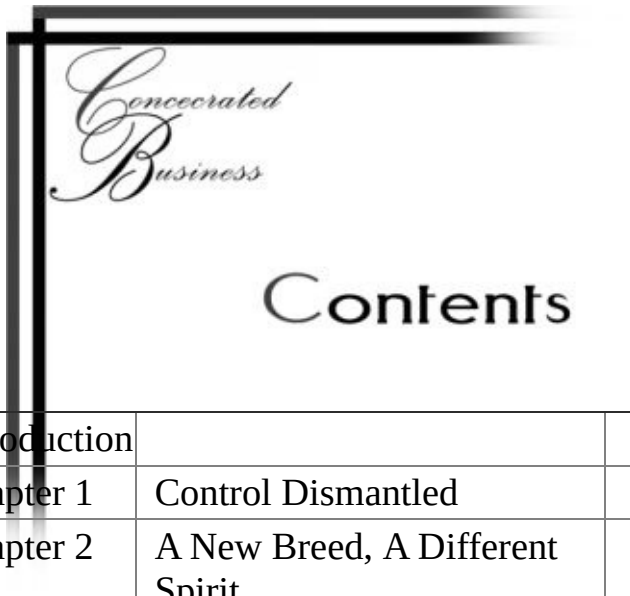

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Introduction

I believe with all my heart that the Lord is unveiling for us in this day principles that can bring about promises in His word. Acts 3:19-21 shows us that we are in the time of restoration of all things:

> *Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.*

The heavens are holding Jesus until everything prophesied by the prophets of old comes to pass. We are now in times of restoration. The closer we press to the coming of Jesus, the

faster these times are manifested and revealed. If we are to see these times of restoration manifest, we must be open to the new and present truth that the Lord is speaking and showing which includes everything in our lives, ministries and businesses.

In particular, it is my assertion that God is raising-up kingdom business people who will do business on a grand scale for the purpose of the kingdom of God. I have chosen to call this *Consecrated Business*. A consecrated business is a business or a person who has committed their business dealing to the Lord. Their business becomes holy to the Lord. As a result of this commitment, God takes it and begins to prosper it for the purposes of His kingdom. In other words, the blessing of God will come on business people who are committed to the purpose of the Lord in the earth to the point that the Lord can bless them and bring them into prosperity and wealth for the reason of financing the efforts to establish kingdom rule throughout the earth. This brings great joy to God's heart as people began to recognize their purpose and role in establishing kingdom rule in the earth. The consecration of a business to the Lord for such purposes involves the principle and pattern of firstfruits. We will discuss this further as we move through this book.

As I released *The Caused Blessing* into the Body of Christ, I immediately began to receive correspondence from business people who wanted to know how to apply the powerful principle of firstfruits into their business dealings. One businessman in particular challenged me to seek the Lord and hear the concepts concerning the applying of this principle to the corporate world and how it can operate.

Soon after this, I was a part of an apostolic meeting where the structure and function of an apostolic team was under consideration. The conversation surrounded the issue of the Church's activity and involvement in the world of business and included the perspective of raising *kingdom businesses* to finance the purposes of God into the world. A comment was made that we all know to be very true: the Church has primarily lived off of leftovers. This is not a slam against the people of God and their giving, but rather an acknowledgment that the finances necessary to see all that God wants done in the world are insufficient and not being provided on the level that we must have.

As a result, we discussed the idea of developing businesses with the express purpose to finance the work of the kingdom on a level heretofore unknown. An integral part of this idea includes the need to convince marketplace people that their place is just as important as those of us called to function in traditional ministerial places. In fact, this concept must be progressively heralded if we are to see what must happen financially become a reality.

Not everyone is called into *full-time* ministry in the Christian world. Unfortunately, we have successfully produced a people that function in the business and corporate world who think they are less than those who preach the gospel. This idea must be dismantled and we must *free* people to find their place in the business sector and become booming successes - not only for their sakes, but more importantly for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Within the Church we must put an emphasis on raising-up people who will lay down their lives to see God bless them in

their work in the ***real world***. When we do so, not only can funds be released on a great level - but the parts of our culture that the Church has no impact in can began to be touched, changed, and transformed. With the same passion that we are fashioning people to function in ***real ministry*** we must fashion them to function in the corporate world. I emphasize these phrases to make the point of how we separate things in our minds and thought processes. These walls must be broken down if we are to see the kingdom expanded and financed. Not only do we need ministers who preach the gospel, but we need ministers who go into the corporate world everyday and have success that grabs the attention of the world.

Many of those we speak of in Scripture and draw our examples from were not *preachers* at all. David was a literal shepherd who became a great military leader, who eventually became king of a nation. Joseph functioned as the manager of an Egyptian household and finally found himself as Prime Minister of Egypt. Even Abraham was a great businessman who had great wealth and abundance which allowed him and his descendants to become the envy of the nations. If we take our spiritual glasses off, we will see that some of God's greatest men that impacted the world would not have been considered in the *ministry* today. They were *secular* people who loved God with all of their heart and impacted and played a great role in the purposes of God in the earth.

We must stop making a distinction between that which is secular and that which is sacred. God makes no such distinction. To the Father, all things are sacred and for the purposes of the kingdom. Psalms 24:1 declares that everything in the world is the Lord's, not just what we traditionally think it to be:

The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein.

The person who gets up every morning and functions on Wall Street to bring in great amounts of wealth for kingdom purposes is just as important as the person who stands and delivers the "thus saith the Lord" from the pulpit. I might say in some cases perhaps even more important in that their ability to transform society could be even greater. It is not God's intention that *business people* and *the ministry* work independently of each other, but instead the Lord has ordained for our lives and functions to be intertwined to see the rule of Jesus established throughout the whole earth. We must change our ideas and mentalities.

As the conversation in the apostolic meeting progressed, I began to feel the Lord press me to share with the other leaders about the firstfruits principle I wrote about in *The Caused Blessing*. I resisted at first because I had shared about it previously and I didn't want those around the table to think I was beating a dead horse. But the Lord just kept pushing me to talk about what would happen if business people grabbed hold of this particular concept. So I took the step and brought up this subject again. I began to share how the firstfruits principle was necessary for business people to be trusted by God with the type of wealth we were discussing. I shared how every business that wants to be a kingdom business should function in this dimension if they desire the kind of blessing needed for kingdom advancement. Firstfruits, as we shall see later in this book, was **the secret** the Hebrews understood which brought them blessings that no other nation enjoyed.

As I briefly unfolded this principle, those around the table began to grasp it. Not only did they grasp it, they began to get excited about it. One particular individual, a businessman, was really moved. From that point on, I was inundated with questions of how this operates for those who were not just wage earners, but corporate people that operate on a level that others don't understand. As a result of these questions, this book has come about. *Consecrated Business* takes the firstfruits principle and "the caused blessing" to another dimension that the first book did not address. I have endeavored to answer at least some of these questions that I pray will unlock this powerful principle for those who own home businesses to the greatest CEO in the world. When something is a principle of God's word it works in every culture and every setting, if we learn how to apply it.

I am convinced that the firstfruits principle will birth many kingdom businesses, will propel many that are presently operating to new levels of prosperity and influence, and will involve the Lord on a new level in all of our endeavors for Him. We will see Consecrated Businesses arise.

This book will answer many questions and unfold for many the secret of the blessing of the Lord. Remember what Proverbs 10:22 promises:

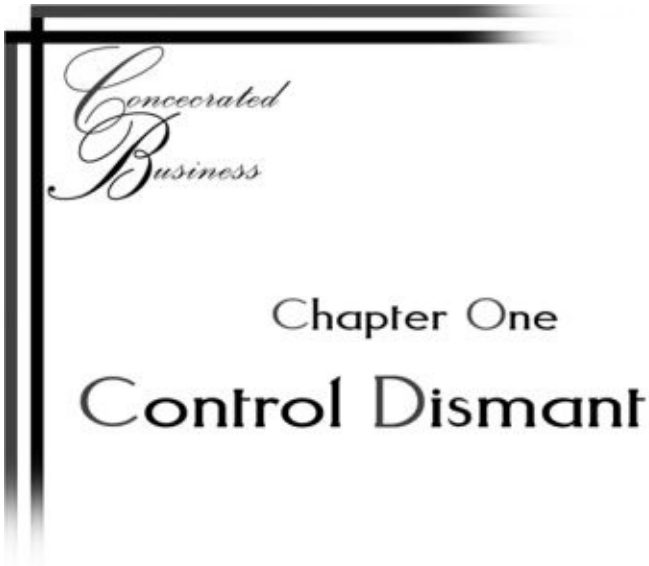
> *The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it.*

There are many ways to get rich, but when the blessing of the Lord produces wealth, it can be used for the purposes of the kingdom and we get to enjoy it as well. I Timothy 6:17 also

speaks to us about being able to enjoy the wealth that God gives us:

> *Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.*

God is the one who richly blesses us with all things that are for our enjoyment. As we learn how to function in the blessing that makes riches and brings no sorrow, we will be postured to take what we have and be a blessing to the kingdom of God. What a privilege we have been granted.



Chapter One

Control Dismantled

The meeting was powerful and the Lord was moving in a dynamic way. The minister leading the meeting was about to receive the offering for the evening. I began to struggle with what I was to give. I wasn't struggling because I didn't want to give or because I was stingy. I struggled because I had never had the capacity to sow in the dimension that I presently had. Whereas my wife and I had been able to write $20 checks, progressing to $100 checks, we had now come to a place of blessing where we could sacrificially sow thousands of dollars. As I came to a conclusion of what I could give, but more importantly what I wanted to give, I filled in the blanks of the check and prepared to sow my seed for my harvest and for the work of the kingdom of God. I stood there waiting for the opportunity to give my best and have the man of God pronounce blessing over me. As this occurred, an overwhelming sense began to touch me. I began to weep as I

felt these words come up out of my spirit and then out of my mouth. I said, “Thank you Lord for the privilege.”

What a wonderful privilege to give to the Lord and His purposes in the earth. I believe God is raising-up people today with this kind of spirit. It is a different spirit, just like Caleb had a different spirit from the people of his generation. (Numbers 14:24) God is raising-up a people who do not want to control with their money and wealth, but want to see what they have used as a tool and a necessary instrument for the world to be touched and the kingdom of God to be advanced. These people are business people who are in business for a different reason. They are not about padding their own pockets and being the boss. They are not on an ego trip. Their passion, their desire, and their goal is to be one of the many that God will trust with the wealth of the world for the cause of Christ. This is a major transition from that which is old.

Sad to say, but most of the people I have encountered who have wealth and riches tend toward control. In other words, they use their money to manipulate leaders in the body of Christ if they can. They become the puppeteer that is jerking the strings connected to the leaders of churches and organizations. For kingdom businesses to arise we must see this spirit of control dismantled and removed from operation.

We see the spirit of control at work in a man named Diotrephes in the writings of the Apostle John in the book of III John. In verses 9-10 of this short book, John says:

> *I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. Therefore, if I come, I will call to*

> *mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church.*

Diotrephes was a control freak. Somehow he had gained a realm of influence among God's people that was not healthy. People of financial means who are of this spirit will seek to use their finances to control. There are two things a person with a controlling spirit doesn't need. One is a place of authority and the other is wealth and money. With either one of these items the spirit of control that is on their life is empowered.

Diotrephes' life provides us with some of the characteristics of people who want to control. First of all, they *love* to have influence. I have always said that you should never give authority to someone who wants it because it will eventually be used in a self-serving way. People qualified to carry the authority of the Lord should have a heart to minister with it and not use it to be ministered to. This is the very spirit of Jesus. He said He did not come to be served, but to serve. (Mark 10:45) True men and women of God do not take delight in being in charge. They would prefer to have someone else in those positions, but will function there in an effort to be true to the calling of God on their life.

This is true of anyone, whether they have money or not. But I have watched people within the kingdom of God consider that their money *bought* them certain privileges. This is so against the spirit of the Lord and must be guarded against in our hearts and minds. Apostles, pastors and church leaders must never *sell* themselves to people of means just so they will give their

money. We are to be co-laborers together, but always honoring the God-set functions of each other. The God-ordained leader must have the liberty to follow the word of the Lord that he has heard without the fear of losing funds. If this controlling fear is there, he will cease to be the servant of God and become the servant of man. But the leader of the house of God or of a ministry must also honor those who have the money accompanied with the right heart. These people are invaluable when the spirit of control is not *on* them. Not only can they finance and empower the vision, but they usually can bring great wisdom if their wealth is bonded together with a spiritual heart and passion for God. Spiritual leaders and kingdom business people create a powerful dynamic when they are joined together.

Notice a second character trait of Diotrephes. He did not receive anyone of real authority. Not only did Diotrephes love to have pre-eminence, but he rejected those who were of authority.

> *I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.* (III John 9)

People with control issues will never seek out authority. They themselves want to be in charge. The opposite is true of those who are of the spirit of Christ. They love to find proper authority and connect to it.

When our family relocated to Colorado Springs my first order of business was to search out authority and leadership within the city. I function as an apostle in my own right which has been validated over and over by other apostles and prophets. I

personally believe no one should consider nor call themselves an apostle until others recognize that grace upon their lives. We don't need those who are self-proclaimed anything. If someone is one, others will recognize it. As we considered our relocation within the nation, I told my wife that I only wanted to live where we could be connected apostolically. We felt quite sure that the Lord was leading us to Colorado Springs. I knew no one within the city, except that certain well known Christian ministries were there. I will not go into all the details, but through sovereign moves of the Lord, we became aligned with Dutch Sheets and C. Peter Wagner and those who are connected with them. We came into the city and recognized the apostolic that was already here and joined them. I did not come in and say, "Move over, the real man of God is here." I was wise enough to know that I needed to connect to that which God had put within the city long before I came along. No one made me do this. It was and is a conviction of my heart. My point is this: control freaks will not do this. They will not *receive* other authorities in their lives. Again this can be a very big problem with those who have been blessed with finances and business sense. They are accustomed to being in charge and calling the shots. Honoring authority is not about who is in charge. It is about the recognition of each other's functions and callings and learning to walk together. In short, business people who want to be kingdom in nature should find and search out who they relate to apostolically and become aligned. We will talk more about this later.

Let me make one more point about this whole issue of searching out and connecting to rather than rejecting authorities and going it alone. Many people do this because of past wounds. A couple of incidents come to mind which illustrate my point. I was ministering in a church where the pastor was

under fire. It was a *board run* church. In other words, the pastor was hired and could be fired by this group of leaders in the church. Let me say that this whole set-up is being dismantled by the Spirit of God as we transition into apostolic government around the world. This is an old wineskin which can never facilitate the move of God coming to the earth. In fact this is what this particular pastor was seeking to do. He was endeavoring to move this church structure and government into an apostolic sphere where it could have the kingdom impact that God intended in its area.

At first these leaders were in agreement, but then became afraid that they would lose control of *their* church. The first red flag should have been the idea of ownership. The church is not ours but Jesus'. He said He would build "HIS" church. (Matthew 16:18) Jesus is the owner of the church because He paid for it with "HIS" blood. We are all stewards, regardless of our function. Anyway, the leaders reneged on what they had previously agreed to because they became afraid and wanted to maintain control.

As I came into this situation for a weekend of ministry, the Lord spoke to me about the missing of destiny and proper alignment due to the fear of being controlled. Many people are control freaks because they have been wounded by abusive authorities in times gone by. The whole issue of control is born out of wounds from leaders in their past. From these occurrences they purpose to never let anyone have this kind of impact in their life again. I prophetically challenged this whole church to allow the healing balm of the Lord to touch their souls and heal their hearts. I knew that if this church resisted coming into alignment out of the fear of being controlled they would miss what God fully had for them. Sad to say, but this is

what happened. When we recognize control issues in our lives, we must deal with them. They will cause us to miss the alignment that we need for the future God has for us. This is true for us all, but also for people called to kingdom business.

The second scenario that I am mindful of happened as I led the apostolic center that the Lord allowed me to see raised-up. A very gifted and anointed worship leader and musician came and desired to connect with me. Through a process of time, I brought him on as the chief musician and a staff pastor. Very quickly I began to have some problems with him. There were things that didn't line up. Yet in the midst of it, I was committed to helping him work through these issues if he would just be honest with me. During one of the times of us sitting and talking, the Lord spoke to my heart and told me that his fear was that he would be controlled. This is so common among gifted artisans. They have such powerful abilities in them that they want to release that they get intimidated by the very thought of someone stymieing them. I knew that until this fear was dealt with he would never be free to really get connected and aligned in his heart. I looked at him and told him that I did not value him because of what he did, but I loved and valued him for who he was. As I released this word out of the prophetic understanding I had received, this man began to weep. He had been so accustomed to people wanting him and even using him for his gift that the thought of someone valuing just him was liberating and healing. This was the beginning of healing for him that would break the fear of being controlled and the need for him to control.

Many business people who desire to be kingdom in nature must also have this fear of being used destroyed as well. If that fear is present, they will never be able to move beyond these issues

and become aligned properly for what God wants to do with them and through them.

Let me say that it is also equally as important for these kingdom business people to exercise wisdom in who they connect and align with. God entrust to them great wealth, that they must give an account for. These business people must be joined with those who will take the finances that God has poured through them and use it to its fullest effect to establish the kingdom of God in the earth. Understanding the need for discernment is essential here. Jesus did not commit himself to people who were applauding him because he knew the heart of men and knew what was in them. (John 2:23-25) Kingdom business people must exercise similar discernment so that they are not misused and can properly steward the money God has entrusted to them. Yet on the other hand, they must deal with any fear from past experiences that could hinder the connections that God really desires to make. We must not fear control to the point that it paralyzes us, but neither should we be those who exercise this destructive spirit.

We should also notice that Diotrephes spoke malicious words against those in authority. When people want to control with their money or by any other means this almost always happens. A person with control issues will speak evil against those who are in authority.

Malicious words can be outright accusations and attacks, but usually take the form of *concerned questions*. An example of another personal experience might help us to understand. In the midst of the effort to build an apostolic center over a 15 year period, I encountered on many occasions words and even

malicious words being spoken against me. The Lord is so faithful to warn, if we will just have an ear to hear.

A multi-millionaire was a part of the congregation. Several members of the leadership team and I had very negative dreams about this individual over a several month period. I knew he did not like all that I did. But his main complaint was that I didn't "pet" him as a result of the money he had. Still I could not understand why we were having the dreams which were warnings about his influence among others.

He had come into the church fairly recently and I just could not see how he could have gained that much influence that quickly. I under-estimated the power his money had with people. Later I found out that he was greatly affecting some of the very core of the church. He was in fact causing great damage to the work that was being built. Without intervention in the matter, we were headed for a major problem. But he made one deadly mistake in the control he was expressing and the malicious words he was speaking. He spoke to the *wrong* person.

A brother who later would become one of the staff pastors of the church was approached by this man. He began to ask divisive questions about me and the direction of the ministry. Questions such as: "Do you think we are going in the right direction as a church?" "Do you feel the Spirit of God moving here?" "Pastor Robert is a good man, but it seems he has too much control here, don't you think?" This man recognized what was happening and told the multi-millionaire he would tell me within 24 hours if he did not call me and repent. Needless to say, he did not call and repent, so the brother informed me of what was going on. Because of the dreams and

now this information, I immediately called the man and confronted him about his actions and words.

To make a long story short, this man did repent and things were made right. This is actually the only circumstance like this that I had in more than 22 years of pastoral work where the individual did repent. Most get mad and leave. Others say they will repent but don't, yet this man actually did. He was salvaged and became a supporter of the work and the vision. This says something about this man and his integrity. Yet initially, a spirit of control was definitely at work through him that was bent on doing damage to the work, but was aborted by the revelation of the Lord and a loyal faithful brother who did what he needed to do.

According to John, Diotrephes did "not receive the brothers." The "brothers" spoken of here were the other parts of the five- fold ministry mentioned in Ephesians 4:11. They were the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher gifts. Diotrephes was so controlling that he would not relate to any of the other ministry gifts. Any real ministry gift will relate and be accountable to other real ministry gifts. As we will discuss later, everything needs to be apostolically aligned. Even the other ministry gifts need to relate to each other, but also be aligned and connected to that which is apostolic. I believe we see this in the life of Philip the evangelist. He goes down to Samaria and a great moved of God ensues to the point that the whole city is filled with joy. Acts 8:8 says:

> *And there was great joy in that city.*

A massive move of God was taking place. But the power and person of the Holy Spirit didn't fall until the apostles arrived. Acts 8:14-17 says:

> *Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*

The apostles came down and joined with Philip in what was happening. Philip didn't try to take ownership and say that it was his. He gave place to the apostles and when he did, another level of ministry began to take place. Never connect or align with someone who is not aligned themselves. Even if they are the chiefest of all apostles, they will be clothed with humility and submit to others in the fear of the Lord. There is great safety in this and a tell-tale sign that things are right in hearts and structure. Diotrephes would have none of this. He did not want the people hearing from anyone else but himself. These are the ones we should flee from and have nothing to do with.

A final thought concerning Diotrephes and his control was the fact that he wanted to put out of the church anyone who wanted to relate or connect with others. This is classic control. If you will not honor him and him alone, then you must be removed. There is a ostracizing and excluding that takes place with these kinds of individuals. There is no room for disagreement of any

kind. There must be complete and total adherence to what the person who controls wants and desires.

For example, a small group of people led by a specific couple broke away from the apostolic center I led and said with their mouths that they were not starting a church, yet kept pulling on people who were a part of the congregation. They spoke things against me and the work and claimed that we weren't spiritual or prophetic enough. As this continued, their own adopted daughter had lunch with someone who was not a part of their group. She was told that this was inappropriate and would not be allowed. They later kicked her out of the house because of her violation of these guidelines. This was control at work. My point in all of this is that we must make sure that we are not the controlling ones. This is at its core a spirit of witchcraft that will bring devastating results into relationships, family, churches, businesses, and any other expression of life.

We must also make sure that we don't seek to control with our money. When it comes to wanting to be a kingdom business person, we must join forces with the leadership of the church and work together, with each of us adding our piece to the puzzle. But it is also a necessity that business people not yoke themselves to controlling apostles, pastors, or any other ministry gift. When they do they are actually empowering the wrong spirit and will get the wrong results. The Lord in these days is producing business people and ministry gifts with a passion for the kingdom. We are not seeking to build our own kingdom, but rather to expand His. His will is accomplished as this heart and spirit is in all of us. His kingdom will come and it will be in earth as it is in heaven.

There is a joining of forces taking place today of kingdom business people and kingdom ministry gifts. This is true of this new spirited business people that are arising. They see themselves as co-laborers together with those who are called to preach the gospel. They recognize the need to steward what God has placed in their care, but also see their wealth that they have and are attaining as that which belongs to the Lord and His kingdom. They are stewards and not owners. This spirit greatly delights the heart of God. Next, let’s talk about one of the main characteristics of being a steward and not an owner.



I remember years ago as an associate pastor teaching a foundational course for new members of the church. In the process I began to teach the difference between being a steward and being an owner in our hearts. One gentleman took real exception to the idea that he was not the owner of what he had in his possession, but simply the steward. It perplexed him greatly to consider that God, not he, was the owner. I remember having a rather intense conversation in front of the whole class over this concept. I don't think either one of us changed the mind of the other, but at least I was willing to confront what I considered to be the fallacy of reasoning.

The sad truth is that this idea is much more prevalent in the Body of Christ than we would care to admit. People consider themselves owners, rather than stewards. Until this idea is confronted and broken we cannot enter into the times of blessing that the Lord has promised which must be released for

the sake of kingdom advancement. This is what I mean by a new and different business people being produced. The “new breed” kingdom business people see themselves much in the same light as David saw himself.

When David committed to the purposes of the Lord great amounts of his own personal wealth, he said that all he had done was give to God what was His already. We find this in I Chronicles 29:13-14 as David is worshiping the Lord and thanking Him for the privilege of giving back to Him what was His anyway:

> *Now therefore, our God, We*
> *thank You*
> *And praise Your glorious Name.*
> *But who am I, and who are my people,*
> *That we should be able to offer so*
> *willingly as this?*
> *For all things come from You,*
> *And of Your own we have given You.*

Notice that there is no sense of ownership involved in David’s heart. He is not considering himself to have done anything special. He is not looking for honor or a pat on the back from anyone. He is in fact, thanking God for the honor and privilege of having been trusted by God so greatly, that he could now give back to the Lord what was His all the time. This is the new spirit and different heart that God is raising-up. It is a heart and spirit that sees wealth and riches as that which God entrusts to people for kingdom purposes. Those with this heart and spirit believe what the Word says. They believe:

> *The earth is the Lord's and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.*
> (Psalms 24:1)

In other words, all things belong to God even the riches that we control and possess. Another verse that is relevant to kingdom business people is found in Haggai 2:8:

> *'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the Lord of hosts.*

How much more blunt and to the point can the Lord be? All money and possessions belong to Him. He is the legal owner of it all. If He is the owner, then that makes us the stewards. All we are doing is being trusted with what belongs legally to the Lord.

If we are not the owners, but really stewards, then what is a steward? Throughout the New Testament teachings of Jesus, we see this principle spoken of over and over. A steward is basically a servant who is put in charge of the master's possessions. His one purpose is to manage the possessions of the master into great gain and increase. To simply present back to the master what was entrusted without any increase or gain is not acceptable. Only when you bring increase to the Master's stuff are you then acceptable and pleasing. We see this in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30. Jesus tells a story about three servants who were entrusted with varying amounts of the Master's wealth. One servant received five talents, another received two talents and third servant got one talent. Please be advised that the word "talents" refers to money and not some innate ability. (I remember as a child in church being taught that talent referred to my spiritual giftings that the Lord

had given to me. After all it couldn't mean money, because money was evil and God would have nothing to do with it and neither should we.) The truth is that the Master **trusted** these guys with His money. His expectation was that they would make increase with it and deliver more back to Him than what He had entrusted them with. Please notice that the Bible says that He gave to them according to each one's ability. Matthew 25:15 says:

> *And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.*

The word *ability* is the Greek word *dunamis*. This word almost always is a reference to God's power. This is the same word found in Acts 1:8 when Jesus told the apostles that they would receive *power* after the Holy Spirit came upon them. It is the word from which we get our word *dynamite*. It is the dynamite power of God on the inside of us as a result of the infilling of the Holy Spirit. So when the Master gave them the money to increase and enlarge, He gave it to them based on the gifting of the Holy Spirit within their life. From the anointing of the Lord that was in them, they were to have the wisdom, power, understanding, favor and ingenuity to see increase come to the Master's money. We must realize that there are those who are *anointed* to make money. Deuteronomy 8:18 tells us that God gives power to get wealth:

> *And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.*

There is a power or an anointing to get or develop wealth. This is the *dunamis* of God within a person who has been created and positioned of God for this purpose as it relates to the kingdom of God. Let's look at this scripture so we can see what is involved in this anointing for wealth. There are several Hebrew words here that will help us understand the depths of what the Lord is saying. My friend Dutch Sheets actually shared some of this with me while we were in a discussion about these matters. Now I have given him credit for it, so from this time on it is mine. It doesn't matter that you remember his name, only mine.

First, we should see why people are anointed to make money and get wealth. Cleary God said it is so that He might establish the covenant He made with His people. We could say that the covenant is related to God's purposes in the earth. In other words, everything God does, He does through covenant. It was always God's intention to get His Son into the earth. As a result of His Son coming into the earth, His kingdom would be established. When Jesus came to earth, He produced a people that became His church through which His purposes would be seen and done. Obviously, none of this can occur through a weak and poor people. So God declared that His people would have power to get wealth so that what God intended could occur. It is still the same today. Without wealth, riches, and finances what God wants cannot take place. For the gospel of the kingdom to go forth, wealth is required. For spiritual awakening to happen, we must have money. For social transformation to become a reality, riches are a necessity. The Lord is still in the business of anointing people to make money for the sake of the fulfillment and establishment of His covenant. Wealth is one, if not perhaps the most important,

element to seeing the will of God done on earth on the scale that the Lord intended.

The other parts of Deuteronomy 8:18 give us some insight into how this works. This verse says we are “given power to get wealth.” The word *given* in this verse is the Hebrew word *nathan* which means among other things *to assign*. So God assigns some with the power to get wealth. In other words, the whole getting of wealth issue is an assignment. It is what some were created for. Within general terms, all of us as God’s people are *assigned* to get wealth, but there are those who were actually created and made by God to be able to produce great revenue for the kingdom of God. When they make money, they are fulfilling their God ordained function in life. This should be freeing to some who have been saddled with old religious mindsets that have communicated that money is dirty and unclean. Contrary to this, money is necessary to the purposes of God in the earth. Without money, the purposes of God will be frustrated and the devil will continue to delay his inevitable judgment. As those who are assigned by God step into their assignment with a full vigor, we will be on our way to all that God desires to accomplish in the earth.

The next word in this verse that we must understand is the word *power* as in power to get wealth. This word is the Hebrew word *koach* whose meaning is varied but is unusual in that it means a large lizard or chameleon. What a strange idea to be communicated about the attaining of wealth. But when we stop and consider, it is revelatory in nature. A chameleon is a lizard that has the power to adapt itself to its surroundings. It changes colors to blend into wherever it is. I believe the Lord is saying that if we are to obtain wealth we must be able to adapt. We know that the economy and markets of the world are constantly

changing. Those who function in them must have a willingness and ability to change with them or those who have been prosperous will be prosperous no more.

When Mary and I were first married, she worked for the clothing store, J.B. White. This store had been in business for many years in the place where we lived and as wells as other regions. As Mary watched the inner workings and running of the store she begin to be aware that some of their marketing strategies were at best outdated. As a result most of their clientele were older people with not many younger people interested in what this particular store had to offer. One of the areas where Mary suggested some changes that might be made was in the way they prepared the display windows in the store. In her opinion, from a younger person's perspective, they weren't appealing or inviting. When she dared to mention this, the manager's response was, "That is not the way we do it at
J.B. White's." You've probably guessed what I am about to tell you. This individual store and the whole chain itself are no longer in business because time passed them by as a result of failing to adapt to a changing culture in the market place. They resisted new innovations and ideas and were left behind. They wrongly believed that what had been - would always be and the way that things had been done - would always be good enough. They were unwilling to adapt.

God's people that have power to get wealth are adaptable. They have wisdom that comes from the Lord. They see things that others don't see because they have been assigned of God with a power or adaptability to get wealth.

We see this in Joseph's life when God gave him dreams to know what was coming economically in Egypt and what he

should do about it. Not only did this revelation get Joseph out of prison and make him the prime minister of Egypt, it brought great wealth to Pharaoh and his kingdom, and most importantly saved the budding nation of Israel from destruction. Joseph was ahead of the curve. He knew by revelation where things were going economically. If God's people will have an ear to hear, God will instruct them in what to do in every economic season that hits the earth. We have been commissioned and assigned by God to know how to adapt ourselves and make strategic moves that result in power to get wealth. God's people can make money when other people are making money, but also make money with other people aren't. We have been called to be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. (Matthew 10:16)

The other word that we must see is the word *get*, found in the phrase *power to get wealth* in Deuteronomy 8:18. This word is the Hebrew word *asah* which has several different meanings. Part of the meaning is to *bring forth*. We have power to *bring forth* wealth. The argument can be made that we travail and bring forth like a woman in labor. We carry something to full term until it becomes a reality. A kingdom business person must be willing to go through this process which can involve an idea that spawns an acquisition that produces a marketing plan which in turn brings in revenue that then involves an investing. All the while this ordeal is being bathed in prayer while the business person listens to God. There is a "birthing" of wealth that takes place for kingdom purposes.

Another idea behind this word *get* is a fighting man or warrior. In the process of birthing, there will be times of spiritual warfare that must be accomplished. We must war wealth and revenue through. Because we are kingdom in nature the devil

will seek to resist what God intends. It will take spiritual warfare in addition to natural issues to bring the level of wealth that is needed to reality. I know of successful kingdom businessmen who have intercessors on their paid staff. They pay these guys to stand in the gap for them and their business dealings. They have recognized the warring issue that is involved in kingdom business and have decided to hit it head on. As a result they are seeing advancement come to their companies because they see the warfare that is involved in wealth for the kingdom.

The other idea behind this word *get* that I want us to notice is it means *to have charge of*. When we have been assigned with an anointing and power to adapt so we can get wealth, we have been put in charge of it to distribute it and to use it to produce more. We will give an account of how we use the wealth that God empowers us to accumulate. If wealth is so important that we can't see the purposes of God done on earth without it, then those who have it will give an account for it. So with wealth must come the wisdom and understanding on how to use it. As we use it wisely, God will entrust us with more.

There is one more word in this scripture that is very important. It is the word, *remember*. We are told that as we *remember* the Lord, He will then grant and assign us power to get the wealth. This word is at the whole crux of this book. The things contained in this word are what bring the ability to get wealth into our hands. The Lord clearly says that if we remember Him He will give us this power. If we don't remember Him, then He will not release to us this power. Without this power we are destined to try to accomplished things in our own might that only God's strength can do. We will see what this word means

and implies in a later chapter. It is very important - keep reading.

So God gives people anointings to get wealth. The church must recognize and cultivate this if we are going to get the job done that has been left to us. These kingdom business people must be fully released into their function and operation. Their anointing is just as significant and spiritual in nature as the one who heals the sick, releases and dispenses revelation, prophesies the word of God or does other traditional ministry functions.

The Master trusted the three servants with His goods. He left them and after a time returned. We find in the story that two out of the three did what the Master required of good stewards. They brought increase to their Master's stuff. The one who received five portions of wealth produced five more and brought them to the Master with excitement in his heart. Notice verse 20 of Matthew 25:

> *So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'*

Notice how this person brings the increase he gained for the Master. He says, "Look". Can't you hear the heart of this guy saying, "I am so excited about what I have accomplished! Didn't I do well?" He is like a child excited about pleasing his father and looking for that look or word of approval. The Master did not disappoint him. Verse 21 gives us His response:

> *His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'*

The Master commends and approves him on the basis of the increase he brought to the Master's money. We find this repeated with the guy who had the two talents. Won't it be a glorious day for all of us when we stand before the Lord and declare that we brought increase to what has been entrusted to us through our family, children, spouses, churches, ministries or businesses that were used to finance the kingdom of God and His will in the earth? We will be like the guy who said "Look" at what I have done. Thank you for the privilege of being your steward.

But the story doesn't end here. The guy who received one talent based on his dunamis abilities took the money and hid it in the earth. He presented back to the Master what he had been given, but nothing more. What happened next is not always consistent with the picture that has been painted of God in most churches. We aren't going to see a God who is full of mercy and understanding. Instead we see a God who is upset at the lack of increase brought to His stuff. The excuse the man uses for not increasing the Master's stuff is turned around and used against the man in judgment. The Master tells him the excuse he used to avoid taking the risk to bring increase to the Master's money would now be used to judge him. This is found in Matthew 25:24-27:

> *Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and*

> *gathering where you have not scattered seed.’And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.’*

The Master instructed him that the things that he knew about his Master, whether they were right perceptions or not, should have served as a motivation for him to have brought increase to His lord’s money. He told him that at the very least he should have put the money in an interest bearing account and let it gain a little there. But this man did nothing but hide the money in the earth. The Master refers to him as a wicked and lazy servant. The bottom line was the Master, which is clearly a reference to the Lord Himself, was very unhappy because His steward had not brought increase to that which belonged to Him. If we are to please Him we must bring increase to what is His. Kingdom business people have no greater joy than bringing increase to what the Lord has entrusted them with. They understand that their job as stewards and not owners is to increase the Master’s wealth for the kingdom of God’s sake. It isn’t about driving nicer cars or living in bigger houses, even though there is nothing wrong with this. The passion of their hearts is that God would use their giftings and dunamis abilities to bring finances into the kingdom of God.

The Master even goes further with His dealing with the useless steward. He takes away that which he had entrusted him with

and gives it to the one who has the most. We find this is the parallel parable in Luke 19:24-25:

> *And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.' ("But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')*

Even the other servants were amazed at the fact that the Master would give it to the one who already had the most. Why does he do such a thing? He commits it to the one who is the most apt to bring the greatest increase with it. God is looking for those He can trust with His stuff, those who will not be owners, but who will treat it as stewards. Whoever will bring the greatest return to the Master's stuff is who will get it. Prophetically speaking we need to recognize that we are in this season. The Lord is taking away from those who have not produced and is giving it to those who will. If we desire to be candidates as those God will entrust, then we must be stewards and not owners.

There is one more area I want us to see considering this whole issue of stewardship. There is always a war in the heart of man over this issue. There is another parable that Jesus spoke of a man in Mark chapter 12 who planted a vineyard and completely prepared it and then leased it to tenant farmers to farm. Again this is the picture of stewardship in the business realm. I am the youngest of five children in my family. I have one older brother and two older sisters who are 18, 16 and 14 years older than me. They grew up in a different era than I did. I also have a twin brother that was born five minutes ahead of me. This makes me the youngest, not to mention the smartest and prettiest as well. I remind all my siblings of this every time

I am around them. I let them know that God did in fact save the best for last. For whatever reason, they don't seem to appreciate this revelation that I have. I can only keep praying that they get it one of these days. But this is not completely relevant to the point I wanted to make. My older brother and sisters grew up when my Dad and Mom farmed as sharecroppers. They farmed and grew cotton and then sold it to the mills. They received a percentage of the harvest and the man who owned the land usually got the greater part. This was their pay to him for allowing them to use his land. This is what was happening in Mark 12:1-11 except it is a vineyard here and not a cotton farm.

These tenant farmers took this vineyard and produced a harvest from it. But as the time of harvest is upon them the owner who made all the investments to build this vineyard, sends servants to get his portion from the harvest. But instead of the tenant farmers honoring the one who owned the vineyard, they beat the ones sent to them and even killed others. The story continues that the one who owned the vineyard finally decided he would send his own son to get his portion, believing that they will honor him as the son of the owner. But notice what these wicked and evil men do. When they see the son, they devise a plan to kill him in Mark 12:7:

> *But those vinedressers said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.'*

Why did they plan to kill him? Very simply, so they would no longer be stewards, but would be owners of the vineyard. Their words were that it "will be ours." Clearly this was a prophetic word that Jesus was speaking about the Father and His Son

who had come to get what belonged to them as the owners of the kingdom. We must see how evil and insidious it is when we move from stewards to owners. There is a real spiritual warfare over this issue. As God raises up people with this new and different heart He will transfer to them the *assets* of the kingdom.

The vineyard represents the kingdom of God that was under the jurisdiction of the Jews. Jesus said in this parable that because they wanted ownership and not stewardship, He would take away the *assets* of the kingdom and give it to others. We find this in Mark 12:9:

> *Therefore what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the vinedressers, and give the vineyard to others.*

Everything that was needed to produce a harvest was in the vineyard. Jesus said He would take it away and give it to stewards who would bring forth the results and fruits that were called for. Kingdom power, kingdom favor, kingdom influence, kingdom finance, and kingdom anointing would be taken from those who had it and given to those who would produce with it and establish kingdom rule in the earth. This is the same principle we see in the Matthew chapter 25 teaching on the talents. Those who aren't stewards or those who misuse their stewardship will lose what they have been entrusted with to those who will honor God with stewardship and bring increase to His kingdom. May you and I be one of them as well.

Prophetically there is a major shift going on today in the world. Several years ago a prophet that I have learned to trust came to

me with a word that I knew was from the Lord. The word was, “Shifting of the shadows and changing of the guards”. We clearly understood that we were moving into a season where the shadows were going to shift. That those who had been in the spotlight would find themselves in the shadows and those who had been in the shadows would find themselves out of obscurity and into places of greater influence. There would also be a changing of the guard. In other words there would be a change in those who were guarding and stewarding the assets of the kingdom. This happens as a result of people, ministries, businesses and others entities failing to bring forth the results God is after with the assets He has placed with them. This occurs because people stop operating as stewards and start trying to own that which they have in their possession. They are building their kingdom and not establishing His. As we are faithful stewards who bring forth the fruits thereof, God will trust us with more. But if we don’t produce increase for His kingdom we can lose even what we have.

Another trait that characterizes this new breed of businesses person is they are not content to only give God a tenth of their prosperity and some offerings here and there, but they are in business to pour abundantly into the kingdom of God in manners that most would see as crazy. One of the most prominent people of the last 100 years that did this was a man named R.G. Letourneau. His ambition was to be so wealthy that he could live off of 10% and give away 90%. This became a reality. Mr. Letourneau’s first job was the leveling of farm land. He became so frustrated with the whole process that he began to dream of a better way to move earth. The result was that God gave him ideas and inventions in this arena. As the father of the modern earthmoving industry he was responsible for 299 different inventions. Mr. Letourneau felt his call was to

be a “businessman for God.” He understood something that we too must grab hold of: many people are called to the marketplace for the kingdom’s sake. Mr. Letourneau said that he could never out-give God. He said, “I shovel it out and God shovels it back, but God has a bigger shovel.” Letourneau felt that in the midst of his businesses and dealings that the reason for his existence was to glorify God and spread the Gospel message. May God grant us many, many more like Mr. Letourneau.

Kingdom business people have a very similar heart. They are great givers and live to give. Paul spoke of this in Ephesians chapter 4 when he was describing the living of the ascended life. He speaks of putting on the new man which is created in the image of God. In regards to this, he says in verse 28:

> *Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.*

Notice that there is such a change that takes place out of meeting the risen Lord that those who once were takers are now givers. Additionally the reason for work and labor is now *not* to meet my needs but that I might have something to give to the one that has need. What a powerful revelation. We work to be able to give. This is the heart of the new and different breed of business people. They no longer work to climb the corporate ladder. They no longer work to live in the lap of luxury. They no longer work to gain the applause of men. All this may happen, but their motive for work, is to give. Once this spirit grabs hold of business people who are becoming kingdom people in their heart, they have crossed over into a

dimension that will propel them into places of abundance in life. II Corinthians 9:10-11 talks about this heart that God entrust with His stuff:

> *Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.*

The Lord supplies sowers with seed. He also multiplies the seed we have sown. When business people step into this realm, it is like the snow ball effect taking place. The more seed they sow the more multiplication of it comes back into their life and businesses. This is one of the ways that kingdom businesses get so blessed. They are operating by another set of values that the world's businesses don't understand.

Notice also that we are enriched in everything for the purpose of liberality. The Apostle Paul was communicating that greater and greater enrichment and blessing was for the purpose of greater and greater liberality. In other words, God blesses us more, so that we can sow more into His kingdom. This new breed of business people understand this and delight in it. It has and is coming to them through revelation from the Lord. I believe we see this in the life of the early church. A most astounding account is given in Acts 4:34-35 of people selling land and houses and bringing the proceeds and laying them at the apostles' feet:

> *Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses*

> *sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.*

What would possess people to do such a thing? The only answer is that they had become possessed with a grace for giving that had overtaken them. It was the delight of their hearts to give. This is the same spirit that is within this new breed of business people and business owners. Their passion is to bless the work of God and it is what they live for. A very similar spirit that possessed the people of the early church possesses them.

A final trait that I would mention concerning this new and different breed of business people is they are willing to follow unconventional wisdom at the mouth of the Lord. Scripture is full of those who were taught of the Lord to function in the business realm. When Jesus was in the wilderness and the devil came to tempt Him to act as the Son of God and turn the stones into bread with His God powers, His response was that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:3–4)

First of all let me say that the response of Jesus to not do what the devil was seeking to press Him to do was so that He would not disqualify Himself from being our Saviour. Jesus never did a miracle as God, but always as man. If He touched His Godhood at any point during His time here on earth, then He could not legally be our Saviour. A man, Adam, lost dominion and a man, Jesus - the last Adam, had to win it back. In regards to the word that Jesus resisted Satan with, which came from

Deuteronomy 8:3, we have understanding of how God works in the business realm:

> *So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.*

The Lord humbled them and allowed them to go through a place of need so they would have an ear to listen to Him. He wanted to teach them a principle, but had to first get them ready to listen. He said the whole reason for allowing them to suffer hunger and then meeting their need miraculously with manna was to teach them that provision comes from hearing and paying attention to every proceeding word of God. They had to hear what the Lord said about the manna, then go out every morning and gather it up. This is what God wants to do in business today. He wants to teach us to hear him, then go out and gather up His provision for our life, ministries, and business. The new breed of business people are wise in the principles of business, but mainly have a heart and ear to listen to the word of the Lord.

The key to kingdom businesses is the proceeding word of God. Peter found this out in Luke chapter 5 when Jesus told Him to launch out into the deep for a catch. (Luke 5:4-11) Peter had fished all night and caught nothing, but when he obeyed what seemed like a silly commandment, the greatest catch of his life was had. Fish represented money to Peter. The more fish Peter had, the more money he had. Peter learned that a kingdom business operates off the proceeding word that may go against

conventional wisdom. Remember that when Jesus spoke to Peter about launching into the deep that Peter said we have fished all night and caught nothing, nevertheless at Your word we will do this thing. This makes business exciting. Hearing the word of God, obeying it and seeing the provision of God materialize right before our eyes is an astounding thing. May we learn how to listen to the proceeding word.

Another place where we see this working is when Isaac sowed in the years of famine and reaped a hundred-fold return. Genesis chapter 26 says that there was a famine in the land. In that year of famine Isaac did what no one else was doing, he sowed seed. Sowing seed during famine is stupidity, unless the Lord tells you to. Verse 12 of this chapter says that he was blessed by the Lord. He was blessed because he heard and obeyed the proceeding word. As a result he began to prosper, kept on prospering until he became very prosperous. (Genesis 26:13) This occurred because he obviously had some inside information from the Lord that others didn't have. If we will listen, God will show us where to sow and get a harvest no one else gets. This could translate into investments, business ventures, opportunities, and ideas.

To heed the proceeding word, we must not have a confidence in the flesh. Jeremiah 17:5-6 shares some significant insight in heeding the Lord:

> *Thus says the Lord:*
> *"Cursed is the man who trusts in man And*
> *makes flesh his strength,*
> *Whose heart departs from the Lord.*
> *For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, And*
> *shall not see when good comes,*

But shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness,
In a salt land which is not inhabited."

When we trust in man or in the flesh, we evaluate everything from a human perspective. The word of God does not make sense in the natural. I Corinthians 2:14 says that the natural man will dismiss that which is of the Spirit as not being relative:

> *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

Scripture says that when this is our posture, "we will not see when good comes." This means opportunities that are presented to us we pass by because we have our eyes so much on the flesh that we miss the spiritual word of God to us. Somehow Isaac recognized what others didn't. He made an investment at the right place and the right time and reaped a harvest others missed. May the Lord get our eyes off of that which is just natural and teach us as business people how to hear the Lord and move with Him rather than conventional wisdom.

Jacob also worked in this principle when he agreed with Laban to have only the sheep that were speckled and spotted. Laban had been mistreating and cheating Jacob out of what should have been rightfully his. Jacob struck a deal with Laban for only the speckled and spotted sheep. We find this in Genesis 30:31-34:

> *So he said, "What shall I give you?" And Jacob said, "You shall not give me anything. If you will do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep your flocks: "Let me pass through all your flock today, removing from there all the speckled and spotted sheep, and all the brown ones among the lambs, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and these shall be my wages. "So my righteousness will answer for me in time to come, when the subject of my wages comes before you: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the lambs, will be considered stolen, if it is with me." And Laban said, "Oh, that it were according to your word!"*

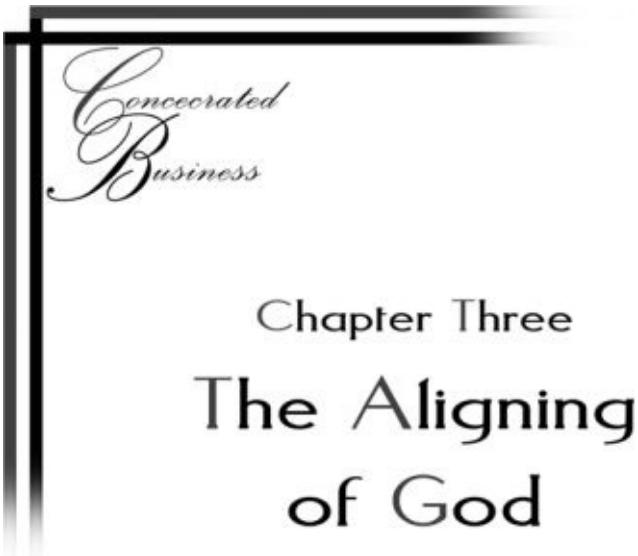
The Lord then gave him wisdom to know what to do in allowing the sheep to bring forth speckled and spotted sheep so that he increased in his business. But how did Jacob know to ask for the speckled and spotted? We find the answer in Genesis 31:10-12:

> *And it happened, at the time when the flocks conceived, that I lifted my eyes and saw in a dream, and behold, the rams which leaped upon the flocks were streaked, speckled, and gray- spotted. "Then the Angel of God spoke to me in a dream, saying, 'Jacob.' And I said, 'Here I am.' "And He said, 'Lift your eyes now and see, all the rams which leap on the flocks are streaked, speckled, and gray-spotted; for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you."*

God spoke to Jacob in a dream and as a result he knew what to request from Laban in the business dealings. His business functioned from the proceeding word. We are not to live by bread alone but from the proceeding word of God. If we will listen to the Lord, He will instruct us in how to function in business in this world. As a result of this happening, Jacob was accused of taking away Laban's wealth. Genesis 31:1 says:

> *Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth."*

This is one of the ways that the transfer of wealth from the wicked to the righteous will occur. Just like God empowered Jacob to increase and Laban to decrease, so it will be today. This new generation of business people will have a heart to hear God. From this hearing, there will be wisdom that will be unconventional and unheard of. Whoever will have a heart to hear and obey, will see the Lord bless them and increase them for His kingdom's sake. *Raise them up O' God until society is changed and the wealth transfer that has been promised is accomplished.*



Most of us have probably seen the flight of geese above our heads. You have probably looked and marveled as I have as these wonderful creatures of God instinctively fly in formation through the sky. They intuitively line up in a V formation and cut their way through the currents of the sky on their way to their destination. You have been told as I have I'm sure that the main reason for this aligning of themselves with each other, is that this formation allows for each goose to fly and expend less energy on their journey to wherever they are going. It seems that this V formation allows for the whole flock to cut through the currents of air with an ease that would otherwise be difficult were they going it alone. The drag effect of the wind is not there only because of the aligning of the geese within the formation. An additional factor is that the honking that is often heard as the geese fly by actually encourages the one who is presently leading the flock. As the leader begins to weary from catching the brunt of the wind resistance, another will fly to the front and take his or her place and allow the one who has been

leading to drop back into the formation for some much needed rest.

What a picture of what God is presently doing in the world apostolically today. There is an apostolic aligning that is going on that is producing more effective results through the church, regardless of where differing expressions of the church are functioning. The church is everywhere today. We must all remember that the church is not the building we meet in, but the redeemed of the Lord throughout the cultures of the world. The church is in the religious world, but also the marketplace, government, education and every other dimension of society and civilization. My purpose is not to discuss this principle necessarily. There are many other authors and speakers who are heralding these concepts and truth in a much more effective way than I ever could. My purpose is to show that wherever the church is and whatever the expression of it may be, that it must be apostolically aligned and connected for it to have the effect and prosperity that it desires and needs.

This is true in the business realm as well. In fact I would be so blatant and blunt as to say that unless business people and businesses become apostolically aligned, they cannot be *kingdom* in nature and function. The apostolic alignment or connection to apostolic authority is what releases kingdom authority, power, prosperity, and influence through the fabric of any business or business person. Apostolic alignment is not only essential to those who are in ministry, even though it is of utmost importance for these, it is also of paramount importance to anyone who desires the business they lead to experience the prosperity of the Lord within it and the power to transform society through it.

We must realize that anything whose purpose it is to extend and empower kingdom rule across the earth will encounter satanic resistance. There is no natural force on earth that can deal with this reality. Only the powers of the Lord Jesus Himself can bring the breakthrough necessary to see these entities prosper and increase. This authority is connected to that which is apostolic. Principalities and powers of darkness are assigned to resist and break down kingdom businesses. Just as surely as the geese fly in alignment to diminish and even destroy the wind's resistance against them, kingdom businesses that get into apostolic alignment experience the same principle. The apostolic dimension brought into the equation of business endeavors, helps break down resistance and allows businesses to prosper and be enlarged.

When God made promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob concerning the "seed" that would come through their lineage, immediately there was resistance against the ones who would bring forth that seed. We know that the seed was Jesus Christ. Galatians 3:16 clearly shows that Jesus is "The Seed":

> *Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.*

He is the one who crushed Satan's head. He is the one who has won the eternal victory. But getting Jesus into the earth through the family line of Abraham and the Jews was no easy task. Every step along the way was demonically resisted. Not mentioning all the plots and plans to bring destruction to the nation of Israel, from the famine in Joseph's day to the plot of Haman to annihilate the whole nation while in captivity, to the

effort of Herod to kill Jesus by killing all children under the age of two. All of these were attempts of darkness to stop the *seed* from being born. Isn't it interesting therefore that all the wives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were initially barren and unable to produce children? From Sarah, to Rebekah, to Rachel, each one was barren and unable to bring forth a child. Those who were not of the seed but yet were connected to the family line had no problem conceiving. The line that came through Ishmael for instance enlarged itself progressively. Why was this? There was no reason for the devil to fight against this line because there was no promise of kingdom purposes in it. But Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Rachel all carried the kingdom mandate to see the promise of *the seed* being brought into the earth. As a result the devil fought against them through barrenness.

Kingdom businesses can expect the same thing to happen. The devil will seek to withstand the purposes of God in the earth through barrenness in these businesses. This is why many business people that are kingdom minded and kingdom hearted find themselves with problems to contend with that don't seem natural. The reason they don't seem natural is because they aren't. The devil knows that if he doesn't withstand these people, they will prosper and increase and finance the rule of the kingdom in the earth and bring social transformation and awakening to nations. His ploy therefore is to fight against them and not allow them to get the breakthrough they desire, need and deserve.

I cannot tell you how many people I have heard of and met who feel that the breakthrough they need is only inches away. Yet they seem to be in some form of a fight that about the time it appears the breakthrough is there, *something* digs in against

them and things *fall through* again. One well known man of God who is at the forefront of this whole issue of kingdom businesses recently told me concerning some business people in his life, that for weeks, months and even years the money was coming *next week.* In other words the breakthrough and release of funds was imminent only to see another thing rise to delay what seemed to be inevitable. What was going on? Were these people pie-in-the-sky individual? Were they not in reality? Were they playing a silly game of get-rich-quick- schemes? The answer to all these questions is a resounding ***No!*** Obviously there are those who haven't done what they need to do and are hoping for something magical if not miraculous to make them wealthy. These are not the ones of whom I am speaking.

The ones I speak of are experienced business people who have developed kingdom business hearts. They are neither delusional nor out of touch with reality. They are simply running up against devilish powers that are resisting them tooth and toe nail because of the call of God on their lives to finance the kingdom of God. The enemy is resisting the purposes of God through them through barrenness just like he did the patriarchs who carried the promises of *the seed* in their hearts. The good news is that the devil could not destroy the ultimate end that God intended. He was only able to delay it for a little while, until what needed to be brought in place and aligned was accomplished. This is also the answer today.

Apostolic alignment will bring the added fire-power that is necessary to see the powers of darkness neutralized and destroyed. The reason many of these kingdom businesses are struggling through the throes of barrenness is that there isn't just a little demonic imp or entity resisting them. There is

actually a principality at work against them. Ephesians 6:12 shows us that there is a satanic hierarchy that we are contending with:

> *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

We are wrestling not with flesh and blood or that which is human in nature, but dark spiritual forces that are fighting for their lives and existence as they know it. These are the big boys.

Satan knows that when the church establishes kingdom rule in the earth, then Jesus will be set to return. Jesus is simply waiting on that restoration of all things. He is at the right hand of the Father waiting until all His enemies are made His footstool. (Hebrews 10:12-13) This is why we are told that as the church, to *hasten* or *speed up* the day of the Lord. II Peter 3:11-12 show us this fact:

> *Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat?*

We are to be looking for and *hastening* the coming of the day of God. This is the day when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in

power and splendor and establishes in fullness His reign upon the earth. So the coming of Jesus is not a set time in the sovereignty of God. It actually hinges on the church bringing a manifestation of kingdom rule into the earth.

We are told that Jesus' return is connected to the gospel of the kingdom being preached in the world. Matthew 24:14 tells us that this particular and specific gospel must be preached:

> *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

The gospel of the kingdom must be preached as a witness. This is distinctive from the gospel that is normally preached. The gospel that is preached today is the gospel of salvation. This is the gospel that gets people to heaven. The gospel of the kingdom on the other hand is what gets heaven into the earth. This is the objective of the Lord. He isn't interested in getting people to heaven. Heaven is a by-product of serving Him. His real passion is the getting of heaven or the kingdom established in earth. When the kingdom comes, culture, society, atmospheres and life is transformed here on earth. This is the losing battle that Satan is fighting.

I remember when I was a senior in high school and on the football team that we had the privilege of playing the 3rd and 6th ranked teams in our state. There was no way that we were going to beat these two teams. The only thing that we had to offset their size advantage was their quickness and our slowness. In other words, we were out matched. I know you are probably thinking that I am going to tell you that we pulled out an amazing upset and won. I'm not. We got beat. I still

remember the scores. One was 21 to 6 and the other was 14 to 0. We did play good games and amazed people at how much *heart* we had. In fact one of the coaches made a statement I still remember to this day. He said as we got on the bus after the second of the two games, “I would go to war with you boys”.

What a compliment to the desire, passion, and unwillingness to quit in the midst of sure defeat. But the fact is we still lost. We all knew in our hearts before we took the field that short of a miracle we would not win. This is a good picture of Satan. The Bible says he knows he is beaten. Revelation 12:12 says,

> *Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.*

He knows he is defeated and has already lost. He knows he has a short time. So what is he doing? He is simply seeking to prolong the inevitable, his ultimate and final judgment and sentence to Hell and torment. He does this by trying to misguide the church whose primary job is to establish the kingdom rule of Jesus in the earth. He seeks to keep the church impoverished, powerless, prayerless, and impotent in its commissioned purpose to proclaim, declare, and establish the kingdom of God. He does this because this gospel of the kingdom must be preached before the end can come. This specific and significant gospel of the kingdom must be preached before God can righteously judge the earth. He said it had to be preached as a *witness* then the end would come. God cannot judge the world or the nations until they have been given an adequate *witness* of the kingdom.

In a court of law, a defendant is only found guilty if the witnesses are adequate enough to convict them. If they aren't then the defendant goes free. Because God is a righteous judge there must be an adequate witness to warrant and support the judging of the nations. This witness is the proclamation of the kingdom of God with signs and wonders following. Jesus spoke of this in Matthew chapter 11. In this chapter, Jesus is speaking to cities that have seen His mighty display of power. They have seen the power and might of God, yet have not repented. Verses 21 and 22 say:

> *"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. "But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you."*

Mighty works of power, healing, signs and wonders are manifestations of the kingdom that give a witness that allows God to judge people, cities and ultimately nations. For the most part there has not been this witness because the gospel of salvation rather than the gospel of the kingdom has been preached. Jesus says that once this gospel is preached that gives the proper witness, then God in His righteousness and justice can render judgment to the nations.

The devil knows that one of the greatest things he can do to stop this gospel from being preached is to hinder the wealth that the church needs for this job. Without this wealth the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom will only be a fantasy.

We will never see it materialize and be a reality. A good friend who works in the United States but is Ugandan had a dream about me and the apostolic center that I led. He said in the dream that the electricity went out because the *power source* was struck. The good news is that he shared I made an *apostolic decree* and the power was restored. He challenged me that if I saw any *power problems* to not be bashful or timid about exercising the authority that God has given me. He shared with me that the power source could relate to one of, if not all three areas. He said the power source was made up of the leadership team, the prayer team, and the finances. He was right. If there are problems in the leadership team, unity will be disrupted and the power will be cut. If the prayer team is disintegrated or interrupted, the power of any work or ministry will be short-circuited. Equally as important, if the finances are hindered or not in place, it doesn't matter what dreams or visions you have, they will only serve to frustrate you. Finances and money are absolute necessities to this gospel of the kingdom being preached in such a way that a proper witness is given so that the kingdom can be established and the end can come.

This is our job as the church. We cannot see it happen on the level that is required to see the world impacted and won without kingdom business people. The devil is not stupid as some would like to believe. He is very strategic in his warfare to keep this gospel from going forth and the world and society experiencing transformation as a result. He hinders and fights against those who would finance the gospel as a result. If he can cut off the money, he can stop the inevitable from happening, which is the kingdom of God being established, his rule being uprooted and Jesus coming back in great glory, because we have hastened the coming of his day. The main

purpose of this book is to help with understanding and strategies that God has outlined in His word to defeat the powers of the enemy and see kingdom businesses raised up in power, might and great glory that the ultimate purposes of God might be done in the earth.

This brings me back to how we are to deal with these principalities that are resisting kingdom business and causing barrenness. The word principality means *that which was there first*. In other words, something becomes a principality because it was given a legal right in a given area and was never removed. The longer it stayed in a place of rulership, the stronger it became. This is why Jesus asked the man with the demonized son, how long he had been in this condition. (Mark 9:21) He was seeking to discern what strength of demon he was dealing with. The longer something has been in place, the more rooted it has become. So if something is a principality that has been there first, it has been there a long time. From this rulership and influence many other spheres of devilish activities can be released. But if we are to touch and move *the prince* we need the firepower to do it.

The Word says in I Corinthians 12:28 that God has set first the apostle:

> *And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.*

The word first here means first in prominence, power and importance. We are not going to achieve what needs to be accomplished without the apostle. Jesus invested into His

apostles a degree of authority that is necessary to deal with *the prince* or that which is there first. In other words, *it takes the first to deal with the first*. The powers of darkness that are resisting the progress of the kingdom must be dismantled and removed. This can only occur through the apostolic. The *first placed* apostles are those who have the commissioning of the Lord to deal with these resistant forces.

In the early church, everything was connected and aligned with the apostles, therefore everything had apostolic DNA running through it. This is what brought such great breakthrough into and from the early church. Without question, the early church experienced breakthrough anointings against demonic powers that had been in places of dominion for generations, centuries and millenniums. When the power of the Holy Spirit fell on the Day of Pentecost, everything changed. The apostles that Jesus had spent 3 ½ years forming were suddenly empowered with great levels of anointing. They were empowered to transform society from that day forward. So much was this the case, that in Acts 17:6 says that they turned the world upside down:

> *But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too."*

The word *down* in this verse is the Greek word *anastatoo* which means *to drive out of home*. They were saying that these apostolic men were evicting powers that had been in control and changing society as they knew it. We are still called to the same task today. Apostolic authority is there to evict the powers of darkness and remove them from dominion. Culture and society is a reflection of that which is in authority in the

spirit realm. When apostolic people begin to express the authority granted them from the Lord, powers that have been in control begin to be dismantled. Once this occurs, the will of the kingdom of God is free to be enacted on planet earth.

The problem has not been that we haven't understood this; the problem has been that we haven't recognized that it is the apostolic that has the right, commissioning, and authority from God to accomplish these things. Again we can see this is the lives of Paul and Silas and Acts chapter 16. They come into the city of Philippi and began to preach the gospel. A slave girl with a spirit of divination that is used by her master to tell futures and to get gain follows the men of God and proclaims who Paul and Silas are. This goes on for several days while Paul becomes increasingly annoyed at this unclean spirit that is operating. He finally turns and rebukes the spirit and tells it to come out of this girl. The Bible says it comes out the same hour. When the masters of this girl see what Paul has done in taking away their hope of profit, he drags them into the marketplace and in finality they are cast into prison by the authorities. Finding themselves in prison, they begin to worship and sing psalms at midnight. As they do, something snaps in the spirit realm over this city. An earthquake ensues and the prison doors are open. The keeper of the prison and his household ends up getting saved and baptized that very night.

We can see most clearly that something changed in the spiritual realm over this city by what happened when the morning came. The same ones who were against Paul and Silas now favor them. The governing authorities in the city who the day before beat and threw them in prison now come and treat them with respect and honor. Acts 16:35-39 says:

> *And when it was day, the magistrates sent the officers, saying, "Let those men go." So the keeper of the prison reported these words to Paul, saying, "The magistrates have sent to let you go. Now therefore depart, and go in peace." But Paul said to them, "They have beaten us openly, uncondemned Romans, and have thrown us into prison. And now do they put us out secretly? No indeed! Let them come themselves and get us out." And the officers told these words to the magistrates, and they were afraid when they heard that they were Romans. Then they came and pleaded with them and brought them out, and asked them to depart from the city."*

The same guys who the day before had greatly mistreated and abused Paul and Silas, now come to them plead with them to be merciful and leave their city. In less than a 24-hour period the tables have been reversed. What caused this to happen? The earthquake that happened at the worship of the apostles was not just a natural occurrence, but was the result of something spiritual transpiring. It wasn't just natural jail cells opening - it was a spiritual release that occurred as a principality was altered in his domain. The city and region became changed in the realm of the spirit because of apostolic authority being set- in place and released. This was the clashing of two *firsts*. God's first will always trump the devil's *first*. The principality that ruled the area of Philippi encountered the apostles of the Lord and when he did, something had to move.

Through the apostles' ministry, powers that resist the kingdom purposes of God will fall. Whether it is in the miracles that are needed to convince the lost, revelation that is needed to undo

darkness, or finances that are needed through kingdom business people to be produced and developed the apostles hold the keys of authority to make this happen. This is why Jesus told Peter and the rest of the apostles that the keys of the kingdom were for them. Matthew 16:19 says:

> *“And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

Jesus committed to the apostles the authority of the kingdom so that they could bring the breakthrough necessary that the kingdom rule of God might be established on the earth. It is the apostolic that carries this authority.

I need to pause here and share some things that are very important. We have been taught for a long time that everything flows out of the local church. This sounds good and even right, but is wrong. It goes against the pattern that Jesus Himself set up. As Jesus prepared to give birth to the church on the Day Of Pentecost, the first thing He did was spend 3 ½ years raising-up apostles. He then told them not to leave the upper room in Jerusalem until the power came. Once the power of the Holy Spirit fell upon them, from their lives the church was born. So the apostles didn’t come out of the church, the church came out of the apostles. This is huge. Again I Corinthians 12: 28 tells us that God set the apostles first:

> *And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.*

Whatever the church comes out of, determines what the church is. The reason we have had a weak and anemic church is a result of what it has come out of. As great as the evangelistic gift is, a church that comes out of it will not have the power to remove principalities. As great as the pastoral gift is, a church that comes out of it will not have the power to deal with demonic realities that resist God's purposes. As great as the teacher's gift is, it will not produce the kind of church that can pull down or alter devilish hierarchy. Only the apostolic can produce and birth the kind of church at which devils tremble. This is the church that is presently emerging across the globe. To have this kind of church, God has and is fashioning apostles that can produce, equip, and empower God's people apostolically. But for the fullness of this to be seen, an apostolic aligning must take place. It is not enough for apostles to emerge, there must be a recognizing of them and aligning with them for powers that resist us to fall.

The early people of God in the first century were all apostolically aligned. Acts 2:41-43 shows us this aligning:

> *Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles.*

The 3,000 souls that were saved on this beginning day of the church continued in the apostles' doctrine. They broke bread, had prayers and signs and wonders happened through the

apostles. Everything was connected apostolically. The apostolic DNA ran through the entire fabric of this new church. As a result even though everyone was not called nor meant to be an apostle, they all had apostolic DNA, anointing, and power that was theirs. This is the principle of Psalms 133:1-2:

> *Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For*
> *brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the*
> *precious oil upon the head, Running down on the*
> *beard,*
> *The beard of Aaron,*
> *Running down on the edge of his garments.*

Whatever is in the headship will run down eventually to the ends of the garments which is a picture for us of the way the anointing operates. Whatever we are aligned with and connected to will run down to us. If we are business people warring with demonic hierarchy to see breakthrough come for ourselves and the kingdom, we need apostolic virtue to flow into and through us in the realm in which we function. Without it we may never see the level intended for us to become a reality. This principle is seen throughout Scripture.

I personally believe the reason Jesus promised that healing, miracles, sign and wonders would operate in the normal body of Christ was because of apostolic alignment. Mark 16:17-18 says:

> *And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it*

will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.

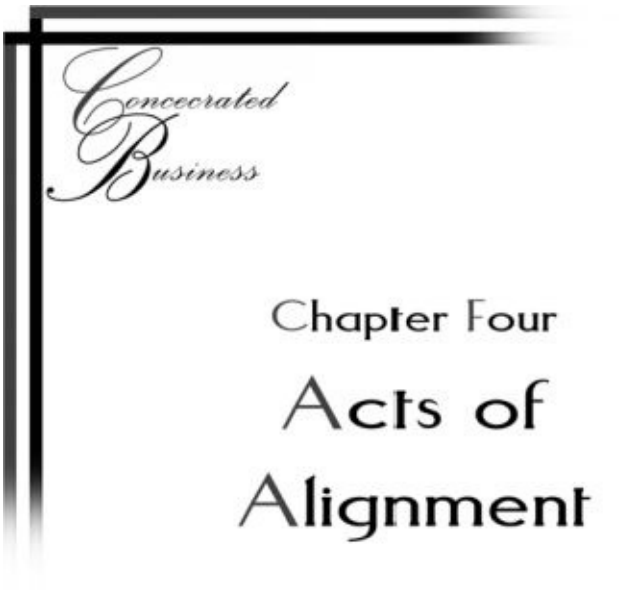
The early church knew only apostolic aligning. When the body of Christ lost the whole concept of apostles and began to believe they did not exist anymore, the supernatural in the church ceased. The supernatural power of God among God's people is a result of apostolic alignment. When this is in place normal and common believers can be equipped with apostolic virtue to practice and function in the supernatural. That which is in the headship runs all the way down to the skirts of the garments of His church. This is also true in other demonstrations of power as well. The apostolic brings powerful releases that deal with every demonic assignment to withstand God's purposes, no matter what our functions might be. It is true in the kingdom business realm as well.

Jesus also shared a concept with us concerning this whole running down of the anointing into our lives in Matthew 10:40:

He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

Jesus told His apostles that if someone received them, they also received Him and if they received Him, they received the Father that sent Him. This is a powerful concept. What Jesus was revealing among other things was the ability to release at least a tri-fold anointing over someone. The apostles' own personal anointing, joined with Jesus' anointing and then added to it the Father's anointing equals a tri-fold or triple anointing. What we have pictured here is alignment: from the Father that sent Jesus, from Jesus to the disciples, then from the disciples to those to whom they were ministering. The people receiving

ministry were actually experiencing a triple anointing as the earliest disciples of Jesus ministered to them. This could only occur as alignment was in place. In a very similar way, when alignment comes into place today and we begin to honor those that God has set into our lives, the anointing we function in can increase and be enlarged. Whoever we are aligned with releases into our lives dimensions of power that we do not have without them. The fact is that because we have not understood alignment, most of us have been ministering only in our own anointing. But when we make connections with those that God has set into our lives, we multiply the power we can function in. This is especially true as it relates to the apostolic alignment that is occurring around the world today. People are increasing in their measurable effectiveness because of the critical alignments that are taking place.



I had begun to get a real grip on the healing presence of the
Lord. The church was experiencing a great outpouring of God's presence and power as the city and even the region was beginning to come and see what all the buzz was about. I distinctly remember sitting in my office typing away at my computer and feeling this strange sensation. It was a fever and sickness seeking to come on me. You have to know that I very rarely get sick and since I had moved into the healing presence of Jesus, it was an even more rarity. As lunch time was approaching, I went home and ate a little something then sat down in the recliner. I was immediately asleep. I slept for a little while in the chair then got up and went to lay down on the bed, not feeling well at all. To add to this issue, I had told my son who was a basketball player that we would go to the high school playoffs that night that was about 60 miles away. As the afternoon went on, I was still in bed sick. My son and his friends came home from school for us to go to the scheduled

game and found me in this condition. I called for my wife Mary to bring me some crackers and grape juice. She thought I wanted them to put something in my stomach, but what I intended to do was *line up* with the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for my healing. As she brought the juice and crackers in, I partook of them with her in the room agreeing with me. I invoked the healing presence of Jesus from His atoning work on the cross and felt His presence come into the room. I then got up from the bed as an act of faith in who He is and what He had done and began to feel the life of the Lord stream through my body. I gathered my son and his friends and drove to the game and watched a wonderful playoff. We saw some players that now play in the NBA go at it as high school superstars. My son and I still have those memories together because of the healing presence of the Lord brought into my life by aligning with who He is through communion.

We see this issue of alignment being rehearsed in I Corinthians 11:27-30. Paul is speaking of the receiving of communion or the Lord's Supper. In these verses he reveals the further importance of recognizing the different giftings in the church and our aligning and connection with them:

> *Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.*

We are told that we mustn't eat or drink in an unworthy manner, or we can eat and drink judgment to ourselves rather than life. Most of the time when we think of eating or drinking in an unworthy way, we think of being in sin or rebellion of some kind. However, these verses tell us what eating and drinking unworthily is. They say that when we partake of communion while not discerning the Lord's body, this is eating and drinking unworthily. Not discerning the Lord's body has two connotations. The first is we are eating and drinking without a real awareness of what Jesus did for us in His body on the cross. He spilt His literal blood and gave His literal body for our sin, sickness, disease, poverty and every other curse that could attach itself to us. Because of Jesus' sacrifice and the price that He paid, I can be free from all of these things if I line myself up with what He did. When I line myself up or align myself with His sacrifice, I receive the benefits that He paid for. The Holy Spirit takes His work and applies it to my life and I am freed.

But there is a second idea we must examine in the discerning of the Lord's body. When we partake of communion, we are not only remembering the literal body of Christ that was offered for us, but we are connecting to the many-membered body of Christ called the church. I Corinthians 10:16-17 says:

> *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.*

When we partake of the cup and the bread we are also connecting and aligning ourselves with each other. We are discerning the Lord's body and esteeming it to be that with which we must connect. You can neither align nor connect with what is not valued. As we value the gifts of men that the Lord has placed into the body, we align ourselves with them and receive a greater impact and effect as a result. Notice that because they were not doing this some were weak, some were sick, and some had even died prematurely as a result. This had happened because of the lack of alignment with the literal sacrifice of Jesus and the lack of alignment with the gifts of men that carry the release of that sacrifice into the body of Christ. We must align ourselves with both aspects of Jesus and His body if we are going to see the power we need function in us and from us. Primarily this alignment is apostolic in nature, because this is what the early church understood. Everything flowed out of the apostolic, because everything was connected apostolically.

Another picture of the aligning that is necessary is when Jesus fed the five thousand men in Mark chapter 6. We know that the disciples wanted to send them away because they had nothing to feed them. Instead, Jesus told the disciples to have all of them to sit down in groups of fifty and hundreds. Mark 6:39- 40 says:

> *Then He commanded them to make them all sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in ranks, in hundreds and in fifties.*

This is a picture of alignment. Jesus was about to perform a powerful miracle. For the anointing to be facilitated that would result in this miracle, there needed to be alignment. The people

sat down in groups and ranks of fifties and hundreds. As the anointing was released it was facilitated and not frustrated. The move of God and the power of God produced what the Lord intended for it to do. Verse 42 of this chapter says:

So they all ate and were filled.

Everyone that was in one of the groups of fifties or hundreds ate and was filled. The anointing only ran through the alignment that had been created. If perhaps there was someone who would not get into one of the groups, they were left out of the miracle. If they opposed getting aligned, they missed what could have been theirs, which was getting to eat and be filled. This is a picture of the aligning that is taking place apostolically in the world today. As people get in their ranks of fifties and hundreds, they will find a release that will bring great resources, even miraculously, into their hands. It is the result of the aligning of God. If anyone resists the aligning of God, they will be cut off from the greatness of God's power and the breakthrough it can bring.

We have other pictures in the Word of this aligning process of God. The prophetic word in the book of Ezekiel chapter 37 shows the aligning of God. In this chapter the prophet is told to begin to prophesy to a valley of dry and scattered bones. The Lord asked Ezekiel, "Can these bones live?" His reply was, "O Lord God, you know." (Ezekiel 37:3) It doesn't appear that Ezekiel was too hopeful concerning these bones coming back to life. The Lord then told him to begin to prophesy to these dry, barren, and scattered bones. He obeyed and as he did a miracle began to happen. The bones began to shake and rattle and began to come together from all over the valley. Sinew and flesh wrapped around these once scattered bones, yet there was

not life or breath in them. What we have here is the aligning of God taking place. As the prophetic call of alignment has gone forth there has been a supernatural aligning of God occurring.

Apostolic networks are rising as apostles take their place. Kingdom business people are recognizing the missing ingredient of the apostolic in the business ventures and enterprises. They are coming to apostles and seeing the alignment and connections that God intends to occur become a reality. Bones are coming to bones, yet the process did not stop there. As good as bones coming to bone is, they were still lifeless and without breath. The Lord then speaks to the prophet to prophesy to the four winds of heaven. Ezekiel 37:9-10 chronicles this amazing occurrence:

> *Also He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ' " So I prophesied as He commanded me, and breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.*

As the prophet obeyed again, the winds began to blow and carried the breath of God into this now fashioned and formed army of God that had yet to come to life. As the breath entered this army, it came to life and stood on its feet a conquering and victorious army sent forth to establish kingdom rule.

I want you to see a couple of things here. Notice the order in which these things happened. The first thing was that alignment came, then the outpouring of the Spirit. I believe we

have been calling for the move of the Spirit prematurely, when we should have been calling for alignment. Once the alignment is in place, then without hesitation, God will send the outpouring and move of His glorious presence that will bring all things to life. Without alignment though, we will not have that which we have longed for and desired.

We see this order throughout the book of Acts. In Acts 2:1-2, the initial outpouring happens:

> *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.*

The original apostles and those who were with them all came into one accord, or we could say into alignment with each other. Once this happened, the Holy Spirit fell upon them in such a way that history was altered. This is the level of outpouring that will happen as things become apostolically aligned, but even in addition to this apostles get aligned with other apostles. This alignment is bigger than any of us can imagine. I am not only speaking of apostles having ministers and business people aligning with them. I am also talking about apostles across the globe coming into alignment and connection with each other for something so fabulous that it hasn't been seen since the first century. When apostles align with each other and come into one accord, history will again be altered and rearranged. A power will be released that will transform and awaken society on a grand scale. But this will not happen without the aligning of God taking place. Once this aligning took place, Peter stood up with the eleven and

preached a message that resulted in 3000 people being saved. Verse 14 of Acts 2 gives us some insight as to how this happened:

> *But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words."*

Please notice the word "with". This is a word of alignment. When Peter and the eleven stood up *with* each other, a power was released that shook the earth and is still shaking it today. As apostles align with apostles with kingdom hearts, we will see a whole new dimension of power and social transformation hit the earth. I also want to point out that this alignment wasn't passive in nature. It wasn't a toleration of each other. Remember that these are the same guys which have argued and debated among themselves who would be the greatest. Jesus had consistently sought to break that self-seeking spirit out of them, but it was still very much there when the entered the upper room. Something occurred during the days they were there together. They came into one accord according to Acts 2:1 as we have seen. The words, "one accord" are significant. This phrase in the Greek is *homothumadon* which means *unanimously*. Homothumadon comes from two other Greek words, *homos* which means *to be together at the same place and time*, and *thumos* which means *to breath hard with passion and fierceness*. So we see that as the aligning of God came it wasn't a passive thing, but a passionate togetherness that was filled with the fire of God. This is the aligning that is taking place among apostles today. It isn't a passive tolerating, but a passionate togetherness that is set on the establishment of the kingdom rule of God in the earth. As this alignment came, they

all stood up together and history occurred. So it will be today as well.

Another place we see apostolic alignment occurring is in Acts chapter 8. We have already discussed the revival that happened in Samaria from the ministry of Philip who was an evangelist. The whole city was touched by that which was happening. When the apostles heard what was happening in Samaria, they sent Peter and John from Jerusalem to align this revival apostolically. When they came down they took hold of this great move of God and people began to be baptized and filled with the Holy Spirit. We find this in Acts 8:14-17:

> *Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.*

The point I am seeking to make here is that the Holy Spirit didn't fall on the culture or society until the revival was apostolically aligned. When Peter and John came to Samaria, the move of God went to another level apostolically. As powerful as Philip was, the Holy Spirit didn't fall until the apostles were present and things were connected to them.

The outpouring we desire on the level that we need cannot and will not occur until things are apostolically aligned. The additional issue here is that we need to learn some things about

handling revivals. Many revivals in our history have not reached their full potential because of lack of apostolic alignment. As we see this aligning take place, the revivals and moves that God sends will not just bless the church, but reshape society as the Lord intends. The revivals that God will send and that will be birthed are not about a few people being converted but about social transformation taking place. This will only happen as revivals are apostolically aligned. Otherwise they will end and the purposes of God will not be fully met in the earth. We will have some people get to heaven, but not have heaven come to earth as the kingdom of God is established and the rule of King Jesus is seen in society and not just the church.

Another place where we see the power of apostolic alignment is the entering of the gospel into the Gentile world through the house of Cornelius. In Acts chapter 10 Cornelius had a visitation from an angel who told him to send for a man named Peter. Once Peter comes, he will tell him of the things that he needs to know. The problem is that Peter was a Jew and would not go into the house of a Gentile. As Cornelius was having his visitation, the Lord was setting His servant Peter free from his Jewish bondages. He drew Peter into a trance and there made him to know that he was not to call unclean what God had cleansed. This was the Lord convincing Peter that his invitation to go to the house of Cornelius, a Gentile was from the Lord. As the vision and trance ended, the men from Cornelius' house arrived and told Peter what had happened to Cornelius and his angelic visitation. The Lord then spoke to Peter and said to him in Acts 10:20:

> *"Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."*

Peter obeyed the Lord and left with the men. As he entered the house of Cornelius and began to speak the word of the Lord, the Holy Spirit fell upon all that were in the room and they were filled and baptized. Acts 10:44-45 says:

> *While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.*

The Holy Spirit made entrance into the Gentile world and a whole other culture, but not until things became apostolically aligned. Peter, just before the things that have been described, would have had nothing to do with Gentile people. They were considered dogs and unclean. But after the dealings of God into his life, he was willing to go to those who previously with which he would have no dealings. The alignment that had to take place apostolically was a result of God dealing with Peter's religious prejudice. The alignment happened because Peter got over his hang-ups and became willing to hang-out with those he would have normally had nothing to do with.

God is breaking down prejudice and divides in His body to bring together and align apostolically. Racially, culturally, economically, geographically, and territorially God is removing the boundaries and connecting apostolically. As this continues to occur we are being positioned by the Lord to see the outpourings of the Holy Spirit invade whole new cultures and sectors of society. It will not happen ahead of alignment

though. Apostolic alignment is the key to the outpourings and transformation of God.

Let me give you one more example from the book of Acts of the outpouring as a result of apostolic alignment. Chapter 19 tells us about twelve men who had become disciples of the Lord but had some wrong beliefs and doctrines. We find in verses 1-7 that as the Apostle Paul encountered these guys in Ephesus, he brought apostolic alignment and the Holy Spirit was poured out on them:

> *And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. Now the men were about twelve in all.*

As the Apostle Paul encountered these new believers, who were most likely brought to the Lord through Apollos' ministry, he brought things into apostolic alignment. They had

only known the baptism of John which was a baptism of repentance. Paul took them and explained that the baptism of Jesus was not a baptism of repentance, but a baptism into the newness of life which is an identification with the Lord. This is alignment. Just like the Lord's supper lines us up with the sacrifice of the Lord and with God's gifts of men among us, baptism can do the same. When we are baptized, we are baptized *into* Christ Jesus. Romans 6:3-4 tells us:

> *Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*

When we line up with who Jesus is and what He has done, we can then expect to step into the newness of life. This is much deeper than just some repentance. Baptism brings us into alignment with the Lord and even that which is apostolic. Scripture says of the children of Israel that as they came out of Egypt that they were baptized in the cloud and in the sea, but it also says they were baptized into Moses. I Corinthians 10:1-2 says:

> *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*

I realize that we must be very careful with what I am saying and implying, but is it possible that when Paul baptized the 12

men in Ephesus that not only did he baptize them into Christ Jesus, but also into that which was apostolic? Just like the people were baptized into the cloud and the sea but also into Moses, is it possible that there is an apostolic aligning that can take place through baptism? Isn't this what some denominations are implying when someone has to be re- baptized when they change denominations? Most are not saying that the person isn't saved. They are in essence saying that the person needs to be aligned with them and their belief systems. I am not necessarily advocating such practices, I am simply saying this could be the philosophy behind what is being done.

I personally believe this is one of the things that Paul was doing. As these people became aligned through baptism with the proper belief systems, but also with the apostolic, the power of the Holy Spirit fell on them. The order is clear throughout both Old and New Testaments, first the aligning, then the outpouring of God's presence and power.

The other issue I want us to see is that this breath that came from the four winds and brought the army to life in Ezekiel 37 carried with it four clear virtues. There was one breath that breathed life into this now fashioned and aligned army, but it came from four distinct winds. These winds carry different emphasis and anointings if you will. Once the alignment is in place we can expect a release of these four anointings to come on a much grander scale. We understand that the four winds speak of the north wind, south wind, east wind, and west wind. Each of these winds carry things into the breath that bring us to life.

The north wind is a wind of refreshing rain. Proverbs chapter 25:23 tells us:

> *The north wind brings forth rain….*

Out of the north wind comes the rain of God. Joel promised us the early and latter rain in the same month. Prophetically speaking of the outpouring of the rain of God Joel prophesied that the early and latter rain would be sent graciously from the Lord which would result in great times of harvest. Joel 2:23-24 says:

> *Be glad then, you children of Zion, And rejoice in the Lord your God; For He has given you the former rain faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down for you The former rain, And the latter rain in the first month. The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, And the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil.*

Let's not be so quick to spiritualize this verse. To the Jews that this was originally spoken to the "threshing floors" that were "full" and "vats overflowing" meant great business times and prosperity. So the sending of this rain that produced this meant a *hot* economy. As the breath of God that carries the virtue of the north wind which brings the rain of the Lord comes because of proper alignment, kingdom businesses will be blessed on levels that we haven't seen before. We must let God bring us into alignment, then call for the breath from the winds of heaven.

The second wind in the breath was the south wind. The south wind is a wind of power.

> *He caused an east wind to blow in the heavens; And by His power He brought in the south wind. (Psalm 78:26)*

As the aligning of God comes fully into place, we can expect the breath that carries the virtues and anointings of the south wind to come. As this south wind of power begins to blow, it will bring the fulfillment of desires into our lives. Acts 27:13 speaks of the south wind that fulfilled desires:

> *When the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their desire, putting out to sea, they sailed close by Crete.*

Many desires and even frustrations are in the lives of people in the body of Christ but in particular in kingdom business people. These people have been functioning in the marketplace and seeking to see the wealth of the wicked transferred into the hands of the righteous for kingdom purposes. But they have met with disappointment after disappointment. The Word describes their experience in Proverbs 13:12:

> *Hope deferred makes the heart sick, But when the desire comes, it is a tree of life.*

But as a result of alignment, the wind is blowing and it is bringing a breath from the south that is full of power to fulfill desires. The power and anointing of the Lord coming out of the south will break the back of every resistance, bring favor where it is needed, and fulfill the passions carried in those called to see wealth released into the kingdom of God. *Blow O south wind!*

The next wind contained in the breath was the east wind. The east wind is a wind of judgment. When Moses stretched out his rod over Egypt, it produced a wind from the east that brought locusts which destroyed the produce of Egypt. Exodus 10:13- 15 says:

> *So Moses stretched out his rod over the land of Egypt, and the Lord brought an east wind on the land all that day and all that night. When it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt and rested on all the territory of Egypt. They were very severe; previously there had been no such locusts as they, nor shall there be such after them. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every herb of the land and all the fruit of the trees which the hail had left. So there remained nothing green on the trees or on the plants of the field throughout all the land of Egypt.*

Judgment came to Egypt as a result of the east wind of God. As we are aligned and then God's presence and anointing is released, an authority will bring judgment against anything that dares to resist the purposes of God. Psalms 149:5-9 shows us the honor and privilege that the Lord has granted to us as His servants and saints:

> *Let the saints be joyful in glory;*
> *Let them sing aloud on their beds.*
> *Let the high praises of God be in their mouth,*

And a two-edged sword in their hand, To execute vengeance on the nations,
And punishments on the peoples; To bind their kings with chains,
And their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute on them the written judgment
This honor have all His saints.
Praise the Lord!

We have been commissioned by the Lord to execute the written and declared judgments of the Lord. In other words we have the right and responsibility to judge anything that would hinder or stand in the way of God's will being done.

As the east wind of God begins to blow, we will be empowered on another level to render judgments against that which stands in the path of God's intended will. Kingdom business people need this operating in their lives. As things are aligned apostolically in the earth, there will be a new level of anointing arise that empowers us to render judgments against that which is resisting the wealth transfer. Business deals will go through that have been held up, investments will produce gains that have held just steady, favors will be extended, and contracts granted that looked to go the other way. All this and much more can and will happen, because of an anointing to render judgment as a result of right alignment. Remember that right alignment is the prerequisite to the anointing of God that carries the four winds of heaven.

The last wind is the west wind. The west wind is a wind of deliverance. As Pharaoh asked Moses to deal with the locusts in his land and feigned repentance, Moses prayed to the Lord

and God sent a west wind to drive the locusts away. Exodus 10:19 says:

> *And the Lord turned a very strong west wind, which took the locusts away and blew them into the Red Sea. There remained not one locust in all the territory of Egypt.*

Contained within this breath of God that brought this great army to life is the west wind of deliverance. As the breath of God comes upon us as His army, the power to deliver will come. Deliverance will come and powers will be broken that are working against the economy. When the locusts were driven away by the west wind of God, it was for the good of the economy. God is against poverty and for prosperity. He would deal with and break any spirit that would dare to propagate poverty.

One of the reasons for Jesus' death was to deliver us from poverty. II Corinthians 8-9 speaks of the passion of the Lord being so strong that poverty is destroyed and blessing coming into its place because Jesus gave His life for it:

> *For you 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.*

When Jesus died on the cross, He destroyed every curse that could work against us including poverty. In fact, we have a great picture of this when God delivered the children of Israel from Egypt. Psalms 105:37 says in addition to their spiritual salvation, their deliverance from Egypt involved the healing of

every sickness and the destroying and deliverance from poverty:

> *He also brought them out with silver and gold, And there was none feeble among His tribes.*

The deliverance from Egypt is understood to be a foreshadowing of our own great salvation. Jesus' death on the cross saves us spiritually, heals us physically, and prospers us financially by breaking poverty at its roots. The west wind of God comes with the anointing of the Spirit and puts in place what Jesus died to accomplish.

Many business people cannot prosper because this spirit of poverty is yet hanging on to them because of generational issues, wrong thinking, wrong practices, and religious training. We must allow the west wind of God to blow and set us free from these issues. If we don't, there will be an unseen force called a curse working against that which God has intended. As proper apostolic alignment comes, these winds will blow and be carried in the breath that raises up this mighty conquering army. We will see what has seemed hard become easy as we are empowered with His virtue, life and anointing for kingdom purposes.



I was driving down one of the busiest roads in Colorado Springs when I came upon a sign that was blinking to get my attention. It read: *Caution: New Lane Alignment*. This major thoroughfare was under new construction and the highway department wanted people to be aware that the lanes were altered from what they use to be. They jigged and then jagged back and forth. We need to be aware also that all over the world, God is putting in some new "lane alignment." We need to move with a caution as we seek to find our place and function in this new aligning of God. It appears that the Lord is showing the necessity of being aligned, but then causing men and women to find that place of alignment for themselves. What many have tried to accomplish in a zeal to bring unity to

the body of Christ and the kingdom, God is now doing with and by His sovereign hand.

We can see this massive and even worldwide emphasis of God's new alignments in Isaiah 40:3-5. This is a very familiar passage, yet holds tremendous understanding of what the Lord is presently doing:

> *The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord;*
> *Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.*
> *Every valley shall be exalted*
> *And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth;*
> *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see it together;*
> *For the mouth of the Lord has spoken."*

As the prophetic voice goes forth there is a highway created for our God to enter on. According to this scripture, when He enters it is with such grandeur and majesty that "all flesh shall see it together". We are not talking about a little revival in a corner somewhere. We are not even talking about a revival in a locality that has an impact in the world. We are talking about that which is world wide in scope and power. When "all flesh together" see it, it is bigger than what any of us have seen before.

Please notice what produces and brings about this kind of impact in the world. It is alignment. Valleys exalted, mountains and hills brought low, crooked places made straight and rough

places smooth is about a massive alignment taking place. It is about things being moved around on a scale that creates a highway for the Lord. This is what is presently happening all over the world apostolically. The next great move of God is the aligning and connecting of that which is apostolic on a world level. As this happens not only are nations as well as whole continents aligned together, but the glory that all flesh sees together will begin to be manifest. We see here what is involved in this level of alignment. Valleys coming up, mountains and hills coming down, crooked places being straightened and rough places made smooth are the things that produce this alignment. Let's see what this involves.

Valleys that are lifted up speak of those who are vindicated and have been disregarded or have served in obscurity that are now being exalted by the Lord. There is a verse of Scripture that I love found in Psalms 113:7-8:

> *He raises the poor out of the dust,*
> *And lifts the needy out of the ash heap, That He*
> *may seat him with princes With the princes of*
> *His people.*

The Lord loves to take the most unsuspecting person and raise them up to sit with the princes of his people and grant them great influence for the sake of the kingdom. This is why Paul said that God chooses the foolish things to confound and put to shame the wise. (I Corinthians 1:27) I have always said that because of this verse I am qualified to be used of the Lord. John the Baptist is a prime example of a valley being exalted. In Luke 3:1-2 we find God passing over the "important people" and going to His man in the wilderness.

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

God overlooked all those who were in positions of authority both politically and religiously and spoke to John in the wilderness. As a result, John came out of the wilderness with a word that reshaped a nation. He was an unknown man who was a valley that God exalted. This will occur as alignments come to place. Valleys will be exalted.

It seems that rare is the individual who can maintain a true heart of purity and sincerity of the Lord when God begins to use and promote them. This was the case of Uzziah, a great king, but when the blessing of God came upon him, he became presumptuous and filled with pride. II Chronicles 26:14-16 gives us a little of the details surrounding his fall:

> *Then Uzziah prepared for them, for the entire army, shields, spears, helmets, body armor, bows, and slings to cast stones. And he made devices in Jerusalem, invented by skillful men, to be on the towers and the corners, to shoot arrows and large stones. So his fame spread far and wide, for he was marvelously helped till he became strong. But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the LORD his God by*

entering the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the altar of incense.

Uzziah was lifted up in pride until he was brought to destruction. He began to act presumptuously and take a place that was not his. As God blesses us with success, wealth, prosperity, influence and favor, we must maintain a heart of humility and graciousness before the Lord and His people. Remember that what God blesses us with is for the ultimate purpose of service. Somewhere along the way, Uzziah forgot this. As valleys are lifted up in this massive aligning of God, may they take their place with all humility.

My own pastor told me that when he was just a young country preacher that his pastor told him that it was possible to get so full of yourself that you can't get through the door, but if the Lord every really uses you – you will be able to leave the room through a window pane. I have found this to be true myself. When you see God really use you, it is a humbling experience. It fills your heart with gratitude and humility to think that the God of All would humble Himself to use you. This is the spirit that we must strive to have and maintain. Without it we are apt to not be as useful to the Lord as we could or should be.

As I was being trained and equipped for ministry as a young man, I recognized the propensity for pride in my life. I would spend much time in prayer crying out for the Lord to break me and empty me of this fleshly issue. I remember being asked to preach in a certain location. As I did my thing, I really enjoyed it and thought the Lord really moved in a powerful way. I went back to my pastor to *humbly* report to him what had happened as I had ministered. As I sat in his

office and shared with him what had happened and what I had ministered, I confided in him that I was really struggling with pride over how well I had done in this setting. I will never forget his response. He said, “Well Brother Robert, the Lord will not use you again until you get rid of that pride.” I remember how those words stung me as they came from his lips. I don’t know what I expected him to say, but it wasn’t that. His words broke me and pressed me to seek God until that ugly and nasty issue of pride was broken and removed from my life.

If we are to be *valleys* that God can exalt, we must be people of real humility before the Lord. Only then can God trust us with His wealth, power, anointing and influence. Otherwise we will misuse that which He has entrusted us with for the purpose of expanding and extending His kingdom rule. I personally believe that the Lord is searching the earth for *valleys* that He can exalt in this aligning process. Business people, apostles, pastors and anyone else who would have a desire to see the kingdom come in power should humble themselves in real humility before the Lord.

I say *real* humility as opposed to *false* humility. Some people have mistaken the authority of the Lord and the boldness of God for pride. This is not true. A person who has humbled themselves before the Lord can come out of their place of humility with a great authority and boldness to do damage to the powers of darkness and establish the rule of the King. The unlearned or unspiritual person will think they are filled with pride. This is because they have a wrong conception of what humility is. Humility is not feeling like you are a worm and saying so. This is an insult to God. Humility is recognizing who we are in light of who God has made us to

be. Uzziah sinned with arrogance and presumption when he got out of his place as king and tried to function as a priest. Humility is knowing who we are and staying in the place God has built us for. When we are there, we are pleasing to the Lord and serve as His representatives in that area He has given us. I always said that I have two main fears. One is seeking to take something God hasn't given me, while the other is *not* taking what God has given me.

As the Lord exalts the *valleys* in this aligning process, we must know how to keep ourselves in humility. The Apostle Paul gives us some insight I Thessalonians 2:4:

> *But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.*

Paul said those who had been entrusted by God allowed Him to constantly test their hearts and make sure their motives and intents were pure. So must we if we are to avoid falling prey to pride and presumption, we must allow the presence of the Lord to search us out so that we remain qualified to take our place in this great aligning that is taking place. His presence and His word will keep us in a proper place of humility so that we can be trusted with that which is necessary for the kingdom of God to be established.

The next step that occurs in this apostolic aligning of the world is the mountains are brought down. The word mountain used in Isaiah 40:4 is the Hebrew word *har* which means *to loom up*. Many times a mountain is used in Scripture to speak of that which is withstanding the purposes of God. In Zechariah 4: 7

we are told that which was resisting what God wanted to do so in the rebuilding of the temple:

> *‘Who are you, O great mountain?*
> *Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he*
> *shall bring forth the capstone*
> *With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!”"*

The prophet prophetically promised that every mountainous thing that resisted what God desired to do would be removed. Jesus spoke of the removal of mountains in Mark 11:23:

> *For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.*

Jesus said that from the faith realm with words flowing from that kind of heart, mountains that resisted what God wanted could be dismantled and removed. A mountain can be a demonic entity and that which that entity controls. We know this because when Jesus was asked by His disciples why they couldn’t cast a devil out of a boy, He responded in Matthew 17:19-20 by talking about a mountain:

> *Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”*

Jesus connected the demonic entity they had been dealing with to that which was mountainous. So when Isaiah prophesied that mountains would be brought low, he was speaking of that which is demonically controlled being dismantled and removed. One of the main reasons we have not seen the alignment that we are discussing is that there is a removal that is necessary of mountainous religious spirits that are hindering the apostolic alignment. There are people in places of authority that are under the control of these devils. Until these devilish things are broken and/or these people are removed, the alignment cannot take place. Yet the Lord has promised that every mountain that dares to stand in the way of this alignment is going to fall. The valleys will be exalted and these satanically inspired mountains will shake and fall at the presence of the Lord.

Next in the alignment to be seen in fullness is the crooked places made straight. The word crooked is the Hebrew word *aqob* which means *to be fraudulent and to seize by the heel*. Of course, when we think about something *grabbing* by the heel we immediately think of Jacob. When he was born after his twin brother Esau, he grabbed Esau's heel even while still in the womb. This is why he was named Jacob. His name means *heel catcher*. These are the same words in the Hebrew whose strong implication is one of deception and manipulation. These attributes were in Jacob's life even though the promise of God was with him and not his brother, Esau.

The Lord had to straighten the crooked places out that were in Jacob. This happened in Genesis 32:24-28 when Jacob had his encounter with God and a Man wrestled with him until the sun began to come up:

> *Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed."*

The “Man” in these scriptures is obviously the Lord or that which represents the Lord. As He wrestled with Jacob, He was seeking to change who he was. The Lord or His angel as it might be could not prevail and had to weaken Jacob by touching the socket of his hip and putting it out of joint. Jacob in the midst of all this would not let Him go unless He blessed Him. The problem was that the Lord could not bless who Jacob presently was in his *crooked* condition.

We need to know that the blessing of God can only come upon that which has been qualified to carry it. The Lord had to do a work of aligning in Jacob for this to happen. The Lord then asked Jacob for his name. In Jacob declaring his name in the midst of this wrestling match, he confessed and acknowledged his deceptive nature and manipulative ways. The moment he was willing to do this, the Lord gave him a new name which spoke of a new nature and a new future. He named him “Israel” which means *prince of God*. This name was given him because he had struggled with God and with man and had prevailed. In

other words, the will of God was done in and through his life. In losing the wrestling match, he had won. Jacob went from a crooked place to a straight place.

As this massive alignment takes place, many ministers, business persons, apostles and others will go through their own wrestling match with the Lord. These great inward dealings are necessary for God to not only align us, but use us to the fullest capacity in His will. Many Jacobs will become Israels. Many heel grabbers will become princes of God. God will not just have things aligned outwardly, but inwardly as well, as we allow His purposes to be done in us, then through us.

The last part of this alignment is rough places being made smooth. This whole term is a little deceiving. The Hebrew word for *rough* is *rekec* which means *summits tied together*. As we see alignment come into place, there will be a disintegration of some *ties* and some alliances that are already there. Business persons, apostles and ministers will began to have a sense that they cannot remain connected in certain places that are hindering what God really wants to do through them and in the earth. Who we associate and walk with has a whole lot to do with where we go and what we get.

When Lot, the nephew of Abraham was joined to Abraham, he prospered and became wealthy. We see this in Genesis 13:5-6:

> *Lot also, who went with Abram, had flocks and herds and tents. Now the land was not able to support them, that they might dwell together, for their possessions were so great that they could not dwell together.*

As long as Lot was with Abraham he prospered just like Abraham did. Strife then arose in the camp and as a result Lot separated from Abraham. Genesis 13:11 tells us that Lot separated from Abraham:

> *Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.*

When he left Abraham, he left the blessing. We know this because from this point on Lot is taken captive by kings that invaded the land where he had chosen to dwell. (Genesis 14:12) He is then taken out of Sodom and Gomorrah before the judgment of it because of Abraham's influence with God. (Genesis 19:29) He loses his wife because she turns back toward Sodom and becomes a pillar of salt. (Genesis 19:26) He loses some of his daughters because they will not leave the city before it is destroyed. (Genesis 19:14). He then ends up living in a cave with his two remaining daughters who commit incest with their father. (Genesis 19:30) How the mighty are fallen.

All of this can be traced back to the roots of Lot disconnecting from Abraham. Abraham had the blessing of God on him. Whoever was connected with Abraham was able to walk in that same blessing. Who we are connected to will determine where we end up. When Isaiah prophesied about this great aligning that was coming, part of it will be and is, the untying from some and the tying up with others. This alignment will require that some disconnect so that they can connect righteously. There will be an untying of some summits so that the right alignment of God can take place.

A good picture of this *not* happening is in the story of David and Jonathan. Jonathan recognized the anointing and call of God on David to be the king of Israel. We see this in at least a couple of places. I Samuel 18:1-4 says:

> *Now when he had finished speaking to Saul, the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore. Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan took off the robe that was on him and gave it to David, with his armor, even to his sword and his bow and his belt.*

This act of covenant was also a declaration of who Jonathan understood David to be. By giving David his robe, his armor, his sword, his bow and his belt he was decreeing that he knew the throne that belonged to him in the natural was actually David's from God. Jonathan had a revelation of who David was. We also see this very clearly in I Samuel 23:17:

> *And he said to him, "Do not fear, for the hand of Saul my father shall not find you. You shall be king over Israel, and I shall be next to you. Even my father Saul knows that."*

Jonathan clearly describes what he understood the will and intent of God to be. But it never happened. The fact is that instead of ruling in covenant relationship with David over Israel, Jonathan died with his father in a useless battle. (I Samuel 31:8) How did Jonathan not get what was his? He

would not disconnect from the natural to connect with the spiritual and his destiny. Instead of leaving the palace of his father while David lived in the strongholds of the wilderness, Jonathan stayed tied to Daddy. The sad fact is that many do the same thing today. The pull, security, favor, and comfort of their present palace is too much to sacrifice for the future and destiny God has for them.

In the aligning that is coming and even upon us, there will be those who will be willing to untie. Whole networks and perhaps denominations will fall as the rough places are made smooth. These tied together summits will fall and God will make a way for His glory to enter the earth.

This is so relevant for kingdom business people. We must be willing to make the connections that are God ordained. This may cost us untying from some to tie up with others. It may cost us moments of awkwardness and being misunderstood, but nothing is worth missing the destiny, favor, prosperity and influence God has purposed for us to wield. My challenge to all who want to be a part of what God is doing in the earth is to get aligned. Whatever it costs, get aligned. As this occurs, satanic powers will fall, the glory of God will be seen, and we will establish the kingdom rule of God through out the earth. In the next chapter we will see functionally and spiritually how these connection and alignments are made. Get ready for a life changing revelation.



When Mary and I lived in East Texas with our growing family, I felt it prudent to get a part time job to supplement our income of staff associate pastor. The church actually paid me well for the position I held, it was just that with a family of six to feed we found our budget stretched on a regular basis. In fact to be honest it was more than stretched, it was broken and shredded. As a result of this, I applied for and got the job of “throwing” the city’s evening paper. I would have to pick the papers up in mid-afternoon, roll them, sack them and then drive my route and deliver them. I also had to do this early on Sunday morning, as the same customers who received the paper during the week also received the Sunday paper. This required that I get up every Sunday morning around 3 A.M. and do the same scenario as I did during the week, just at an ungodly hour. There are stories to be told here, but we won’t bother now.

One afternoon during the winter months as I was driving my route, it began to snow. This is a very rare occurrence in East Texas. It was beautiful and I was actually excited about it. As I finished up the job for the day, I rounded a curve in the road in a very exclusive neighborhood in the city. I was driving my Chevrolet Cavalier. As I rounded this curve in the snow, the road was already covered. Being then the East Texas boy that I was, I failed to recognize that the road had become slick and slippery. I began to slide in a direction that my wheels were not turned. I hit the break, but nothing happened. There was a concrete median about a half a foot tall that divided the lanes of traffic. I could see it coming at me very quickly, but was helpless to do anything about it. My car went up and over the median and completely blew out one of my tires, bent the rims on the other three tires and as I was to find out, knocked the car out of alignment and bent the frame of the car itself. After changing the tire with the spare that I had, I got back into the car and begin the five mile drive home. As I drove down the road, being very careful in what I knew now to be treacherous conditions, I began to smell rubber burning. I couldn't figure out why there was this terrible odor in my car. Yet, since I needed to get home and I had such a short way to go, I proceeded. When I arrived, I got out of my car and quickly understood what that wonderful aroma was that I was encountering. It was my tires going bald. When I went over the median, I had so knocked the car's front end out of alignment that my tires weren't really *rolling* much when I went down the road. They were more like being *pushed*. I could tell this by the smell, but also by the fact that within a five mile journey, the tires were completely slick and looked like they had 40,000 miles on them even though they were almost new. The reason for this was the accident had put my car out of alignment.

How often do we also experience this in life? We aren't in proper alignment and therefore instead of rolling down the road with the ease we should, we find ourselves struggling and pushing to get somewhere. Proper alignment brings a spiritual power that translates into the affairs of life. It releases a *blessing* which means in a very significant way to be *empowered*. We become empowered with a spiritual dimension that is practical in nature. We cannot underestimate the realm of the spirit. Everything has its roots in the spirit realm. When we are properly aligned, we are not grinding or pushing, we are in the *groove*. As a result, everything becomes easier. We must therefore not just get aligned, but stay aligned. When I went across the median, I knocked everything out of alignment. I know because I remember how much it cost to get that car repaired when I already didn't have enough money for our necessary needs.

It is possible to take some *hits* in life that knock us out of alignment. We find ourselves on some slippery slopes and offenses come, either with men that we are aligned with or even with God. I know some people who are mad at God. I have been a few times myself. But if we don't know how to deal with these things, they can *knock* us out of alignment. If this happens, it can be costly to get things repaired. In order to protect ourselves, we must know how important alignment is. When we actually recognize this, we will guard our hearts in the midst of the *knocks* of life and stay aligned with that which God has connected us to. Without the awareness of how crucial alignment is, we will let go of what is absolutely necessary to our future, destiny and success. But when we know the importance of alignment we will deal with our hearts, fight with our faith, and stay rightly joined and connected no matter what. This isn't always easy, but it is necessary.

So how do we become functionally aligned? Is it a matter of words, covenant, acts, gestures or agreement? The answer to all of these is, “Yes!” The practicality of this is what I want to address. Biblical principles show us how to make these spiritual connections and alignments. When we function in these patterns, they release for us unbelievable power to make us a success in every realm. But because this book is targeted toward the world of business, we need to learn these principles and apply them in our endeavors to create wealth for the kingdom’s sake.

The principle that I want to share with you was the principle that the nation of Israel understood that no other nation in their day practiced. As a result of this nation functioning in these realms, God made them the head and not the tail, the lender and not the borrower. This is what God promised in Deuteronomy 28:8-13. As you read these verses, interpret them in the light of business. The children of Israel were entrepreneurs. They were business people who dealt in agriculture. Listen to the promises of these verses:

> *"The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you.*
>
> *"The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in His ways.*

"Then all peoples of the earth shall see that you are called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of you.

"And the Lord will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers to give you.

"The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

"And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them."

The Lord promised the people of Israel a blessing so great that their businesses would be blessed. He said that other people would be *afraid* of them because of the prosperity and success in which they lived. They would lend, but not borrow, they would be the head and not the tail, and they would be above and not beneath. In other words, the blessing of God would come on their business endeavors so strongly, that they would be the dominate force within the business realm.

Notice that all of these promises for blessings over their business endeavors were connected to them being a “holy people to the Lord.” Verse 9 says:

> *The Lord will establish you as a holy people to Himself, just as He has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of the Lord your God and walk in His ways.*

To be a “holy people” means that we have been “consecrated” to the Lord or set apart to Him. When something is holy to the Lord, it means that God treats it with special care just like it is His. Whatever is the Lord’s, God will fight for, bless, increase, prosper and enlarge. If it is ours, then we produce only what our own ingenuity and skills allow. But when something has been consecrated to God, then His blessing is added to the abilities and skills we personally function in. This is why Proverbs 10:22 says:

> *The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it.*

It is the blessing of God that produces the riches that bring no sorrow with them. We can work hard and possibly become wealthy. Proverbs 23:4-5 tells us:

> *Do not overwork to be rich;*
> *Because of your own understanding, cease! Will you set your eyes on that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; They fly away like an eagle toward heaven.*

Overworking is not the key to kingdom wealth. I know many people who are workaholics who are sacrificing the true riches of life just to be wealthy. The Scripture says to understand and cease such behavior. I am not saying that being wealthy and rich for the sake of the kingdom doesn't require work. It does. But it is a right perspective on work. It is work that brings forth abundantly.

Part of the curse that came on Adam at the fall was diminished returns for his labor. Adam always had a *job* from the beginning. He was the keeper of the garden. Genesis 2:15 tells us that God put Adam in the garden with a specific task:

> *Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.*

Adam's job was to tend and keep the garden so that it would produce the greatest amount possible. The Lord planted the garden, but Adam was responsible for the increase of it. The intention of the Lord was for the garden to increase and fill the whole world. This is why the rivers split into four heads and went into the rest of the world. (Genesis 2:10) God's purpose for the garden was to see it transplanted into the whole earth. It was Adam's job to steward, tend, keep and produce until this became a reality and the whole world began to reflect the paradise of the garden.

But then the fall came and sin entered the earth and everything changed. What had been easy and brought forth abundantly, now became hard and produced little with much labor. Genesis 3:17-19 tells us the circumstance after the fall:

Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':

"Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil
you shall eat of it
All the days of your life.
Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,
And you shall eat the herb of the field.
In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you
return to the ground,
For out of it you were taken; For
dust you are,
And to dust you shall return."

Notice that instead of production and return, thorns and thistles came up. All of a sudden, what once had been fruitful and producing now is hard and diminished in nature. Instead of finding fulfillment and satisfaction in the *business* realm, Adam is now full of strife, worry, and anxiety. He is producing and eking out a living by the sweat of his brow. How great are the wages of sin and the curse associated with it.

But the good news is that all of this changed when Jesus came. Because of what Jesus did for us on the cross, every curse has been lifted, including the curse of diminished returns. No longer as business people do we have to labor under this curse. Galatians 3:13 says:

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is

written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree").

The curse of sin, sickness, poverty and every other thing connected to these and others have been dealt with by and through the offering of Jesus. In fact, in regards to diminished returns we see a powerful teaching by Jesus in Matthew chapter 20. I love this story. It is about a vineyard owner who goes out in the beginning of a work day and hires laborers to work in his vineyard. These initial workers *agree* with the owner for a certain wage for their labors that day. Verse 2 shows us this:

> *Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard.*

The owner then goes out ever so often throughout the day and hires others to work as well. All of these though go to work in the vineyard on a different basis. They go on the basis of *whatever is right.* Verses 3-4 show us the heart of these next and subsequent laborers:

> *And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, "and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went."*

One group went as a result of an agreement, while the other groups went in trust of the owner. The spirit of this *agreement* is one of legalism. The reason people make *agreements* is to make sure that everyone gets their due, that no one gets cheated. It requires the keeping of rituals and laws on one end so that the other party is obligated to do what has been

promised. This is the way that many people live their lives before the Lord. They live lives of *agreement*.

But the other groups lived, worked, and functioned on a completely different basis. They functioned from *whatever is right*. In other words they had a *trust* in the goodness and faithfulness of the vineyard's owner. They had a revelation of how good He is. The owner of the vineyard is clearly the Lord. These workers were willing to expend themselves and labor in their allotted time with a perfect confidence that the owner would be fair and faithful. This is such an exciting way to live life. It affects our attitudes, relationships, expectations, giving and every other aspect of life when we are serving on the basis of whatever is right and not from agreement.

I want us to notice the results of this perspective and revelation. When it came time for each one to get their portion for their labor of the day, the first got what they had agreed for. Then the others came and received their *pay* and each one got the same as the one who had worked all day. Finally those came who had only worked for an hour and they received the same as those who had worked the entire time. The first ones became very upset and began to complain against the owner. Matthew 20:11-15 shows us their attitude and the owner's response:

> *And when they had received it, they complained against the landowner, saying, 'These last men have worked only one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day' "But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? 'Take what is yours and go your way. I wish to give to*

this last man the same as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?'

There are several points I want us to see in the owner's response. First of all He said He wanted to give to the last one the same as He gave to the first one. He says is it not lawful for Me to do what I want with what belongs to Me? We must understand that it all belongs to God. He can give it to whoever He chooses. We know from earlier, that He is apt to give it to the one who will produce with it. Those who produce are those who have a revelation of the goodness of the Master. They produce because their revelation of His goodness gets them out of fear and into grace. This frees people to serve God with joy, excitement and liberality.

The owner then poses the question, "is your eye evil because I am good?" The owner pointed out to those who had *agreed*, that their problem was with His goodness. Many people have a struggle with how good God is. I tell people all the time that God wants to bless you so much that people have a problem with it. This is what was happening in this story. The religious crowd or those who *agree* will always have a problem with the blessing of God when it comes in strength upon a person. I made my mind up that I am not going to allow the religious- crowd determine what I get to enjoy from the Lord. If you let them, they will take the joy out of serving God and bring you under that which they live in.

I also want you to notice in this story that the curse of diminished returns was broken when people had a revelation of God's goodness. Those who *agreed* received diminished returns, because their legalism kept them under the curse that

Jesus' sacrifice lifted. But those who functioned from *whatever is right*, received great returns from their labors. One of them, in fact, received the same pay for an hour's work that the first had worked 12 hours for. This is the blessing of God that makes rich and adds no sorrow with it. This is what God will bring His business people into. When we have a revelation of the goodness of God it changes the way we function and the attitude in which we live. It brings us out from under the curse of diminished returns and into the joy of His blessings that makes rich.

Let me point out something else here concerning this curse of diminished returns. When God was not just the owner of the earth, but the One who was exercising functional authority over it through Adam, everything was fruitful, productive and increasing. The moment that Adam *sold earth out* to the devil by coming into agreement with him through his disobedience to God, the earth came under this curse of diminished returns. What God had ordained to produce abundantly, now was restrained and restricted in its production. It had everything to do with who was ruling over it.

I know that when I went to Haiti, I was amazed and appalled at the weight of poverty in that nation. It is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. As a result all sorts of sin, crime, degradation, political upheaval and troubles are within this land. I personally know of a pastor that was shot and killed at point blank range while sitting in his vehicle in front of his home because the bandits thought he had money from the church service he had just left. The reason this country is this way is because the leaders of the nation around 100 years ago *consecrated* it to Satan. They literally through sacrifice and ceremony *gave* dominion and rulership of the nation to the

devil. If you want to see what something looks like that Satan rules, just look at Haiti. This portion of the earth called Haiti is under satanic rule because those who had the authority within the nation made the decision and decree to *give* it to the devil by consecration. If this works in the devilish realm, how much more when we consecrate things to the Lord?

Just like what the devil rules is full of poverty and destruction, what the Lord rules is full of blessings, life and increase. We must know how to get the blessing of God on our businesses through the principle of consecration. Our businesses must be consecrated to the Lord, through strategic acts designed by God that He will honor. Involved in this is also the apostolic aligning that is necessary for breakthrough against devilish hierarchy that is resisting prosperity for the kingdom's sake.

In order to consecrate businesses to the Lord and come into apostolic alignment we must learn to function in a principle called firstfruits. Firstfruits is the act that consecrates businesses to the Lord and makes them kingdom in nature. In fact, firstfruits is the means of God to consecrate anything to the Lord. In Romans 11:16, we find a foundational truth concerning this principle of firstfruits:

> *For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches.*

This passage reveals to us something very powerful about consecrating our businesses and even lives to the Lord. To consecrate the *lump* or the whole, what is required is the first and best portion of that *lump* to be given to the "Lord.

When we take a firstfruits portion and offer it to the Lord according to this scripture, we do two things. The first is that whatever we sow the firstfruits in behalf of, becomes consecrated to the Lord. I believe we can see this in a most significant way in Jesus coming to earth to be our Savior. When Jesus came to earth, He came in human flesh. He came as a man. (Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 2:14-18) In other words, He came and became a part of the *lump* of humanity. God then took Jesus as a firstfruits portion of the *lump* of humanity and offered Him up as a firstfruits offering. He was and is the absolute best part of humanity that ever lived. He is the firstfruits portion. Through His sacrifice on the cross, He sanctified and consecrated the whole human race, so that whoever exercises faith in His offering is saved. In other words, it is the firstfruits principle that gets us saved and into heaven. This principle has power in this life and the one to come.

Next we see from this scripture in Romans 11:16 that:

…if the root is holy so are the branches.

When we make a firstfruits offering, we create a holy root that allows the branches of our future and destiny to grow out of. Because the root is holy, so are the branches considered holy that grow from this created root through the consecrating act of firstfruits. So when I sow a firstfruits offering in behalf of my business, I create a root in God that allows prosperity and increase to come. My business becomes holy to the Lord as a result of it being consecrated through the act of firstfruits.

I need to make something very plain here. Because of teaching that has linked the whole issue of firstfruits and tithing together, there is confusion. Many people believe that firstfruits and tithing are the same. They in fact *are not*. Notice the difference between tithing and firstfruits: Firstfruits is the offering you sow first, ***before*** your harvest, while the tithe is what you render ***after*** your harvest.

Firstfruits was the offering that was brought during the Feast of Pentecost which was observed 50 days after the Day of Antonement in the Jewish calendar. It was so positioned that it arrived as the crops began to ripen during the first harvest of the year. There were two distinct times of harvest in the Jewish culture, this first harvest we have spoken of and the second harvest was during the third feast of the year called the Feast of Ingathering. As this first harvest began to ripen at the same time that the Feast of Pentecost was observed, or the Feast of Firstfruits as it was also known, the people would go through their crops and glean the ripening heads of grain as the first portion and bring this part as their firstfruits offering of the Lord. This was before the harvest had ever come in. This first gleaned portion was called the "firstfruits" when brought to the priest, (which is a picture of the New Testament apostle - we will discuss later) and was the part that made the entire first and second harvest consecrated to the Lord. This was the portion that was taken from the *lump* or harvest that caused not just the firstfruits to be holy, but the lump or harvest it came from as well.

Through firstfruits, the business owners consecrated their businesses and their profits from these businesses to the Lord. They became holy to the Lord, so that He treated them special and defended them from every attack until the fullness of the

harvest was seen. Please realize that these people we are speaking of were agricultural business people of their day. Through firstfruits, businesses can become kingdom in nature because they are consecrated to the Lord and become holy unto Him.

The business owners of Israel were the only nation who functioned in this principle. Other nations went through their harvest and gleaned it. What they did with it though was different than the people of God. They would take this gleaning and store it up in the barn in case pestilence, hail, an enemy or any other disastrous thing struck their harvest and they lost it. With the gleaning they had stored up they would replant and not go without or come into poverty. The business owners of Israel did not do this. They instead took this gleaning and waved it before the Lord on the Day of Firstfruits. (Numbers 28:26) As they offered the first and the best of their crops to the Lord in an act of firstfruits, God released divine protection and prosperity over the crops they were consecrating to Him. As a result the first and second harvest of the year was given to the Lord through this act of consecration. Supernatural prosperity came upon them and their businesses. We see this echoed in Proverbs 3:9-10:

> *Honor the Lord with your possessions,*
> *And with the firstfruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.*

Notice that as these business people honored the Lord and put Him first by the act of firstfruits that I have described, that barns are filled with plenty and vats run over with new wine. The Word of God promises *barns* plural and *vats* plural as

well. In other words, great wealth and prosperity is described as a result of consecrating our business and its dealings through the act of firstfruits.

The word *plenty* is the Hebrew word *saba* which means *to be satisfied and filled to the point of being weary of it*. God's blessings come so strongly on businesses that have been consecrated by firstfruits that there is so much that we even become tired of looking at it. I don't know about you, but that seems like a good problem: God blesses businesses that become kingdom in nature through the consecrating principle of firstfruits to the point that their main problem will be what to do with it all. There will have to be whole divisions and arms of our businesses developed for the purpose of distribution because of the blessings that makes rich and adds no sorrow with it. All because business owners and the businesses themselves have been consecrated and made holy to the Lord through firstfruits. What we have discovered concerning being the lender and not the borrower, the head and not the tail, above and not beneath becomes a reality in the business sector.

Remember the whole issue of power to get or create wealth out of Deuteronomy 8:18?

> *And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day.*

We discussed earlier the words in this verse and their connection to the anointing or power to obtain wealth so that the covenant of the Lord or the purposes of God might be fulfilled in the earth. The establishing of kingdom rule will not

be accomplished without great amounts of wealth. But this is all released from the word “remember.” We are told that we must *remember* the Lord our God. The previous verses admonish and challenge the people to not “forget” the Lord their God and to think it was their own might that produced the wealth. Deuteronomy 8:17 says:

> *then you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gained me this wealth.'*

What an insult to the Lord for us to think and to say that we produced the wealth, when it was He who blessed us with the power to get rich and have no sorrow with it. But the power to get wealth was connected to *remembering* the Lord our God. The way the Jews remembered the Lord and acknowledged that it was His blessing and not their own ingenuity was through the realm of firstfruits. By consecrating their harvest and pursuit of prosperity by the act of firstfruits, they were *remembering* Him and in a very tangible way putting Him first in all things. As they acknowledged that it was His blessing and not their ability that produced prosperity through the operation of firstfruits, they kept God in the proper place of their lives and business dealings. As a result of this, God’s blessings came upon them unrestrained. The principle of firstfruits is an act of consecration and as we will see one of apostolic alignment. This brought the blessing of God on the business realm of God’s people because they had declared through their act of faith that their dependence was on the Lord and not their own strength.

Let me address this whole issue of the tithe now. Firstfruits was what was brought to make the business and its endeavors holy to the Lord, while tithe was that which was brought ***after*** the

harvest. Three different places in Scripture show this distinction. The first is found in Nehemiah 10:35-37:

> *And we made ordinances to bring the firstfruits of our ground and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, to the house of the Lord; to bring the firstborn of our sons and our cattle, as it is written in the Law, and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks, to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God; to bring the firstfruits of our dough, our offerings, the fruit from all kinds of trees, the new wine and oil, to the priests, to the storerooms of the house of our God; and to bring the tithes of our land to the Levites, for the Levites should receive the tithes in all our farming communities.*

This passage talks about the firstfruits in verses 35-36 being brought to the priest. Then we are told in verse 37 to bring the tithe to the Levite. The firstfruits were given to the High Priest and his family on a yearly basis. The tithe went to the Levite after the harvest came in throughout all the farming communities. The firstfruits were before the harvest, while the tithe was after the harvest. To understand this fully, we must know the difference between the priest and the Levites.

The Priest was of the lineage of Aaron, the first High Priest. He and his family were responsible for making sacrifices and offerings that kept the blessing flowing over the nation. He is a prophetic picture of Jesus Himself as our High Priest. But he is also a picture of the apostolic ministry of the New Testament. Hebrews 3:1 link these two offices together:

> *Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus.*

In Jesus the priesthood and the apostolic are joined. So the shadow we see in the Old Testament of the priesthood is fulfilled in the substance of the apostle in the New Testament. The firstfruits offering belong therefore to the New Testament apostle. These are patterns that we can see and apply out of the Spirit of the Lord's leading. We will discuss more later on how the firstfruits brings us into this alignment and connection with the apostolic so that the blessing of God can flow over us and our business just like it did over the nation of Israel's businesses in the days of Aaron's priesthood.

The Levites were one of the twelve tribes of Israel. They were set a part as the tribe of ministry. Their function was to take care of the tabernacle or the dwelling place of God. Their support came from the tithes of the people after the harvest. They were able to devote themselves fully to the service of the Lord and His dwelling place because of this tithe. They are a picture of local church leadership. This is what the tithe does. It honors and provides for the local church leadership and its function. The local church leadership's job is to serve the dwelling place of God which is His people. (Ephesians 2:21- 22)

So within this concept we see that firstfruits could not be the same as the tithe, because the firstfruits belonged to the priest who had a particular function and the tithe belonged to the Levites which had another function. We see this also in Numbers chapter 18. This is the portion of Scripture where we

see God spelling out how the priest would be supported and how the Levites were to be taken care of. God speaks to the priest in Numbers 18:13-14 and tells them that the firstfruits are theirs as His inheritance into their lives:

> *"Whatever first ripe fruit is in their land, which they bring to the Lord, shall be yours. Everyone who is clean in your house may eat it. Every devoted thing in Israel shall be yours."*

Anything and everything that was a *first* belonged to the priest. This was so that the priest and His ministry might be financed. Again, the priest is a picture and a foreshadowing of the apostles of the New Testament. This is why God has called kingdom business people and apostles to join together for the sake of the kingdom. As this occurs, two primary things happen. The kingdom is financed and the business people experience great prosperity because they have consecrated and aligned their business through firstfruits. As the first portion is used to consecrate the whole, great wealth, prosperity and increase come to the kingdom business people who dare to honor the Lord and align with the apostolic authority that God has placed in their life. But clearly this is different from the tithe.

In Numbers 18 we also see the Lord addressing where the tithe was to go. In verse 21 we see where the Levites or the children of Levi were to garner their support:

> *"Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tithes in Israel as an inheritance in return for the work which they perform, the work of the tabernacle of meeting."*

The tithes of the people of Israel were to go to the Levites. Remember that the Levites are a picture to us of local church leadership. This is why Paul told Timothy to count the elders who ruled well as worthy of double honor. I Timothy 5:17-18 says

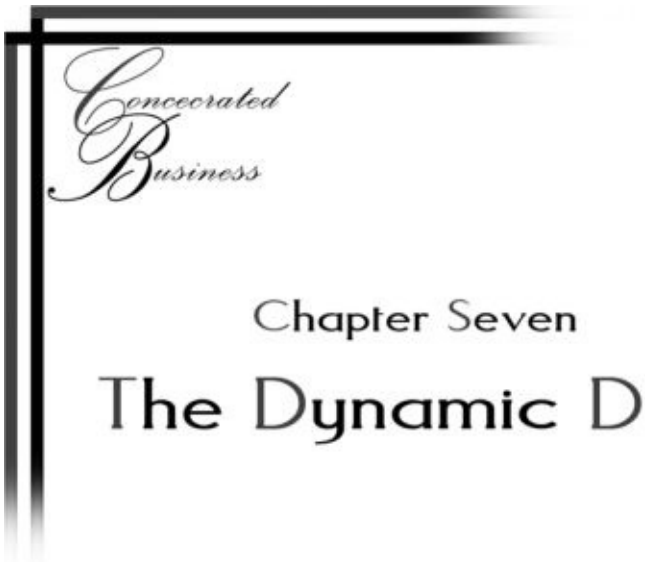
> *Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."*

Timothy was an apostolic emissary of Paul. He was in Ephesus setting things in order in this particular church. One of the instructions he received from Paul was to set in place the support of the local leaders. Elders are local ministry leaders primarily. From the picture we have in Numbers 18, their support came from the tithes of the people, while the support of the apostolic came from the firstfruits principle. It is appropriate for us to glean understanding from Old Testament pictures in regards to these things, because Paul did. In I Corinthians 9:13-14, Paul uses the ideas, concepts and picture of the Old Testament to show how the ministry was to be supported and sustained. In speaking of the financing of apostolic ministry in this particular chapter Paul says:

> *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 from the gospel.

Paul drew from the patterns revealed in the Old Testament to establish New Testament order for the people of God. We are not under Old Testament law. These patterns are not something we have to do; they are things we get to do. When we discover a pattern and align with it, we get the power of that pattern flowing into our lives. As the apostolic is honored with the firstfruits and the local leadership with the tithe, we create a dynamic duo that results in things working for us in the spirit realm. Spiritual forces are set in motion that break down every resistance against our lives and business as we function in these principles.



Chapter Seven

The Dynamic Duo

When I was a child I remember watching the old *Batman* series. Many of you will remember this while some will not be old enough to appreciate what I am about to say. During the mid 60's kids would not miss this show every week. We always wanted to be in place to watch the show at the same "Bat Time" and on the same "Bat Channel". Batman along with his sidekick Robin were crime fighters in Gotham City. In *real life* Batman was Bruce Gordan. He was a wealthy philanthropist. But when evil touched the city in the likes of the Joker, the Riddler or some other criminal super-power, Batman and Robin would go to the Bat Cave, get in their Bat Mobile and be off to save the day. They were known as the "dynamic duo". Time after time they worked on behalf of the city, its people and its leaders to defeat that which was attacking it and to restore safety, protection, prosperity and good fortune.

The “dynamic duo” is a good picture of firstfruits and the tithe. When we function in both as people and kingdom businesses, we release the dynamic duo to work in our behalf. These together will do things in the realm of the spirit that is strong and powerful. A picture of this is seen in II Chronicles 31:4-10 which is the account of Hezekiah bringing reformation and restoration to the nation of Israel. He destroys and breaks-down idol worship and returns a people to their true God. In the midst of this, Hezekiah re-institutes the principles of firstfruits and tithes:

> *Moreover he commanded the people who dwelt in Jerusalem to contribute support for the priests and the Levites, that they might devote themselves to the Law of the Lord.*
>
> *As soon as the commandment was circulated, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of grain and wine, oil and honey, and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything.*
>
> *And the children of Israel and Judah, who dwelt in the cities of Judah, brought the tithe of oxen and sheep; also the tithe of holy things which were consecrated to the Lord their God they laid in heaps.*
>
> *In the third month they began laying them in heaps, and they finished in the seventh month.*

> *And when Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed the Lord and His people Israel.*
>
> *Then Hezekiah questioned the priests and the Levites concerning the heaps.*
>
> *And Azariah the chief priest, from the house of Zadok, answered him and said, "Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat and have plenty left, for the Lord has blessed His people; and what is left is this great abundance."*

As the people with a generous and abundant heart began to bring in the firstfruits and also the tithe, which we now know to be two separate items, something broke in the realm of the spirit and an unprecedented blessing began to flow over the people's lives and businesses. We know this, because Azariah said that from the time the people *began* to function in these principles, the Lord blessed His people with prosperity and wealth.

This was so much the case that there were *heaps* which were brought to the Lord in firstfruits and tithes. The Priest was able to *eat* from the firstfruits, while the Levites *ate* from the tithes and there was still much abundance because of the supernatural blessing of God that had come on His people. They were learning firsthand the power of the dynamic duo of firstfruits and of tithes. When businesses step into these principles and consecrate themselves to the Lord, similar blessings will occur,

as the powers that resist us fall under the weight of that which has been set in motion in the spirit realm.

I need to address one more issue in regards to the tithe. The priests were supported by the firstfruits of the people and businesses owners. The Levites were ministered to from the tithes of the people. But there is one more facet that we need to see in the picture provided for us in Numbers 18. In addition to the firstfruits of the people, the priest, or that which is apostolic also received tithes from the Levites. Verses 26-28 show us this principle:

> *"Speak thus to the Levites, and say to them: 'When you take from the children of Israel the tithes which I have given you from them as your inheritance, then you shall offer up a heave offering of it to the Lord, a tenth of the tithe. 'And your heave offering shall be reckoned to you as though it were the grain of the threshing floor and as the fullness of the winepress. 'Thus you shall also offer a heave offering to the Lord from all your tithes which you receive from the children of Israel, and you shall give the Lord's heave offering from it to Aaron the priest."*

Because the Levites are pictures of local church ministry, they are to be apostolically aligned and connected. This is what their personal tithe is for. With the tithe they honor the apostolic that is in their lives and from which they draw.

So to clarify the pattern and picture of the Lord, let's look at the pattern one more time. The people honored the Levites or local church leadership with the tithe. The Levites or local

church leadership honored and sowed their tithe into the priest or the apostolic. And finally, the people and the Levites honored the priest or apostolic with firstfruits.

When these patterns are tapped there is a dynamic duo that is released in everyone's behalf. The power of firstfruits sets in operation spiritual forces of blessing and breakthrough, while the tithe allows anything that would be a devouring force to be rebuked and removed.

Firstfruits cause a blessing to come on your house. Ezekiel 44:30 says:

> *"The best of all firstfruits of any kind, and every sacrifice of any kind from all your sacrifices, shall be the priest's; also you shall give to the priest the first of your ground meal, to cause a blessing to rest on your house."*

When the Bible speaks of your *house* it is referring to, among other things, your lineage and generations now and to come. But your house can also contain your business as well. Your business flows out of your house. When someone consecrates their house to the Lord, they are consecrating everything connected to that house, including their business. As a result there is a *caused blessing* that will rest, or come and stay on your house and business. It isn't a blessing that comes and stays temporarily. Instead the blessings come and remain and produce life, prosperity, income and increase for generations to come. Our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and beyond can be blessed in life and business because of our functioning in firstfruits. This is the power of firstfruits.

Another scripture revealing significant blessing connected to firstfruits is the occasion of the taking of Jericho in the book of Joshua. When the people of God crossed the river Jordan to enter their promise land, the first city of conquest was Jericho. God commanded them that they were not to touch or take any of it. Joshua 6:17-19 shows us that God claimed the city of Jericho as a firstfruits offering to Himself:

> *"Now the city shall be doomed by the Lord to destruction, it and all who are in it. Only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all who are with her in the house, because she hid the messengers that we sent. "And you, by all means abstain from the accursed things, lest you become accursed when you take of the accursed things, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it."But all the silver and gold, and vessels of bronze and iron, are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord."*

The silver and the gold were to go into the treasury of the Lord, the city was to be burned with fire and all the people killed as a sacrifice to the Lord. The people were allowed to take none of the spoils from this **first city**. None of it was to be touched. Why would the Lord give such a command? The answer is that He was pressing the people into the firstfruits principle so He could legally bless their conquest. Before they took any other city in their conquest, they had to fully and completely honor Him with the first, before they had any of the other. When they had this done, they marched through the rest of the land and completely took it and subdued it. Obedience to the firstfruits principle caused no enemy to be able to stand before them in

their conquest. How applicable this is to business. When we are seeking to establish a business, or take one to new levels, we must consecrate it to the Lord through firstfruits. When we do, we may have enemies, but every one will fall before us because what we are doing is consecrated to the Lord through firstfruits. The establishing of business involves warfare. We empower our ability to bring down strongholds in the process of the warfare of business through our function in firstfruits.

This is what eventually happened to the nation of Israel, but not until they learned a valuable lesson. Achan, one of the soldiers in Israel's army, decided that the command to give God the first didn't really mean him. So he took a wedge of gold, Babylonian garment and some silver and hid it in his tent. (Joshua 7:21) This act that violated firstfruits caused the army of God to be defeated before its next enemy. Joshua 7:10-12 shows God speaking to Joshua about why they have been defeated by their next enemy:

> *So the Lord said to Joshua: "Get up! Why do you lie thus on your face? "Israel has sinned, and they have also transgressed My covenant which I commanded them. For they have even taken some of the accursed things, and have both stolen and deceived; and they have also put it among their own stuff. "Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they have become doomed to destruction. Neither will I be with you anymore, unless you destroy the accursed from among you."*

Notice that the Lord told Joshua to quit praying. When the firstfruits principle has been violated no amount of praying can defeat our enemies until the Lord is properly honored and our conquest is consecrated through firstfruits. Inferior enemies were able to defeat Israel and its conquest of the land because firstfruits had not been honored. But we know the end of the story. Once the problem was addressed, solved and things were rightly aligned through firstfruits, Israel marched through the land and completely took it and all its resources. So shall we when we consecrate the conquest of our businesses through firstfruits. Jeremiah 2:3 reflects this which we see in Joshua:

> *'Israel was holiness to the Lord, The firstfruits of His increase. All that devour him will offend; Disaster will come upon them," says the Lord.' "*

Anything or any business that is consecrated by firstfruits is defended and protected by the Lord. Notice that He says if something dares to rise up and touch what has been consecrated through firstfruits, God is offended at that thing. He will bring disaster upon whatever seeks to impend what has been consecrated by firstfruits giving. Businesses need this, especially kingdom businesses that have satanic resistance against them. When we operate in firstfruits, our prayers and warfare are empowered in behalf of our businesses and lives. Breakthrough comes because God fights for what has been given to Him through firstfruits.

The other part of the dynamic duo is the tithe. In normal setting, businesses should tithe to the local church leadership. The firstfruits should align and connect businesses to the apostolic, which is necessary for the spiritual force to break down devilish resistance against them; the tithe on the other

hand should honor and connect to local church ministries in which these businesses and business people are established. All this is true, unless the business people are *apostolic* themselves. Then the tithe might need to be dispersed differently. Before I go into this based on the pattern seen in Numbers chapter 18 and the function of the Levites toward the priest with their tithe, let me finish this whole issue of the dynamic duo.

I have given you a glimpse of what the firstfruits do and the blessings and power associated with it. The tithe on the other hand is also very powerful. In fact I believe that God so established the whole issue of firstfruits and the tithe, with one being at the front end of the harvest and the other being at the back end of the harvest, to seal and shield our harvest, businesses and lives completely. In other words, when we function in both, we set a protection and guard that no devil or enemy can penetrate. With firstfruits at the front and tithe at the back we have God and His forces surrounding us completely. They create a shield and a barrier that is divine in nature and strength. The word of God in Psalms 125:2 says:

> *As the mountains surround Jerusalem, So the Lord surrounds His people From this time forth and forever.*

There is a surrounding effect that comes from the dynamic duo of firstfruits and the tithe. Let me say that so many business people do not tithe from their businesses. They tithe off the salary they get from their business, but not from the business itself. When this is neglected, there is an opening on the *backside* because of a lack of follow through in this realm. If we want businesses completely covered, protected, empowered

and prospering on a kingdom level, then firstfruits should be functioned in without leaving the tithe undone.

Tithing off a business is done primarily from the profits. In other words the tithe is computed after the expenses have been extracted and the profit is seen. Whatever the bottom line profit is for the month, year or however such things are done in the business, from this figure a tithe or tenth of this should be given. Malachi 3:10-12 gives us seven promises to those who tithe:

> *“Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That*
> *there may be food in My house, And try Me now*
> *in this,"*
> *Says the Lord of hosts,*
> *"If I will not open for you the windows of*
> *heaven*
> *And pour out for you such blessing*
> *That there will not be room enough to receive it. "And I will*
> *rebuke the devourer for your sakes,*
> *So that he will not destroy the fruit of your*
> *ground,*
> *Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,"*
> *Says the Lord of hosts;*
> *"And all nations will call you blessed, For you*
> *will be a delightful land," Says the Lord of*
> *hosts.”*

We are told that the tithe at the end of the harvest, or on the profits of this business will cause the windows of heaven to be open. Your business will live and function under an open heaven. It will be easy to hear God concerning your business.

This is imperative, because we aren't to live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. (Deuteronomy 8:3) Remember that we make business decisions by hearing from the mouth of God. When the heavens are open we have a clear line and channel to and from Him.

A second blessing of a tithing business is a blessing will be poured out. The idea behind *blessing* is empowerment. When we are blessed, we are empowered. As businesses tithe, empowerment for success and prosperity comes.

A third blessing of a tithing business is the devourer is rebuked. From the tithe anything that comes to seek to take away the profits, we have spiritual authority over. We have a right to come into agreement with the Lord and command any and every devouring force to flee.

The fourth blessing is the fruit of the ground is not destroyed. This is the profits of the business. Again, because the Jews were agricultural, the fruit of the ground was their business. When businesses tithe the profits are secured.

The fifth blessing of businesses tithing, the vine will not will not fail to bear fruit. The vine in Scripture speaks of motherhood. Psalms 128:3 says:

> *Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine In the*
> *very heart of your house, Your children like*
> *olive plants*
> *All around your table.*

When businesses tithe they are empowering themselves to birth other businesses. God's heart is to see kingdom business people not just have one business but multiple businesses. When businesses tithe, they are setting themselves in a place to see this happen. This is why Ecclesiastes 11:1-2 shows us that it is right to believe God and see several different streams of wealth to be raised up:

> *Cast your bread upon the waters, For you*
> *will find it after many days.*
> *Give a serving to seven, and also to eight,*
> *For you do not know what evil will be on the earth.*

Kingdom business people should believe God for their businesses to give birth to seven and even eight businesses that create streams of wealth into their life and the kingdom. The wisdom of this verse is that if evil or recession hits the earth and some businesses quit producing as they have, the others will still be there and take up the slack. The tithe gives the power to give birth to such things.

The sixth blessing of a business tithing is all nations will call you blessed. As businesses prosper, influence comes. Other people and businesses will come to you to learn what you have done and how you have prospered. This is when social transformation begins to occur.

The final blessing of a tithing business is your business will be considered a delightful land. This word in the original says you will be His special treasure. This is what God promised Israel in Exodus 19:5:

'Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine."

When businesses tithe they become a special treasure in the hands of God. They activate the covenant that we have with the Lord. He uses them to display His splendor in the world and to teach others His ways. This was God's original intent through the nation of Israel. As we obey Him in the covenant act of tithing, these things become a reality in our businesses and social transformation begins to occur in the business world.

Before we finish this chapter let's talk about where the tithe should go. If someone is a normal business owner, they should align with the apostolic with their firstfruits, but tithe to the local house they are connected to. This includes their personal tithe as well as their business tithe. But to borrow from some new terminology, if one is a *marketplace apostle* and functions in the business realm on a higher level, then it might be appropriate to not only connect to the apostolic with the firstfruits of their business, but to also honor with their business tithe the apostolic as well. My reasoning behind this is that God is raising-up kingdom business people with apostolic virtue in their life for the marketplace. Just like the Levites honored the priests or apostles with which they were aligned, these kingdom businesses are in place for the purpose of seeing the kingdom of God expanded. They are not about just making a living. They are about the rule of God coming into the earth. When these businesses and business people have this as their goal, they are stepping into a dimension of work and ministry that necessitates apostolic alignment for the purpose of success and protection.

For example, I function as an apostle. From this standpoint I feel it absolutely necessary to be tied to, connected, and aligned with that which is apostolic. As a result of this, I have several apostles in my life that I relate to and honor with firstfruits and tithes from my ministry or *business*. I do not give my *business* tithe to the local house because of my function in the apostolic.

As a result of this I consider it very similar for those who are functioning with apostolic virtue in the business world. These are gifts designed to develop not just a business but businesses for the purpose of kingdom wealth. They must have apostolic connections and alignment to wage the warfare that is necessary to see this done. Again let me be very clear. Firstfruits and tithes from the business realm should be directed toward a God called and set apostle or even apostolic team that they have relationship with. This creates an alignment and joining that allows the business to be protected from the front to the back with apostolic power and authority and creates a joining together of the business world and the apostolic on a level that allows kingdom conquest to occur.

Another reason for this is that it is the apostolic that has the wisdom and understanding to distribute the kind of wealth we are discussing. It was no accident that when the people began to sell lands and houses in the book of Acts they came and laid these funds at the apostles' feet. We find this in Acts 4:34-35:

> *Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.*

By laying this great amount of wealth at the apostles' feet, they were acknowledging that God had commissioned and given them the responsibility of distributing this wealth. The amount of wealth we are talking about for the purpose of the kingdom is greater than what local church leaders probably have the grace to handle, unless they themselves are apostolic. Along with the apostolic anointing is the wisdom to distribute wealth on the level that will allow the kingdom to be established and the glory of God to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The last thing we want to see is kingdom businesses raised up and producing wealth for the kingdom and it be squandered though a lack of wisdom and stewardship. Most local churches don't have the grace to handle this kind of wealth nor the connections.

This is an additional reason why the *marketplace apostles* should be connected to the apostolic with both their firstfruits and business tithe. This working relationship between those who are in the church and those who are in the marketplace will result in great effect in the kingdom of God. These joints will cause great increase and blanketing of the kingdom across the world. Ephesians 4:16 speaks of joints that produce:

> *from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.*

Notice these words "joined and knit together" and "every joint supplying". As the body of Christ is joined and these apostles and marketplace apostles find each other and make these great

connections and alignments, there will be great increase of the kingdom. Not just on local levels but on the level of the whole world being touched. As these things are brought into place, these kingdom businesses are consecrated to the Lord through the firstfruits principles and protected and blessed on the *backside* through the tithe. We begin to see the rule of the kingdom expanded into every arena of life as apostolic alignment functionally occurs.



I was the janitor at the church. The pastor where I was raised up in ministry had the idea that if I was to function in ministry, I needed to first become a servant. Where did he get such an idea? It actually came from the Bible. I know that you probably know this, but Jesus said that whoever would be the greatest in the kingdom must become the servant of all. (Matthew 23:11) This apostolic center where Mary and I were developed for life and ministry didn't just believe this in principle, but also in practice. As young 20-somethings, we were formed and fashioned not just in theology and beliefs, but also character and integrity. Looking back, I have been so grateful for the training and fashioning that we went through in those years that put the right stuff in us for what God has had for us to do. It created an unshakeable foundation that has served us well. But those days were not without incident.

Among the many different tasks that were mine to perform, I had to clean the Christian School that was a part of the

ministry. Every day, I had to clean the bathrooms, vacuum the carpet and take out the trash. You need to understand that the taking the trash out part was not a pleasant experience. In this trash was souring milk, half eaten sandwiches and all other kinds of debris that attract bees. When I would lift the trash bag out of the container, the sour milk would run out the bag all over my hands and feet and cause a great mess not to mention a terrible odor. At the same time, I was fighting the bees and trying not to get stung. I also need to insert here that I worked the night shift at the hospital, so I had to fit the cleaning of the school in between my other work schedule. This required that sometimes I had to clean early in the morning before school began. This is what I was doing this particular time. I had arrived at the school early and was trying to get things done before the kids and teachers showed up. I had the bathrooms clean, the floor vacuumed and was in the process of getting the nasty trash to the dumpster around on the other side of the building.

I had pulled my pickup up in a space next to the school that I thought allowed the parents to get by while they dropped off their children that morning. I was loading the trash onto the back of the truck as the children began to arrive. The parents were dropping them off and squeezing by my vehicle as I got this trash loaded. About this time, the pastor of the church came out the back door of the church which led to the school. He saw what was going on and yelled at me in front of the kids and the parents. He *yelled* and said, “Brother Robert, get this pickup out of here!” I was embarrassed and humiliated. Did I mention that he *yelled* at me?

I must say that this was not my pastor’s normal behavior. He is a very nice and wonderful man that I honor greatly. But for

whatever reason this is what was done. My embarrassment and humiliation quickly turned to anger. I got in my truck, pulled it out of the parking space, (I wanted to squeal the tires, but wisdom prevailed) drove it around to the dumpster, and began to unload the trash. All the time I am doing this, a war was raging on the inside. Everything inside me is screaming to just go and quit, take your family, and get out of this place. Who needs to be treated like this? But there was another part of me that understood submission and honor of authority.

I knew that I was in a test and that my entire future could be locked up in what I did at this very moment. This may sound melodramatic, but if I had of broke and ran, I could have forfeited my entire destiny of life and ministry. I knew that God had connected and aligned me with this man who gave birth to me into the ministry. I made a choice at that moment, right there at that trash dumpster, tired and sleepy from having been up all night at my other job, with sour milk running out of the trash bag and down my arms, to honor and submit to the one that God had aligned me with and had put into my life. It was a choice that I made in spite of what I was feeling and the emotional struggle I was in. I chose to stay aligned out of honor. My life has been blessed and empowered as a result of this choice and many others.

Alignment is first and foremost about honor. It is honor that brings real alignment. In fact I would say that you cannot be in alignment without honor. Alignment is not organizational, it is spiritual. It is a spiritual connecting that allows forces and powers of God to flow through the bonds and ligaments of the body and the kingdom. Honor is what makes these connections. So we need to learn what honor is and how it functions.

Honor is seen throughout the Scripture. When David was in the stronghold and the enemy was occupying Bethlehem, he said with longing that he desired a drink of water from the well that was there. He did not command any of his men to go and get him a drink from that well. As a result of simply hearing the longing of David's soul, they broke through the enemies lines and got David that drink and brought it back to him. We see this account in II Samuel 23:13-17:

> *Then three of the thirty chief men went down at harvest time and came to David at the cave of Adullam. And the troop of Philistines encamped in the Valley of Rephaim. David was then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines was then in Bethlehem. And David said with longing, "Oh, that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that was by the gate, and took it and brought it to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the Lord. And he said, "Far be it from me, O Lord, that I should do this! Is this not the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it. These things were done by the three mighty men."*

What possessed these men to risk their lives for a drink of water for David? Honor was the motivation. Their desire to display their passion, loyalty and commitment to David caused them to do the unthinkable for most. This is what honor will do

when it begins to grab hold of you. It will cause you to function in a way that others think is useless and unnecessary.

Notice what David's response was as well. He would not drink the water that these men risk their lives to get but poured it out. These men could have been insulted by such an act. After all they have risked their lives for this man's desire. But they understood David's act to be an act of honor as well toward them. When he poured it out he was acknowledging their act to be one of bravery, heroism, and honor itself. He was declaring, I am not worthy of such honor and loyalty, but this is what it takes to establish the rule of the kingdom.

This is why the kingdom was established in the days of David. It wasn't just the anointing that was on David, it was men of great honor who recognized the anointing on David. This quality of David's army is what made it so powerful and took ground that no other army had been able to take. This army unseated the Jebusites that controlled Jerusalem and no other man of God had been able to remove them. Joshua hadn't, the judges hadn't, Saul hadn't, but David and his men of honor did. II Samuel 5:6-7 tells us that David removed and dispossessed the Jebusites and took control of Jerusalem and made it the nation's capitol:

> *And the king and his men went to Jerusalem against the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land, who spoke to David, saying, "You shall not come in here; but the blind and the lame will repel you," thinking, "David cannot come in here." Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion (that is, the City of David).”*

The Jebusites were very arrogant and confident that they could keep David out, because they had kept the armies out for centuries. But David and his men of honor were filled with such power and authority that they marched against the city and took it. This is what happens when there is this kind of honor in the ranks of God. The kingdom is expanded and established and places that have not fallen under the rulership of our King Jesus do fall under our influence empowered through alignment created by honor.

We cannot join nor be a part, spiritually speaking, without honor. Honor is the thing that makes the connection that allows what is in the Head to flow down to the body. We know that Jesus is the Head. In Colossians 2:19, Paul is admonishing the Colossian Christians to maintain a connection with Jesus' Headship:

> *and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God."*

When things are properly aligned and connected with Headship, everything is nourished, knitted, and grows with the increase of God. There were those in Colosse that were ceasing to be aligned with the Headship of Jesus. Paul was exhorting these believers to be very careful to not disconnect and lose the flow into their lives that was necessary for their blessing and success.

What we must understand is there is an individual connecting with Jesus' Headship that we each have in our own personal relationship with Him. But there is also out of this relationship

a connecting and aligning with His Headship that is manifested through men and women. Jesus has chosen to manifest His functional Headship through those He has chosen to represent Himself. In particular the five-fold ministry led by the apostolic. Ephesians 4:11-12 says:

> *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

We know that the apostle is set of God as first. (I Corinthians 12:28) We have already seen this. Among other things it is appropriate that the other four giftings of this Headship called the five-fold gifts to be rightly aligned and connected to the apostolic. Together, these apostolically inspired gifts make up the functional release of Jesus' Headship over our lives and businesses. When we honor that which is apostolic, we are honoring the Headship of the Lord. Paul said that when we honor those in authority, we are honoring God Himself. Romans 13:1 sums up that authorities are to be honored as from God Himself:

> *Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.*

If a person is in authority of any kind, clearly the Word says they are there as God's representative into our lives. There is much we could say about this, but I simply wanted to state the case that when I honor authority of any kind, I am honoring

God. It is a sign of spiritual maturity when a person can recognize the Headship of Jesus in the apostolic realm of things. Therefore when I honor the apostolic, (which is the substance of the priestly shadow) I am pulling through that gifting and anointing of God, the very Headship of Jesus that I need to be blessed and be a success. Honor is what connects me and aligns me with this apostolic Headship.

So how do we function in honor? Honor is an attitude, but is displayed through acts, in particular the function and act of firstfruits. Before I get fully into this, let me get established the whole issue of money and honor. It is impossible to disconnect honor and money in the Scripture. If you can hear it, money has the power to make spiritual connections of honor that in turn empower our life as a result of that alignment. If someone believes that money is just about the purchasing of necessary things for life, then we are missing, in my estimation, the greatest aspect of money. One of money's main function is to establish and secure right spiritual alignment. Money is the tool that we use to establish dynamic spiritual connections.

When Abraham returned from the defeat of the kings that had defeated Sodom and Gomorrah, he took a tenth of the spoil and honored one named Melchizedek. We find this in Hebrews chapter 7. Melchizedek is an Old Testament picture of Jesus Christ. We know this for several reasons. The first one is the nature of this "man's" existence. Verse 3 tells us that this man had no known beginning, no known end and was "like" the Son of God:

> *without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor*

> *end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.*

This verse says that he remains a priest forever. We know that Jesus is a priest forever after the “order” of Melchizedek. Hebrews 7:17 says of Jesus:

> *For He testifies: "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."*

How is it possible that Melchizedek and Jesus occupy the same office for the same duration of time, which is forever, unless they are the “same” person? Melchizedek was a pre-incarnation revelation of Jesus Christ in the times of Abraham? Abraham may not have understood everything that was going on, but he knew he needed to be aligned with this “man” and secure the blessing he carried out of this alignment into his life. So when Abraham returned from the slaughter of these kings, he brought a tenth of the spoil and tithes to Melchizedek. We see in Hebrews 7:4 that Abraham sensed and understood the greatness that was in this “man”, and was compelled to align and connect through honor to his greatness with money. Yes, Abraham used money to honor, align and connect:

> *Now consider how great this man was, to whom even the patriarch Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils.*

Abraham had an understanding of the power of money and its use to depict honor in making spiritual connection that would allow an empowering for him to see the promises come to pass.

Abraham was the one holding the promises from God over his life. But none of them had taken place or been fulfilled. As Abraham made connections and aligned with Melchizedek by honor with money, the blessing and empowerment came on his life. Hebrews 7:6 says:

> *but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises*.

Notice the connection between receiving the tithes and releasing the blessing over the one who had the promises. This is what happens when we learn to honor and align with our money. We make connections in the spirit realm that allows the blessing of God to come upon the promises we are carrying. Even though Abraham was the one with the promises, he had to have the blessing of empowerment to see them come to pass. The blessing flowing from Melchizedek was needed to break down every resistance that was hindering Abraham from seeing the fullness of the promise become a reality.

Let me say it again. Abraham used money to release honor to create alignment and connection for blessing to flow through that which he needed to accomplish his call. We too must learn to operate in this as well. With money we bring ourselves into apostolic alignment and make the spiritual connections that are necessary for breakthrough in our lives and businesses.

This concept of money and honor being linked together is throughout Scripture. Paul told Timothy to give double honor to elders who ruled well. I Timothy 5:17 says:

> *Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.*

The words *double honor* in the original language mean *twice the monies paid*. It was understood that money and honor were joined together. Money is one of, if not the chief way of displaying and walking in honor. When Paul wanted the elders honored in Ephesus, he told Timothy to use money. We know this is true, because the next verse speaks of not muzzling the ox and the laborer being worthy of his wages. I Timothy 5:18 says on the heels of honoring with double honor:

> *For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."*

Clearly Paul was instructing Timothy in the use of money to display and show honor. When I give my money and sow my financial seed, I am honoring and making connections with those who carry the blessing I need. With money, I can bring myself into apostolic alignment.

In regards to firstfruits, this is especially true. Proverbs 3:9-10 tell us that the sowing of firstfruits into the apostolic is an act of honor and therefore an act of alignment:

> *Honor the Lord with your possessions,*
> *And with the firstfruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine.*

Clearly we see that honor is involved when we function in firstfruits. We are honoring the Lord and therefore honoring the ones who represent Him. God releases His virtue through those who represent Him. When we honor the apostolic which is His Headship revealed in the earth, we are connecting and aligning with that which we can pull out of the Lord through the apostolic and into our lives. Honor is what makes these alignments and allows these *drawing* to take place.

Let me illustrate this with two examples. The first one happened to me personally. As my wife Mary and I moved to Colorado Springs, we desired and purposed to connect to that which was apostolic in the city. I had known of Dutch Sheets, but had never met him. As we made plans to make our move, we went to the church that Dutch apostolically leads. There was an immediate connection in the spirit from both of our perspectives. As time passed, I became very aware that there is an apostolic anointing on Dutch for the nation of America. I too carry an apostolic anointing and virtue, but recognized something unique on Dutch's life. I consider it to be similar to the anointing that was on David's life for Israel. As a result of this recognized anointing that was on David, mighty men came and served him and the anointing that he carried. As they joined forces with David and each found his place in the plan of God the kingdom was established in Israel through the rule of David.

This was what I knew I was to do with Dutch. I was to join forces with him and together, along with others we would see a team arise with Dutch as the leader to see an awakening and transformation occur in America. Before this could happen, I knew I needed to make a connection and alignment in the spirit realm. I sowed a seed, in fact a couple of seeds of firstfruits

and a portion of a tithe into Dutch's life. This was not fleshly manipulation. I was operating in the spirit realm from a heart of honor. I was honoring what I had revelation of Dutch being. In the spirit realm, from this act of honor, an alignment occurred.

A couple of months later I was in a conference meeting that was being held by a wonderful man of God who also is an apostle named Alemu Beeftu. As a session was ending I was sitting next to Dutch secretly desiring for him to pray for me and release and commission me into America as an apostolic ministry on the next level. I had said nothing of this to anyone. I knew my offering of honor had done something in the realm of the spirit. Suddenly, Apostle Beeftu said, "We were going to take a break but before we do, Dutch Sheets needs to pray for Robert Henderson." I was taken by surprise. Just a couple of days prior to this, the Lord had spoken to me out of I Samuel 10:7 where Samuel speaks to Saul concerning his destiny to be the first king of Israel. He is told that as he turns to go from Samuel he would meet a group of prophets, the Spirit of the Lord would come on him and he would prophesy and be turned into another man. He is instructed that when these things happen to "do as the occasion demands, for God is with him." I knew God had very clearly spoken this to me, but had no idea what it meant, yet here I was in the midst of all these prophetic happenings. I knew I was to *go with the flow*.

In addition to this, before Apostle Beeftu said that Dutch was to pray for me, the Lord spoke to me from I Samuel 10:1 as I sat there:

> *Then Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it on his head, and kissed him and said: "Is it not*

because the Lord has anointed you commander over His inheritance?"

I was told by the Spirit of the Lord that today, He was anointing me as a commander over His inheritance and kissing me with His favor. All of this was occurring almost at the same time. In response to Apostle Beeftu's request, Dutch and I arose and went to the front of the auditorium. I knelt down and can only relay to you in a portion what happened to me. As Dutch laid his hands on me, groanings, wailings, waves and outpourings of the Holy Spirit came over me as Dutch made apostolic decrees and declaration over my life. It was the most intense spiritual place I have ever been in. I knelt down as one man and got up as another with an anointing for the nation. I was commissioned to another level at that place. Why did this happen? There are probably many answers to that question, but the main strategic answer is I was aligned in the spirit realm by my honor of Dutch's apostolic place through the act of firstfruits. I received the blessing to empower the promises I have held in my heart for decades because I aligned myself by using my money to honor the apostolic that God had joined me to.

I hope you are getting this. I firmly believe that my obedience and desire to honor the apostolic in Dutch created a right in the spirit realm for God to make necessary deposits into my spirit for what I needed to fulfill my course. This would not have happened without the aligning brought on through honor.

The other illustration that I want to use to show you the power of honor is in the business realm. As I led the apostolic center that we saw God raise up under our hands, I began to teach the firstfruits principle. As this principle was taught, people from

varying backgrounds began to grasp it and function in it. I have watched as it has made great impact in many lives as lives and desires have been consecrated to the Lord through firstfruits. In particular I have watched as businesses have gone to whole new dimensions because of the consecrating and connecting to the apostolic through firstfruits.

We had in the work, a man who owned a successful roofing company. Before I met him he had been very successful in this business, but had suffered burn out. He had developed so much work and contracts that were residential, commercial, and corporate that he worked all the time just to get it all done. He suffered from a lack of good people to see that everything was taken care of. Even though he was making money and a lot of it, he finally decided it wasn't worth it. He began to scale back from a company of many employees to just himself and another man roofing houses and making just enough for him to live comfortably.

I do not want you to think this was what he was forced to do, but rather what he chose to do because he was tired. This man is an extremely hard worker and would be a success in about anything because of this virtue. While at this place in life, he began to attend the church and heard the teaching on firstfruits and what can happen when you honor God and align yourself apostolically.

He began to sow what most would consider great amounts of wealth into the apostolic and the kingdom from his business at firstfruits time. As he began to do this, contracts began to come in. At one time, I personally know that he had work scheduled a year in advance that people were willing to wait on him to get to. God added the right people to his crews and he began to run

multiple crews again. He told me that because of his participation in consecrating his business through the firsfruits principle and aligning and honoring the apostolic, he is now well over a millionaire, works when he wants, doesn’t work when he doesn’t want, takes time off to be with his family and involvement in other interest and supports and finances the kingdom of God as a result.

This is the blessing of God that makes rich and adds no sorrow with it. This man knows what it feels like to be wealthy but not enjoy it and also knows what it is to be wealthy and have fun with it because of what happens when we with honor to God and honor of His Headship consecrate our business through the firstfruits principle.



Lest you think that those who are in fulltime ministry have no experience or knowledge of the business realm, let me lay this to rest. The motive of ministry is to establish the kingdom rule of God in the earth. It is to see the purpose of the Lord accomplished in the earth. This is also the motive of kingdom business people as well. One has one function in this endeavor, while the other has another function. I want you to know that within the call to ministry is the business realm. Many "successful" ministries I know would also be great business leaders as well had they directed their energies and efforts that way. As I heard one well known and successful apostolic man say, "the church has been my business." He didn't mean that he was in it for the "money". He meant that many of the same principles that make one a success in the church also makes one a success in the business sector.

One of the things that I am is an author. My purpose for writing is to be an oracle of God that can declare His word throughout the earth. But connected to this purpose is that the sell of books bring in finances that allow this process to take place. I don't care how anointed or called you are to ministry, if there is not money to facilitate that call, nothing will occur. As a result, I have endeavored to open up several avenues of finances that allow me the privilege of fulfilling the call of God upon my life. One of these avenues includes selling product, but in particular the producing and marketing of books. As a result of this I had written and began to have the book, *The Caused Blessing* distributed. Even though I had another book out that had been put together from the audio of my teaching on being led by the Spirit, this was my real "first" book that I had methodically sat down and written from scratch. It definitely carries my heart and passion in these areas. As a result of my understanding of the firstfruits principle, I knew that in addition to my firstfruits sowing in other areas, I needed to consecrate this book to the Lord so that it would become supernatural in its impact and affect. I was asking the Lord about how much I should sow to step into the faith realm, honor Him, consecrate this book to Him and align myself apostolically through firstfruits. I knew that if it were to have kingdom impact and influence, I needed His hand upon it and for it to be holy to the Lord.

As I prayed about the amount that I should sow, the Lord spoke to me something unexpected. He told me to make this book "my Samuel" and if I would, He would bless every other book that came out of my "spiritual womb." This is connected to the story of Hannah in I Samuel chapters 1 and 2. Hannah had been barren and unable to have any children. This was a source of great disappointment and misery. We find her in the first

chapter of I Samuel making a vow and commitment to the Lord. She promised the Lord that if He would give her a son, she would give him to the Lord for his whole life. I Samuel 1: 11 says:

> *Then she made a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."*

She was making a firstfruits offering to the Lord. As a result of her promise and then her fulfillment of what she promised, God opened her womb and brought forth many more children. I Samuel 2:20-21 says:

> *And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "The Lord give you descendants from this woman for the loan that was given to the Lord." Then they would go to their own home. And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the Lord."*

Her act of making Samuel her firstfruits to the Lord consecrated and opened her womb and allowed five other children to flow from her. This is what the Lord asked me to do. He asked me to make my "first" book my "Samuel". I have obeyed and as a result other books are flowing out of me like a river. They are all consecrated to the Lord as a result of my obedience in giving God the first one. I have committed all the

proceeds of that first book to an apostolic author with whom I am aligned. As a result of obedience to the word of the Lord and a willingness to sow firstfruits in behalf of my writings, I have a future that is consecrated to the Lord in this arena.

I hope you can hear what I am seeking to communicate. My adventure into the business realm in the form of writing and marketing books has been consecrated to the Lord by giving my first and best to the Lord in the form of my "first" book. I did this at the mouth of the Lord. As I begin to share with you some concepts on how to apply this firstfruits principle in the business realm to consecrate your business to the Lord, know that at the core of the application is *hearing the Lord*. I am not advocating a legalistic approach to operating in this principle. We are no longer under the law. Galatians 5:18 tells us that when we are led by the Spirit, we are no longer subject to the bondage of the law:

> *But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.*

When we submit and surrender our lives to the leading of the Spirit we no longer have to be rule keepers. My walk with the Lord begins to be one of intimacy birthed by the Spirit of God.

Most people have more of a relationship with the Bible than they do the Word of God. Revelation 19:13 tells us that Jesus' name is the Word of God:

> *He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.*

When people have a relationship with the Bible they tend toward being legalist and rule-keepers. So that you don't misunderstand me, I believe and adhere to the Bible being God's inerrant Word. I am not saying otherwise. I believe we need to read the Word, study the Word, believe the Word, confess the Word and all the other things concerning the word. But I don't believe we need to let our Bible take the place of an intimate relationship with the Word of God, whose name is Jesus. The Word of God will use the Bible to speak to us, but only if we have cultivated a relationship with Him through times of closeness and intimacy.

This is why in my formative years that I actually spent more time in prayer than I did in the word. Again, please know that I know the *word*, but more than anything, I know the Word of God who is Jesus. To this very day, my time with the Lord is more about intimacy in His presence in times of prayer and fellowship with Him than it is with my nose stuck in the Bible.

People throughout the years have asked me where I get the revelation that I minister from. I have just told you where it comes from. My greatest joy in life is time with Him. This has made me one who longs, delights and has discovered to some degree, how to be led by the Spirit and not be under the bondage of law that the Spirit has set me free from.

So as we seek to learn how to function in the principle and pattern of firstfruits, realize that it flows out of knowing Him and hearing Him. He will show you how to apply this principle and see it work in your behalf. This makes many people uncomfortable, because it requires us getting out of our religious zone and beginning to hear Him. Everything works from a relationship with Jesus.

Most of the church is about programs and formulas. They want a one, two, three step solution to their problems and to life. This is not how God operates. He functions from us hearing Him. His power is a result of the hearing of faith and not the keeping of rules and laws. Galatians chapter 3 addresses this very well. Verse 2 and then verse 5 shows us that it is the hearing of God that births faith and our response to it that uncorks the power of God in our behalf. Verse 2 says:

> *This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

Verse 5 agrees with this rhetorical question when it asks:

> *Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?*

The answer to both questions is faith that comes by hearing the voice of God. So keeping rules and law will never bring us into the blessing of God, but discovering patterns and principles in the shadow of the law that God can then speak to us from out of relationship can bring us into this blessing that makes rich and adds no sorrow. This is what the firstfruits principle and its application is all about. Once we understand the pattern and principles of firstfruits, the Holy Spirit then has the liberty to show us individually and corporately how to function in it.

So what are some guidelines that the Spirit can use to help us know how to step into this principle to consecrate our business and dealings to the Lord and make those necessary apostolic

alignments? The first is to realize that firstfruits was meant to be a yearly activity. As Nehemiah was bringing restoration to Jerusalem, he re-instituted the order of firstfruits and tithe for the livelihood of the priest and the Levites. Nehemiah 10:35 says:

> *And we made ordinances to bring the firstfruits of our ground and the firstfruits of all fruit of all trees, year by year, to the house of the Lord*

Every year as the harvest began to come in, the first and best portion was brought to the priest in the house of the Lord to consecrate the whole and to align with the "apostolic" of their day called the priest. At the very least firstfruits is to be observed and functioned in year by year. When this is done, we are establishing the blessing of the Lord over our businesses and endeavors for the year.

Remember that there were two harvest brought in during the Jewish calendar. The first harvest was at its beginning stage during the feast of Pentecost. This was the feast in which the Jewish businessmen came and brought the first and best to the Lord to consecrate the first and second harvest for the year. Numbers 28:26 speaks of this specific day:

> *Also on the day of the firstfruits, when you bring a new grain offering to the Lord at your Feast of Weeks, you shall have a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work.*

Every year on a specific day, the businesses and people of Israel brought the firstfruits to the Lord and waved them as a wave offering. This day is called here the *day of firstfruits*. On

this specific day they consecrated and brought into apostolic alignment their businesses. From this act, not only did this first harvest produce and bring forth abundantly, but the second harvest as well that was celebrated at the end of the year with the Feast of Ingatherings. Both produced with a prosperity that amazed the surrounding nations. As a result of this consecrating of their entire year of *business dealings*, a great harvest and prosperity was theirs. This is to be had for any business which will make their business kingdom in nature by consecrating it to the Lord and aligning it apostolically through the function of firstfruits.

There is one more point I want to make concerning this yearly sowing of firstfruits in behalf of your business. This *day of firstfruits* is also known in the New Testament as the *Day of Pentecost*. You will remember this day in Acts 2:1- 2. It was on this *Day* that the power and person of the Holy Spirit fell and entered earth:

> *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.*

For centuries the Jewish people had come with the first and best portion of their harvest waving it to the Lord on this *Day*. They probably didn't know what they were doing, but they were making a prophetic declaration every year at this time.

They were prophetically proclaiming the firstfruits of the Spirit that was to come and endue us with power. Romans 8:23 calls the Holy Spirit, the firstfruits of God:

> *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.*

On this particular day 2,000 years ago, as they waved the firstfruits of their harvest, simultaneously the Holy Spirit fell on the 120 in the upper room. After all those years of prophetic release and decrees through the act of firstfruits, God sent the Spirit as a fulfillment of those declarations. There are a couple of observation I want to make regarding this.

The first observation is that firstfruits - at its core - is prophetic in nature. When we function in firstfruits we are doing a prophetic act that will result in the blessing of God. It is a prophetic act that secures the blessing of God over our lives and businesses. It causes a blessing to rest on our house and businesses, as God responds to what we are doing in faith. (Ezekiel 44:30) Mary, in John 12:7 after the resurrection of Lazarus, has anointed Jesus with a very precious ointment that most say was worth a year's wages. This would definitely be characterized as the first and the best. Just stop and think about taking something worth a year's salary and pouring it out on the feet of Jesus. In fact as she did this there were those who called it a waste, but Jesus recognized it as worship.

As you sow firstfruits in behalf of your business, be aware that many will consider it a wasteful thing. This money could have been taken and invested, or started another business, or provided bonuses for well deserving employees. All of these and other things could be said, but instead it was used as the first and the best to consecrate the business and align with

apostolic authority. When we choose to do this in worship, adoration, honor, and dependence on the Lord it is never a waste. In fact, when Mary did this the Bible says that she performed a prophetic act:

> *But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial."*

Jesus said that because He would not be anointed in His death, because of the Sabbath and his resurrection before the women could get back to the tomb to anoint His mutilated body (Mark 16:1) that Mary was prophetically doing it ahead of time. When she came in her extravagance, she did that which was prophetic in nature, and set in motion necessary things through her act.

When we bring God the first and the best, our act of firstfruits sets in motion the purposes of God in our life and business. There is great power in such extravagance, but only if we can see it as worship and not as waste.

I also want us to recognize in regards to this specific day of firstfruits once a year that in this act there can and should be a fresh outpouring of God over our businesses. As the children of Israel honored the Lord with firstfruits, God responded to their prophetic act with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This is a picture of what will happen as we worship the Lord with firstfruits from our businesses. The anointing of God will come upon that which has been consecrated and aligned through firstfruits. It will be anointed of the Lord with great power to prosper and transform society. As we step into the yearly function of first fruits with liberality, generosity, and excess God will send His Spirit upon us and to us to grant us *power to*

create wealth. All the promises of God connected with firstfruits must have the release of the anointing to bring them out of the possible and into reality. As we honor the Lord with our firstfruits to consecrate and align our businesses apostolically, we are functioning in a prophetic act that God will honor with the outpouring of His Spirit over our enterprises. As He does, that which has been aligned and consecrated will begin to produce abundantly because of the anointing it is functioning under.

I must also mention, concerning a guideline to sowing firstfruits for your business, that in addition to the yearly sowing (which should never *not* be done) we must be open to the Lord helping us to sow in *situations*. When someone is facing the opening of a new business or the launching of another division or making an investment that holds great promise the Lord can and will speak to consecrate this thing to Him through firstfruits. Firstfruits is not just something you do once a year. Once the principle and pattern is revealed and seen, the Lord will speak many times about a firstfruits offering to consecrate and sanctify this endeavor. When this happens, you know the Lord is setting you up for a blessing.

In addition to the whole situation with my *first* book that has become *my Samuel*, I also launched an apostolic network that I felt the Lord speak to me about. My passion was to have a network that was national in scope and influence. I called and pulled together some apostolic men that I deemed to be on this level. As I began to make the calls and invite them to the initial meeting, the Lord spoke to me and told me to pay all their expenses which included a two night stay in the hotel as well as all the food and extras that might be incurred. There were a few more than 25 that came and were a part. The Lord said to me

that this was a firstfruits offering that I was sowing in behalf of this network that had not even yet begun.

The money came out of my own ministry account as I consecrated and aligned things in God. The result was that this network got off to a booming start. There have been some enemies that have fought against it, but because of it being consecrated to the Lord the conquest of the *land* is sure. This network continues to grow and increase as people from all over the nation join and express interest in that which the Lord is doing. People immediately began to call with prophetic words concerning the intent of God over this network from all over the nation and even other nations. There was a buzz that began to happen as it was launched and moved forward.

I am convinced that this happened because it was consecrated before it ever began by a firstfruits offering. Something else that occurred was as the inaugural meeting was held several hundred ministers registered and became a part of what had been consecrated to the Lord. The initial finances that came in during the meetings were astounding and mind boggling. All of this happened because it was appropriately aligned apostolically and was consecrated to the Lord. This can happen in every dimension of life, but especially in the marketplace. As we consecrate our year, but also stay open to the Lord for firstfruits throughout the year to consecrate and align each and every endeavor, we can expect just exactly what happened in the days of Joshua to happen with our businesses. We will march through the land with no enemy able to withstand us and every desire and dream of our hearts in the marketplace will be realized.

As we listen to the Lord about what to sow yearly and in each situation, we need to keep some things in mind. Just to reiterate, we must listen to the Lord and do whatever He says in the amount that should been sown. In the Old Testament there were literal amounts that the people were to bring in their firstfruits, but in the New Testament we are to *hear God*. We are no longer bound by law, but are under the rule of the Spirit and must listen to Him. He will speak and show us what we should sow for our businesses. There are several issues to consider when sowing for your business.

First of all does this amount get you into faith? The Bible is very clear about this. Faith is what is important and what moves God. Galatians 5:6 tells us that the keeping of law in any and every dimension isn't what avails anything, but rather a faith that is motivated and has its roots in a love relationship with the Lord:

> *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.*

When we out of our love and devotion for the Lord are stretched in faith to honor Him, this brings Him great delight. As I heard one man say, God's greatest joy is to be believed and His greatest pain is to be doubted. Like no other dimension, when we take our money that is a sign of what we value, and honor the Lord with it in faith, His heart is moved. Whatever the amount we sow, it must be a reflection of our value of Him. This means it isn't about the amount, but about the sacrifice involved in the amount.

Whatever we sow must also depict our absolute dependence on Him as well. The amount must be enough to propel us out of just religious activity and into a true realm of trusting the Lord. This brings Him great delight. It doesn't have to be all, but it does have to be the first and the best portion. Throughout Scripture we see this principle at work. When people stepped into the faith realm in their giving the attention of the Lord was grasped. It wasn't an attempt to manipulate the Lord, or to *work a principle*. It was a genuine heartfelt expression of love and devotion that released faith.

We see this in the offering of the woman who brings her alabaster flask and breaks is over the head of Jesus and pours out the costly spikenard over Him. Again in this scenario, there are those who begin to chime in concerning this and accuse her of waste. Jesus comes to her rescue and condemns her accusers. He says in Mark 14:6-9:

> *But Jesus said, "Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. "For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always."She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. "Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her."*

Notice that out of her extravagant act of faith motivated purely from her love for the Lord that Jesus says a memorial had been created in her behalf. Every time the gospel is preached this woman has a memorial before heaven operating in her behalf.

Remember that this offering on Jesus was worth as much as a year's salary. Whatever you make in a year or whatever the profits of your business are for a year, think about giving that as a firstfruits offerings and see what it does to you. This is what this woman did and out of her act of faith moved by love a memorial was created in heaven for her before the throne of God.

Firstfruits can create a memorial for us and our businesses. To understand this, we need to go back to a couple of Scriptures. When a person brought an offering to the Lord, he would bring it to one of the sons of Aaron who was a priest. This priest would then take this offering of grain, take a handful of it and burn it in fire as a memorial portion. The rest of the offering would belong to the priest as his portion for his service. Leviticus 2:1-3 says:

> *"'When anyone offers a grain offering to the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour. And he shall pour oil on it, and put frankincense on it. 'He shall bring it to Aaron's sons, the priests, one of whom shall take from it his handful of fine flour and oil with all the frankincense. And the priest shall burn it as a memorial on the altar, an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the Lord. 'The rest of the grain offering shall be Aaron's and his sons'. It is most holy of the offerings to the Lord made by fire."*

As the priest burnt that handful of grain, it created a memorial in the behalf of the one who brought the offering. We see this in Acts 10:3-4 where the angel appears to Cornelius and tells

him that his prayers and alms or giving has come before God and created a memorial at His throne:

> *About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius!" And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, "What is it, lord?" So he said to him, "Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God."*

As a result of Cornelius' praying and giving mixed together a memorial had been created before the Lord. An angel had been sent and the Gentile world was about to experience the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Don't tell me our money doesn't have power in heaven, even though it isn't our money, but the faith and love the money represents.

So what is a memorial? A memorial is something that keeps speaking before the throne of God after we have been quiet. With our money, as we release it in faith and as an act of devotion to the Lord, we create a memorial before the Lord that keeps talking long after we have been stopped. It speaks until the desires of our heart are met by God. This is what happened to the woman in Mark 14. There is still a memorial before the throne of God speaking in her behalf and in behalf of her descendants because of the faith, love and sacrifice she operated in. Every time the gospel is preached this woman and her cry come before the throne of God even though she is long dead and gone from planet earth. With an act of extravagance, faith and love we can by firstfruits create a memorial before the throne of God for our businesses. When we consecrate them and give them to Him through firstfruits, we create a memorial

in heaven in their behalf. Even when we aren't praying over them, the memorial made is talking to God. How we need to take the necessary steps and move into this realm of the Lord over our businesses and their dealings. This woman was not stingy or withholding from the Lord. Her love for the Master moved her to do the unthinkable and as she did unbelievable things were set in motion over her, her life and her lineage. Firstfruits time is not a place to be stingy. It is a time of liberality, generosity and craziness in God. Do what the Spirit bids you to do. You will not be sorry, but look forward to that which you are unlocking in God over your business.

Another principle that I must mention here is that with whatever measurement we use, it will be measured back to us. Luke 6:38 establishes this as a kingdom principle:

> *Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.*

This scripture says that we determine the return that we get back from the Lord. I know that many people are turned off by what I am saying right now. I too was repulsed by the use of this scripture and thought it was a manipulative tool in the hands of those who quoted it or read it in receiving offerings. I will not rehearse it again, but I share in *The Caused Blessing* how God took me on a journey from one perspective to another. All I can say is that a man with an experience is not at the mercy of a man with an argument. I have seen firsthand in my life how this passage has been used by the Holy Spirit to propel me into greater levels of giving, and as a result I have

experienced greater realms of blessing, favor and anointing that has translated into greater places of wealth.

My wife and I have progressively over a twelve year period increased in our giving and as a result God has entrusted us with more. We have gone from the good measure, which is just enough, to the pressed down place, where we had more, to the shaken together where even more was ours, to actually a place of abundance where it was running over and we could be a blessing to others in their ministries, needs and missions. We have lived the life of II Corinthians 9:8 which says:

> *And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.*

Not only have we enjoyed the blessing of sufficiency in all things, which means we are self-contained and have need of nothing, but we have also had an abundance to sow into every good work. This is the passion of kingdom businesses. They are not just interested in prospering for themselves, but also for the kingdom's sake. They are channels and conduit for God to pour His wealth through for the evangelizing of the world and the rule of Jesus' kingdom on earth to be a reality.

It is very important that we grasp the concept that we determining the measure that comes back to us. Paul also declared in II Corinthians 9:6 that we are operating in farming principles when we give our money:

> *But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.*

This verse is echoing the same principle as Luke 6:38. What level of harvest a farmer desires determines how much land he plants in the sowing time. A farmer who desires fifty acres of harvest cannot put five acres of seed in the ground. Five acres of seed will produce fives acres of crops. Fifty acres of crops, requires fifty acres of seed. When we are sowing our firstfruits to the Lord it needs to be commensurate to the harvest we desire. Again, it is we who decide how much harvest we get, by how much seed we put in the ground. There are many places in Scripture where we see this principle at work, but I will draw from just one.

When Jesus got into Peter's boat in Luke chapter 5 and began to preach the gospel, Peter had no real concept of what was about to happen. As Jesus finished His ministry time, He turned to Peter and told Him to launch into the deep for a catch of fish. Peter responded that he had fished all night and caught nothing, but that he would do what the Lord had asked. We find this in Luke 5:4- 5:

> *When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net."*

Please notice that Jesus told Peter to let down *nets* plural and Peter said he would let down a *net* singular. We know the rest

of the story. Peter did launch out and let down his *net* instead of *nets* as he had been commanded. He got the catch that Jesus told him he would, but a lot of it swam away as the *net* broke. Luke 5:6 tells us this phase of the story:

> *And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking.*

If Peter had measured out what Jesus commanded and let down *nets*, his catch would have been a whole lot larger. As it was, Peter got the result of the measurement he used. He got what a *net* could hold and lost the rest.

I have chosen this illustration of the whole measurement issue, because it is concerns a business venture. Please do not think that this was about the souls of men. It wasn't. Peter was in the fishing business to make money. Jesus desired to bless Peter's business because Peter had demonstrated a heart for the kingdom by allowing Jesus to use his boat as a preaching platform. When Jesus sees that our heart is to *really* be a kingdom business to finance the kingdom of God in the earth, He will begin to entrust us with kingdom prosperity and wealth.

I want us to also notice that Peter wasn't in a real prosperous time of his business. Luke 5:5 says that they had fished all night and caught nothing. Yet now the Lord comes with His rhema word and Peter, though it appears reluctantly, agreed to obey. When he did, He got the catch of his life. But it wasn't the catch that Jesus intended as a result of the smaller measurement Peter used in obeying the Lord.

As you step into firstfruits for your businesses and consecrate them to the Lord and align them apostolically, make sure you use the measurement required to get the maximum blessing and prosperity and influence on your business. Don't settle for too little. Take that step of faith and the plunge and believe God on the basis of the word you hear and God will bless you on that level. Your business can go from *having caught nothing all night* to so much that you are having trouble containing it.

It took two boats to get the catch to the shore before the weight of the fish caused them to sink. (Luke 5:7) Peter took this fish and sold them because that was his purpose for fishing. He wasn't fishing so he could have a fish fry. This was business. Peter learned a valuable lesson that we need to learn. Obey the rhema word of God by measuring out what the Lord commands and we will get what the Lord desires into our businesses.

But if we are stingy and unbelieving we will have a time of repentance just like Peter did. When Peter saw what had happened, he fell at Jesus' feet. Luke 5:8-9 tells us:

> *When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken."*

Clearly we are told that Peter's heart was smitten and convicted because of the enormity of the catch of fish. He knew he had not fully obeyed the Lord and measured out what he was to have measured. In the midst of what should have been a joyful time of great prosperity, Peter was under the dealings of God. May we all fully hear God and fully obey, so that we get what

the Lord has for us in our businesses, and have the power to enjoy it as well.

Firstfruits time is a time of great extravagance and abundant giving. In the passage of II Chronicles 31 where Hezekiah is bringing reforms and restoration, remember that he is re- instituting firstfruits and tithes. We have already seen what happened to these agricultural business people because of their obedience in consecrating and aligning themselves through firstfruits.

Notice though how they gave and sowed for their harvest. II Chronicles 31:5 says:

> *as soon as the commandment was circulated, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of grain and wine, oil and honey, and of all the produce of the field; and they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything."*

First of all it says that as *soon* as the commandment was given the businesses begin to function in this principle. They did not hesitate nor contemplate too long. They immediately responded to what was being asked of them. Exodus 22:29 tells us that this is what the Lord requires. He wants our honoring of Him with firstfruits to be a delightful and willing thing from a heart passionate to obey Him:

> *"You shall not delay to offer the first of your ripe produce and your juices. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me."*

So when Hezekiah spoke to them to bring the firstfruits from their businesses, they willingly and urgently obeyed. II Chronicles chapter 31 also says that they brought the firstfruits and tithes abundantly or in abundance. Again, firstfruits time is not a time of stinginess. We are establishing by the measurement we use the increase and return we will get. As a result of the way that these people responded, the blessing of God came immediately and strongly on their life. Verse 10 of II Chronicles 31 again tells us that God's response to them was immediate and with great prosperity:

> *And Azariah the chief priest, from the house of Zadok, answered him and said, "Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat and have plenty left, for the Lord has blessed His people; and what is left is this great abundance."*

The blessing of God came on His people with such strength that every one had enough with a great abundance left over. This is what God will do as we measure out abundantly our firstfruits to Him. He will breathe upon our business dealings His breath of life, and prosperity will be had for us and the kingdom of God.

One more issue I want us to be aware of is that as we sow, we are to do it with purpose and on purpose. II Corinthians 9:7 says:

> *So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*

In other words give and sow on purpose with intent. I always tell people that nothing happens by accident, everything happens on purpose. The catch that Peter got was no accident, it was on purpose. His catch was directly correlated with the measurement he used in letting down his net. The blessing that came on the people in Hezekiah's day was no accident it was directly related to the abundance and heart they gave with to the Lord in firstfruits and tithes. We must learn to do things on purpose. The real issue isn't how much should I sow. The real issue is what kind of harvest do I want. When I determine what kind of increase in my business I want this year that will help determine the level that I step into the firstfruits principle and consecrate my business to the Lord and align it apostolically. As you get ready to move in the area, do something on purpose that will produce the results you desire, want, need and that God has for you.

As we end this chapter, let me relay to you a recent occurrence as a business embraced the concept of firstfruits. As I was teaching this whole firstfruits issue to a church that is a true apostolic center, the people were embracing this which they had never heard. Not only were families involving themselves in this exciting adventure of firstfruits, but businesses were taking the plunge and being apostolically aligned and consecrated as well. As business people began to sow their firstfruits to the Lord, apostolic decrees were being made over the owners, managers, and stewards of these businesses. (We will get to this in the next chapter) There was a noticeable presence of God as people by faith stepped into this concept. The meeting ended and we all went our way with a sense that something had been altered and arranged in the spirit realm over our lives as a result of what had just occurred. We need to

know that once we have seed in the ground especially in the realm of firstfruits, we can go on with life with an awareness that what needs to be done is done. We see this in Mark chapter 4 where a kingdom man scatters seed on the ground and does get his harvest. But please notice verses 26 and 27 of this chapter:

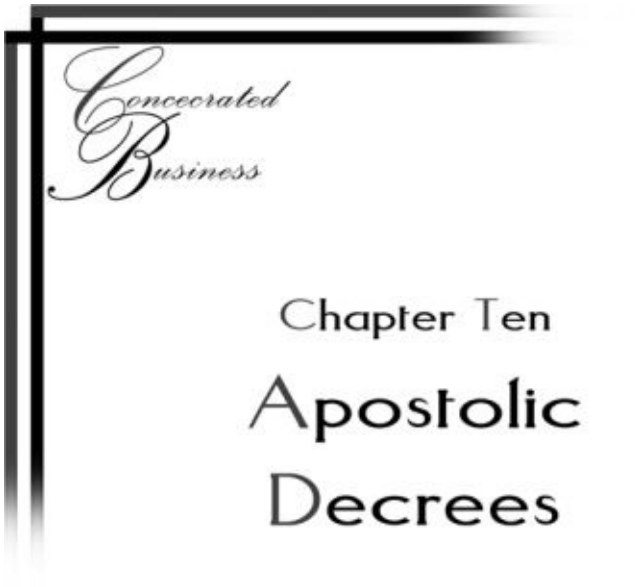
> *And He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground, and should sleep by night and rise by day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he himself does not know how."*

He sleeps by night and rises by day; he goes about normal living, because he knows he has seed in the ground for his harvest. He may not even know how it all operates. What he does know is that as sure as he put the seed in the ground, he is sure that it will sprout, grow and produce a harvest. Once you have consecrated things to the Lord through firstfruits, it sets in motion spiritual dimensions over us that bring us into the fullness of what God has promised.

As I came back to the church on the Wednesday after the firstfruits Sunday, a lady stopped me as I came down the aisle. This was three days later. She told me she must let me know what happened with her business since she consecrated and aligned her business apostolically with firstfruits the previous weekend. It seems that this lady and her family owned an automobile repair shop. She first said that it had been really slow business for months, but then it changed and she said it was more like dead. After she consecrated and aligned her business on Sunday, she received a call on Monday morning from her daughter who was at the business. She told her

mother she was astounded. Cars were lined up in the driveway seeking to get into the bays for repair. They had done nothing different. No additional advertising. It had been less than a day since the business had been consecrated through an act of firstfruits. Nothing had changed in the natural, but something had been altered in the spirit realm. The business began to prosper immediately because of its consecration to the Lord as a kingdom business by firstfruits and because it was aligned apostolically so that apostolic virtue and power broke the resisting elements against it.

This can be had by any and all businesses, no matter how large or small, if we are willing to take the plunge and operate in these measures. God is waiting for His chance to bless you and your business for your sake and His. Will you let Him?



I was driving down the road in the morning hours, making some final arrangements for our conference that was to begin that evening. I had flown into the Texas city where the conference was to be held a few days before. Mary, my wife, was to fly in from Colorado Springs just a couple of hours before the first meeting. It was in the summer months and in Texas the weather can become stormy at any time during this time of year, but especially in the afternoon hours. I had been watching the weather and knew that there were thunderstorms in the forecast for the time Mary was to be arriving. This in itself made me concerned that she might get stuck in the airport in Houston as she made her connection for her final leg of the journey. In addition to this though, I had a sense in the Spirit that there was going to be a problem.

As I drove down the road the Lord whispered to me to “decree” the weather to adjust so that Mary could get to the city on time and be ready for the opening sessions. I spoke to the weather out of the authority I have in the Lord and told it to be calm with the thunderstorms adjusting appropriately so that her plane could depart and arrive on time. It was a very quick but significant moment in the spirit realm. As the day passed I was in contact with Mary as she flew out of Colorado Springs and landed in Houston. As she got to her gate the storms that had been forecast began to roll in over the airport. The airline adjusted the departure time and told the passengers that there would be a lengthy delay. If the plane left when they said, Mary would not arrive for the beginning service of the conference. Mary told me that as soon as they made the announcement of the delay they could see the storms moving in. Suddenly, she said it looked like they *backed up* and went another way. Suddenly the airline agent came over the intercom and announced they *were* going to leave on time because the weather had changed. Mary got on her plane, arrived on time and made the meeting. Why did this happen? It occurred because of an apostolic decree that changed things in the atmosphere. We have these kinds of authority. If you are questioning this, let me tell you about another occasion when even something more astounding happened.

We were on a 21-day fast in the apostolic center that I led. There had been a long and extended drought over our region of Texas that was becoming quite severe. At the same time, California had so much rain that mudslides were destroying homes, properties and even lives. During one of the night prayer times in the midst of the fast, God spoke to me and told me to command the weather patterns over California to move

and position themselves over Texas. This would allow the rain to stop in California and begin in Texas.

As I felt and understood by the Spirit that I was to decree this, I opened my mouth and spoke to the weather patterns of the earth that were involved. In a matter of two days it began to rain in Texas a drenching rain that broke the drought and stopped raining in California so the mudslides would be over. I heard as the rain stopped in one place and began in the other, the meteorologist on television confirmed what we had done in the secret place. He literally said the change in both places was the result of the weather pattern over California moving and positioning itself over Texas. What an awesome God we serve that He would allow us to function in such apostolic authority of decrees that alter atmospheres.

Just like we altered the weather patterns, we also have the authority to alter spirit atmospheres and realities by and through apostolic decrees. We can influence and control that which is resisting and working against us from the authority that God has given us. This is one of the hidden keys contained in the firstfruits principle. When businesses and people align themselves with the apostolic, the apostolic then has the right and power to decree a thing and see it happen. This is what is found in the book of Job 22:28-30:

> *You will also declare a thing, And it will*
> *be established for you; So light will shine*
> *on your ways.*
> *When they cast you down, and you say, 'Exaltation will*
> *come!' Then He will save the*
> *humble person.*
> *He will even deliver one who is not innocent;*

Yes, he will be delivered by the purity of your hands."

The Lord communicates to us that we can speak a thing into existence by our authority in Him. I believe that all believers who are walking with the Lord have power and authority to make decrees and see things be altered, changed and established. Notice that when one is cast down we will proclaim exaltation and it comes. It even says that we can deliver those who are not innocent by our decrees if we have purity in our hands. I have discovered that real spiritual authority has its roots in purity and holiness. Whoever will choose to live a holy life unto the Lord will be entrusted with realms of authority that spiritual forces must respond to. This is especially true of the apostolic.

When a business aligns and connects with the apostolic through the act of firstfruits, that apostolic person has the right, privilege and responsibility of making decrees based on the alignment that has occurred over that business. As a result of these decrees, the spiritual dimension that is resisting, hindering or working against that business is altered and changed. At apostolic decrees things are re-arranged and put into proper place for the blessing to flow as it should over a business, family or life in general. Decrees are used by God to set in place spiritual entities and substance so that the people of God can receive that which the Lord has promised should be. Things line up in the spirit realm and the business goes to new dimensions of prosperity and success because principalities and devilish powers are nudged out of the way and the business is freed from any and all resistance. Remember that only a first can remove or deal with a first. The apostles have been set first in the church (I Corinthians.12:28) and principalities that resist

us are by definition those which were there first. So when that which is apostolic and that which is connected to what is apostolic and therefore has apostolic virtue flowing through it speaks and makes decrees in the spirit realm, these things must move in accordance. Decrees are very powerful things that we need to understand.

A decree is a law or judgment that is put in place by a king. Cyrus made decrees that the house of God should be rebuilt in Jerusalem. As a result of this decree, gold and silver were released for this purpose. We find this in the book of Ezra 5:13-15:

> *However, in the first year of Cyrus king of Babylon, King Cyrus issued a decree to build this house of God. "Also, the gold and silver articles of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple that was in Jerusalem and carried into the temple of Babylon those King Cyrus took from the temple of Babylon, and they were given to one named Sheshbazzar, whom he had made governor. "And he said to him, 'Take these articles; go, carry them to the temple site that is in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its former site.'*

In the days of Cyrus, God moved on his heart to issue such a decree. The Lord literally calls this heathen king “His Shepherd”. Isaiah 44:28 shows the declaring power of Cyrus as God’s king in his generation:

> *“Who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, And he shall perform all My pleasure, Saying to Jerusalem, "You shall be built," And to the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid." '*

The Lord used Cyrus in his kingly position to decree things in the earth and see them become a reality. The decree caused a release of finances to get the job done. In fact, it was the very finances and riches that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem and its temple when he took Israel captive over 70 years before. Now through the decree of Cyrus all these riches were released and restored for the purposes of the kingdom. In addition to this, it appears that God moved the hearts of the people as well. They gave generously to the cause of the temple’s rebuilding. Ezra 1:6 says that those who were “around’ them encouraged their endeavor with giving to their cause:

> *And all those who were around them encouraged them with articles of silver and gold, with goods and livestock, and with precious things, besides all that was willingly offered.*

The favor we see here upon the people for the purposes of God was tremendous and unbelievable. This is a great picture of what happens when apostles and their teams make decrees over businesses and business people. That decree alters the spirit realm and releases great amounts of wealth for the restoration and establishing of the kingdom of God. But it took a king of authority that had been positioned by God to release such decrees that resulted in the wealth that was necessary for the purposes of God to be done. These kings today are the apostles

that God is raising-up that we connect to through firstfruits. As we do, they issue the decrees of the Lord over the businesses that release the wealth of the wicked into the hands of the righteous for the purpose of establishing God's covenant in the earth. They also by their decree reclaim that which has been taken captive and bring it back into the hands of those who are kingdom natured and kingdom prone. With this wealth that which God desires to be established in the earth is accomplished.

Another place where we see a picture of decrees at work in the spirit realm is in the days of Nehemiah, when he was moved by God to go back and rebuild the city of Jerusalem that was falling down with walls dilapidated and gates burned with fire. Nehemiah was the cupbearer before king Artaxerxes. The Lord had formed a passion and burden in his heart for his beloved city.

Through a series of events the king agrees to allow and send Nehemiah back to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls and begin to restore Jerusalem. As the king sends him, Nehemiah asked for letters from the king so that he could pass through the regions and also get materials and substance from the king's forest and its keeper. Nehemiah 2:7-9 displays this for us:

> *Furthermore I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, "and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house*

that I will occupy." And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me.

Then I went to the governors in the region beyond the River, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me."

The king gave Nehemiah these letters so that the governors of the regions beyond the river would allow him to pass through. This is a picture of the demonic realm that wants to impede us in our endeavors in God.

But when we have letters in our hand as a result of kingly and apostolic decrees they must let us pass. They cannot restrict nor hinder what has been purposed by the king. Nehemiah also had a letter for Asaph the keeper of the king's forest. This was a letter to release provision and wealth to get the job done. As apostles make decrees there are letters put into our hands to get us past any demonic resistance against our businesses, but also to release wealth and prosperity into our hands for kingdom purposes. As we align ourselves apostolically through firstfruits with apostles, we must allow them the authority into our life to make the decrees that release the wealth into our hands and through our hands for the kingdom of God.

Throughout Scripture where we see giving and firstfruits being operated in, we see these apostolic decrees being made that move things in the spirit realm and call them into order. In the passage we have looked at in II Chronicles 31, we see that when king Hezekiah came and saw the heaps that had been

gathered by the firstfruits giving and tithes of the people, that he blessed the people of God. II Chronicles 31:8 says:

> *And when Hezekiah and the leaders came and saw the heaps, they blessed the Lord and His people Israel.*

The first thing Hezekiah did as king was bless and worship the Lord for the faithfulness and response of God's people, but then he blessed the people of God. This doesn't mean that he just said some kind word about them. It means that he spoke decrees and declarations of blessings over them on the basis of their giving. His blessing of them positioned and moved things in the spiritual atmosphere over their lives, families and businesses.

In Psalms 20:1-3 we see a declaration or decree being made on the basis of peoples giving:

> *May the Lord answer you in the day of trouble; May the name of the God of Jacob defend you; May He send you help from the sanctuary,*
> *And strengthen you out of Zion;*
> *May He remember all your offerings, And accept your burnt sacrifice.*
> *Selah*

As the Lord remembers the offering of His people, the decrees of those in spiritual authority over our lives bring blessings. We need to know that our sacrificial offerings create a remembrance or memorial before the throne of God. This is clearly seen in Numbers 10:10. Moses has been told by the Lord to have two silver trumpets made for the purpose of

directing the camp, gathering the people, mobilizing for war and other functions. One of the purposes of these trumpets was to blow them over the offering of the people:

> *"Also in the day of your gladness, in your appointed feasts, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace offerings; and they shall be a memorial for you before your God: I am the Lord your God."*

Trumpets speak of that which is prophetic and apostolic. I believe that there were two because it speaks of the apostolic and prophetic being blended together to make decrees that alter spiritual realities. As these trumpets were blown prophetically the Bible says there was a memorial created before the Lord in behalf of the people and their offerings.

Remember that a memorial is what keeps talking to God after we have become quiet. It is our offering mixed with apostolic and prophetic decrees that create this memorial before God and His throne. Never give an offering without blowing or having blown a prophetic/apostolic decree over you offering. This is especially true for firstfruits. Notice that one of the times the trumpets were to be blown was during “appointed feasts.” One of these feasts was the feast of firstfruits when the people brought their firstfruits to the high priest and secured his apostolic blessing as they aligned with him each year. This is why God told Aaron in Numbers 6:23-27 to bless the people of God with a specific blessing. With this blessing he would put the name of the Lord *on* them and the Lord’s blessing:

> *"Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: "The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace."' "So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."*

Aaron, as a shadow of the apostolic of our day had the responsibility based on the people's alignment with him through firstfruits giving to put the name of the Lord on the people and decree blessings over them. Notice that God said at the decree of Aaron, that He Himself would bless them. As businesses align apostolically and apostle decree blessing over them and put God's name on them and consecrate them, the Lord will bless and increase them.

Another place where we see the power of decrees so strongly is in the life of Hannah. Remember that Hannah gave Samuel to the Lord as a firstfruits offering before she ever had him. As a result of the son she gave to the Lord, God gave her five more children with Elkanah. There are a couple of things I want us to see here. In I Samuel chapter 1 as Hannah is praying and pouring out her soul to the Lord, Eli, the priest of that day, thought she was drunk. Yet she was actually in the process of promising God *her Samuel* if He would hear her. As Eli becomes aware of what is really happening, he as high priest makes an apostolic decree over Hannah. I Samuel 1:17-18 says:

> *Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you*

have asked of Him." And she said, "Let your maidservant find favor in your sight." So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad."

Notice that at the decree of Eli, peace comes to the soul of Hannah that had been greatly tormented by her desire. At the decree of Eli, Hannah obviously knew it was done. Apostolic decrees connected to the alignment of firstfruits accomplishes things in the spirit realm. Once they are accomplished we wait with expectancy and excitement at what is on its way. We move into it by faith.

After all these years of praying, believing, mourning and yearning, Hannah knew at the decree of Eli that it was accomplished, and it was. When apostolic decrees are released, what we have been waiting on moves into position for fulfillment. But the thing that allowed Eli by the Spirit of the Lord to decree such a thing was Hannah's promising of her firstfruits. It brought her into apostolic alignment, consecrated the dream of her heart and allowed Eli the right to make such declarations. Samuel would actually be brought and presented to Eli as Hannah's firstfruits offering of her offspring.

I want us to see what happened after this was done. Every year Hannah and he husband would come to Shiloh to worship. Hannah would bring a new coat for her son that was her firstfruits offering. Every year as she and Elkanah came to worship, Eli would make additional decrees over them because of the firstfruits offering that Hannah had given. I Samuel 2:19- 21 says:

> *Moreover his mother used to make him a little robe, and bring it to him year by year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "The Lord give you descendants from this woman for the loan that was given to the Lord." Then they would go to their own home. And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the Lord."*

Eli every year would decree children into the once barren woman's life. The womb that at one time had been barren and non-producing, now because of proper apostolic alignment through firstfruits giving and mixed with apostolic decrees brings forth a total of five more children. As businesses line up apostolically and apostles release decrees filled with apostolic and prophetic power, barrenness is destroyed and dismantled and businesses begin to prosper and increase on new levels.

An additional thought here is that apostolic decrees need to be ongoing until the fullness of what God intends is done. Every time an apostle decrees, there is a battering effect against every resistance. As Eli made decree after decree all that was in Hannah's heart was realized. This can be the power that apostles and kingdom business people see together, the fullness of kingdom prosperity for Jesus' sake.

One more thought on apostolic decrees being made is found in the book of Philippians and chapter 4. Paul is speaking to the church at Philippi and commending them on their giving into his life and ministry. Philippi was in what was called

Macedonia. To get an idea of the level on which this church gave to Paul, we get a glimpse of it in II Corinthians chapter 8. Paul uses the churches in Macedonia, of which Philippi was a part to seek to spur the Corinthians into new levels of sowing and reaping. II Corinthians 8:1-3 gives us some insight into how these people gave:

> *Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing."*

Paul said that these people, who included the Philippians, gave beyond what they could afford. Their giving was with great sacrifice, even in the midst of their own great need. As a result of this level of sowing, Paul promised them that on the level they sowed on that level they would receive. II Corinthians 9:6 says:

> *"But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."*

Somehow the Philippians had come to believe that the key to getting out of their place of need was to honor the apostolic in Paul with their giving. But a part of this whole equation was the apostolic decree of Paul over their giving as they aligned themselves with him. Philippians 4:15-19 shows us the heart of these Philippians people:

> *Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

Paul speaks of the way that these guys had given and aligned themselves with him. They gave when no one else did. He said they were the only church that supported him at one point. They also gave time and again. They were consistent in their giving. They also sent enough so that Paul said he was full. Their giving as a result Paul said created a sweet aroma before the throne of God. As a result of this level of extravagant giving, Paul then decrees an apostolic blessing over the people. He declares:

> *…my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

The verbiage here is one of decree. Paul is taking up his apostolic place in God and on the basis of the Philippians giving to him and therefore their alignment with him, he decrees every need met by God that they have in their lives.

This has been a missing element in the whole issue of giving. But God is restoring this to His people. As businesses align themselves apostolically with their firstfruits in particular, apostles that they are connecting to must step up into the arena of decrees and move things spiritually over these businesses. As this occurs, just like our apostolic decrees altered the natural weather patterns, things will be changed and moved in the spirit realm and the spiritual atmosphere and climate will change over businesses that allow them great prosperity for the kingdom's sake. Favors will come that have not come. Sales will increase that have been sluggish. Contracts that others received these businesses will get. This and many other things will occur as the business is consecrated and aligned apostolically and apostolic decrees are released. Powers that have sought to resist will be moved and nudged away and God's kingdom will be manifest in the marketplace.



What is the conclusion of all this? The whole purpose of God is His kingdom come and His will be done on earth. This requires massive amounts of wealth. Remember that Deuteronomy 8:18 says:

> *"And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day."*

The purpose of wealth attainment is that what God desires to be done in the earth can be accomplished. Please notice that what God wants cannot be done until we come into the wealth that is required to finance it. God's covenant being established in the earth and His kingdom purposes being done hinge on His

people coming into wealth. It will not happen without it. It is non-negotiable and an absolute necessity.

This means that our coming to wealth is not just about God loving us or wanting to bless us. Our coming into massive amounts of wealth is about the purposes of God being done in the earth. I have sought to show you a key that will allow business people to come into this level of financial blessing and breakthrough. As businesses become consecrated to the Lord through firstfruits and aligned apostolically for breakthrough in the spirit realm, this power to get wealth will be seen. As this occurs, the promises of God through out the Bible of a wealth transfer will take place.

The world is not going to finance the kingdom of God. There must be vehicles that God blesses and produces that allows this wealth transfer to come to pass. These vehicles are kingdom businesses that have been consecrated through firstfruits and aligned apostolically. God is using these businesses to make money by finding their place in the marketplace. New ideas, witty inventions, groundbreaking concepts and other devices for the marketplaces are being developed and launched as well as traditional investments in real estate, the stock market and other commonly thought of business ventures. As a result of the blessing of God on these business endeavors, that make rich and add no sorrow to it, these businesses will prosper and take large shares of the marketplace for themselves. Yes, there will be conventional business wisdom that will be used, but in addition the real prosperity will be the result of God's blessing resting so strongly because of the principles of consecration and alignment that has been and or being walked in. God is presently producing this breed of business people that He can trust with His wealth.

Let's look at what the Bible has to say about this wealth transfer. Throughout several places in Scripture we see the Lord promising a wealth transfer. This has been heralded, prophesied and dreamed of, but little in comparison of what is to be and needs to be has been seen. I personally believe there is a two-fold reason for this. First, God has been waiting for the apostolic to be restored so that an alignment with businesses can take place. Also, as a result of the continuing restoration of apostles, there will be the wisdom to dispense and disperse appropriately the massive amounts of wealth for kingdom purposes. Remember this why the early church sold land, houses, inheritances and precious things and laid the proceeds at the apostles' feet. (Acts 4:34-35) It was and is the apostles that have the wisdom and discernment of God to dispense this wealth so that it is not wasted nor misused.

The second reason is that God's people have not understood the purpose of wealth. Until we understand the purpose of a thing, we cannot be entrusted with it. Whether it is our own souls, our bodies, our children, our marriages or wealth itself, when we understand the purpose of a thing then God can trust us with it. There are at least nine different purposes of wealth. I want to briefly mention them in no particular order of importance. The first purpose of wealth, we have already mentioned, is to make God's word come to pass. Again, Deuteronomy 8:18 says:

> *"And you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day."*

God has to have a wealthy people for His purposes in the earth to be done. As we discover this primary purpose of wealth, God will entrust it to those who will use it for this reason.

A second purpose of wealth is to have God's presence among us. When the children of Israel came out of Egypt, the Lord gave them the wealth of Egypt so that they would have the means to construct the tabernacle where God would dwell among them. Exodus chapter 25:1-2 shows how that the Lord caused the people to the have heart to give so that a dwelling of God among His people could be secured:

> *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: "Speak to the children of Israel, that they bring Me an offering. From everyone who gives it willingly with his heart you shall take My offering."*

The Lord through Moses stirred up the children of Israel with a giving heart. In Exodus 25:8 we are told what their giving would produce:

> *"And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them."*

The prophetic picture here is that when we give, we create an atmosphere for God to dwell. People who are great givers have an intense sense of God's presence that hovers over and around their lives caused by their giving spirit and actions. We see this in Acts 2:43-45 with great demonstrations of God's power connected to the giving heart of His people:

> *Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the*

> *apostles. Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need.*

Giving and the manifest presence of the Lord are joined together. We see this also in Acts 4:32-33:

> *Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.*

As the people stepped into giving and created an atmosphere for God to move in, miracles of great proportions occurred. We must learn to use our wealth for the creation of atmospheres so that God will move and live in our lives and in the earth. Generous and liberal people see God do things that stingy and withholding people never do. May we use our wealth to create an atmosphere for God to live in.

Another scriptural purpose of wealth is a defense. Proverbs 10:15 says:

> *The rich man's wealth is his strong city; The destruction of the poor is their poverty.*

I am not speaking of an undo confidence in money, but recognition of the reality that when a person has plenty a sense of security goes with it. One of the purposes of wealth is to

allow us the privilege of living life and making decisions from a position of well being rather than the place of insecurity and need. Ecclesiastes 10:9 shows us that our approach to life is different when there is no need financially:

> *A feast is made for laughter, And*
> *wine makes merry;*
> *But money answers everything.*

When there is enough money, there aren't too many problems you can't solve. It seems that money is almost always at least a part of the answer to any need. Wealth creates a sense of security and defense against the problems and challenges of life.

Another purpose of wealth is to get free of debt and to live debt-free. God promised His people that they would lend and not borrow. Deuteronomy 28:12 says:

> *"The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow."*

The idea here is that when we walk in obedience to the Lord that the blessing of heaven will come on our lives and bless the works of our hands. As a result we will have no need for debt, but be able to lend instead of borrow. Scripture is clear that when we are the borrower we are the servant. Proverbs 22:7 shows this:

> *The rich rules over the poor,*

And the borrower is servant to the lender.

As God's people are trusted with wealth we will be able to live a debt-free life. This is one of the purposes of wealth itself.

A fifth purpose of wealth is influence. Someone once said they believe in the *golden rule,* which is whoever has the gold makes the rules. This may be a funny little twist on what we normally think of the golden rule, but it is nonetheless true. Ecclesiastes 9:15 talks of a man who had wisdom to deliver the city, yet was poor, and when it was all over no one remembered him:

> *Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city. Yet no one remembered that same poor man.*

It is possible to have much to give but have no platform to give it from unless wealth opens the door. We must acknowledge that wealth grants influence. This is why we must have wealth to begin to have social transformation.

A sixth purpose of wealth is to make friends and not enemies. Jesus spoke a parable in Luke chapter 16 about an unjust steward who had mishandled the wealth of his master. Even though he was unjust, he wasn't unwise. When the master was about to put him out of his stewardship and take the goods from him, the steward did a very wise thing. He gave his master's creditors a discount if they would pay off their bill ahead of time. As he did this, he was making friends with the creditors so that when the master put him out of his stewardship, these people would treat him favorably and

receive him. This man knew how to use money to make friends. Luke 16:8-9 says:

> *So the master commended the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly. For the sons of this world are more shrewd in their generation than the sons of light. "And I say to you, make friends for yourselves by unrighteous mammon, that when you fail, they may receive you into an everlasting home."*

Money is a very powerful tool with which to make friends. The truth is that most people make enemies with money, but the Lord wants to teach us how to have a positive effect into the world with money and to make friends for the kingdom with it. This is one of the purposes of wealth. When we take the wealth that God has entrusted us with and use it to make friends, we can see doors open and opportunities extended because of the use of our wealth. May God grant us such wisdom.

A seventh purpose of wealth is God uses money to test and train us for the *true riches*. Luke 16:11 says:

> *"Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?"*

Clearly the Word says that if we don't handle money properly for the kingdom's sake, then the Lord will not trust us with that which is truly valuable: the souls of men, the anointing of God, and others things of great value in the kingdom of God. The wealth we currently have and how we handle it is a training ground for the *greater goods*. If we desire to be trusted

with the bigger stuff, then we must pass the test of handling the wealth God has given to us.

An eighth purpose of wealth is to make spiritual connections. We have already spoken of this at length, but just remember how Abraham made vital spiritual connections with his wealth to Melchizedek. Hebrews chapter 7 declares that Melchizedek blessed the one who had the promises (Abraham) as a result of the connection and alignment Abraham made with his wealth. Hebrews 7:6 says:

> *but he whose genealogy is not derived from them received tithes from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises.*

Clearly the receiving of finances from Abraham created the alignment that allowed the blessing to flow from Melichizedek to Abraham and empowered the promises he carried. We cause spiritual alignments when we use finances to honor those God has connected us to.

A final purpose of wealth is to enjoy it. I Timothy 6:17 speaks to those who are rich and wealthy in this world. It admonishes them with several things, but in finality says:

> *Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.*

Notice that God is not against *things*, as long as things don't own us, but we own things. He actually gives us *all things* to enjoy. In the midst of the blessing of the Lord that makes rich

and adds no sorrow with it is the ability to enjoy what God has blessed us with. When we have the right perspective as stewards, suddenly the *stuff* we have is a love gift from the Lord. We can enjoy the stuff because we know God has blessed us with it. Ecclesiastes 5:19-20 gives us clear understanding of the heart of God:

> *As for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, and given him power to eat of it, to receive his heritage and rejoice in his labor this is the gift of God. For he will not dwell unduly on the days of his life, because God keeps him busy with the joy of his heart.*

The ability to have wealth and to enjoy it is a gift from God. Don't allow anyone or anything to cheat you out of the blessing of the Lord. Don't let those who are of the miser spirit cause you *not* to enjoy want God has given you. Proverbs 23:6- 7 says:

> *Do not eat the bread of a miser, Nor*
> *desire his delicacies;*
> *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. "Eat*
> *and drink!" he says to you,*
> *But his heart is not with you.*

The Word says there are those who are misers in their heart that cannot enjoy the goodness of the Lord. The word *miser* in the Hebrew means *one which has an evil eye*. In other words, he cannot enjoy what the Lord has given because he is so negative and is constantly expecting evil things to come. Don't let these people spoil your party. We must be wise and understand that the primary purpose of wealth is to finance the

kingdom of God, but we also get to enjoy it along the way. The Lord is good, gracious and kind. He delights in the prosperity of His people and wants to trust us with it. (Psalms 35:7)

Mary and I had labored for many years in the raising of the apostolic center that we led. When we started we had very little. We could not afford a home to live in. During the course of time, the Lord blessed and we increased and saw the blessing of God come on the ministry and our lives. We were able to purchase a couple of homes at different times as things were increasing. Yet, in spite of what we had been able to do, Mary still had a desire for her "dream home." Things continued to develop and we felt that it was right to go ahead and design and build the house of her dreams. The house was a pretty large home and as it was being built I began to worry that the "church people" would have a problem with our "extravagance". One morning as I was praying - I was not thinking about the house that was under construction - I suddenly heard the Lord say to me, "This is my reward to you for your years of service to Me." I began to weep as I heard those words and felt His presence and knew that this home was His love gift to us. I no longer worried about what anyone thought. This house represented God's passion over our lives. Do not allow anyone to cheat you out of the joy of God's good things into your life.

As we learn the purposes of wealth and are willing to align and consecrate through the act of firstfruits to the apostolic, a massive transfer of wealth will allow and propel the fulfillment of God's purposes in the earth. Ecclesiastes 2:26 promises that God will take riches and wealth away from the one that God does not favor and give it to the one He does:

> *For God gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to a man who is good in His sight; but to the sinner He gives the work of gathering and collecting, that he may give to him who is good before God. This also is vanity and grasping for the wind."*

According to the Word of God some of those who have experienced great prosperity have it so that it may be taken from them and given to those who are good before God and have their hearts set on the purposes of the kingdom. This will happen as kingdom businesses come to prominence and begin to prosper in the business realm. Companies and businesses that are not kingdom minded could find themselves losing the lion share of their market as kingdom businesses rise with new expertise because of the blessing of God upon them. This is something that kingdom business people should understand and go for.

Lest someone misunderstand, I am not promoting an unsavory idea here. I am not saying that we should want to *stea*l something away from others. The Bible clearly says that all the silver and gold is the Lord's. Haggai 2:8 says:

> *'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the Lord of hosts.*

So it is God's legal and ethical right to entrust the silver and gold to whomever He desires. The silver and God was put here in planet earth to finance the kingdom of God and therefore to accomplish God's plan and purpose in the earth.

Job 27:16-17 also show us this promise of wealth transfer. It speaks of the wicked and those whom God has no pleasure in:

> *Though he heaps up silver like dust, And piles up clothing like clay He may pile it up, but the just will wear it, And the innocent will divide the silver.*

God declares that the just will wear what the wicked have piled up and the silver the wicked has accumulated, the righteous will have control of. This is wealth transfer. As kingdom businesses walk holy and righteous before the Lord in innocence, God will entrust them with what the wicked have gathered. This will occur out of righteous business dealings that are full of the wisdom and understanding of the Lord. In the marketplace the purposes of God will be accomplished and fulfilled. What a glorious privilege God has granted to those He has anointed to make money and finance His will in the earth.

Another place we find this principle chronicled is Proverbs 28:8:

> *One who increases his possessions by usury and extortion Gathers it for him who will pity the poor.*

Again, in this verse we see that the Lord promises to take away from the one who increases by immoral and unethical means and give it to the ones who will serve His purposes in the earth. This is what kingdom businesses are for. They are a vehicle that God can bless, trust, and enlarge to see His desire financed in the earth.

We see the transfer of wealth in several different places in Scripture. One of the first examples I think of is when the children of Israel were delivered from the bondage of Egypt. As they left Egypt they were commanded by the word of the Lord at Moses' mouth to ask from their Egyptian neighbors gold and silver items. Miraculously as they did this, their neighbors agreed and gave it to them. Exodus 12:35-36 tells us the amazing favor that God gave the Israelites in the face of the Egyptians:

> *Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing. And the Lord had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.*

Some wonder how this transfer of wealth will take place. It will be the result of unimaginable favor. Just like the Lord caused the Egyptians to do the unthinkable, He will cause the world to do the unthinkable as well, as kingdom business people merchandise in the marketplace of the world. The Lord will cause the right people to favor you. We do not need everyone to like us, just the right ones. Joseph went from the prison to the palace when the right person, the Pharaoh of Egypt, favored Him. In a moment of time, we can go to great level of prosperity because the right people have liked us.

Another example of a wealth transfer is found in the days of Joseph. Joseph's treatment was unrighteous and he was imprisoned for many years. All this time, God was preparing

him in this unrighteous place for his hour and destiny. Psalm 105:17-19 tells us of the preparation of Joseph to save Egypt, but more importantly the budding nation of Israel from which the Messiah would come. These verses speak of Joseph's time in the prison and what God was accomplishing there with him:

> *He sent a man before them Joseph who was sold as a slave.*
> *They hurt his feet with fetters, He was laid in irons.*
> *Until the time that his word came to pass, The word of the Lord tested him.*

Joseph went from being a slave to being a prisoner to having his soul laid in iron (that is what this portion of the verse literally says) so that God could entrust him with a transfer of wealth.

As the famine came into the land that Joseph prophesied out of the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream, God granted Joseph the wisdom to know how to allow the kingdom to prosper not just in good times, but in the famine and recession times as well. Before it was all over the kingdom of Pharaoh possessed all the goods of the Egyptians and actually prospered because of the wisdom that God granted Joseph. Genesis 47:13-26 shares how that Joseph accumulated all the money of Egypt, all the land of Egypt and all the people of Egypt as sharecroppers working for the kingdom. Because Joseph knew how to behave himself in times of famine and lack, he and the kingdom of Egypt prospered.

I am told that more millionaires are made during times of recession than during times of a booming economy. This is

what God promised again, in Deuteronomy 8:18 when He said He would give His people power to get wealth:

> *And you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who gives you power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day..*

Remember that the word *power* in this verse in the Hebrew means a *chameleon*. In other words, it is the ability to adapt and change according to economic situations so that you make money when others are holding on to what they have or even losing it. This is what Joseph did and it is the wisdom that God will grant to His kingdom business people in this day as well. If we will listen to the Lord and His prophets we will prosper. Kingdom business people do not do business the normal way. They walk in the Spirit, listen to the Lord, and do what God says. Because Joseph was able to do this, a massive transfer of wealth occurred in the kingdom of Egypt just like it can and will in the kingdom of God.

We must have an ear to listen to the Lord. II Chronicles 20:20 records Jehosaphat, a very good king, as encouraging his people to listen to the prophets of God. He promised if they would heed the word from the true prophets of God that they would prosper:

> *So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be*

established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."

This is exactly what Pharaoh did in the days of Joseph. Not only did Joseph tell Pharaoh what was coming, but he told him what to do about it. As a result, the kingdom of Egypt prospered when all others were destroyed. So can and will the kingdom of God, as kingdom business people are rightly aligned and connected to the apostolic and prophetic. They will have wisdom and insight that the world's business people do not have and will experience the wealth transfer prophesied in God's word for the sake of the kingdom.

Jacob is another example of a wealth transfer at work. Jacob labored for many years for his father-in-law Laban. Laban was not a righteous man. He used and abused Jacob. Yet God gave Jacob business sense to know how to prosper in this scenario. This would appear to be an unlikely place to prosper, but because Jacob had a word from the Lord in a dream, he knew what to. (Genesis 31:10-12) His prospering was so great that he took away the wealth of Laban and made it his own. Laban's own sons said as much in Genesis 31:1:

> *Now Jacob heard the words of Laban's sons, saying, "Jacob has taken away all that was our father's, and from what was our father's he has acquired all this wealth.*

The sons accused Jacob of acquiring the wealth of Laban. There was a transfer of wealth that went from Laban to Jacob, because Jacob was willing to do the unconventional and listen to the word of God. When business people pay attention to God's rhema word, that word will lead them into wealth and

prosperity. This word is a result of having consecrated the business to the Lord through the act of firstfruits. Jacob said that God would not allow Laban to harm him financially. Through the word of the Lord Jacob knew what sheep to bargain for and knew what to do to have them bring forth of the right kind. Jacob himself said to his wives that the Lord had taken the wealth away from Laban and had given it to him. Genesis 31:9 says:

> *So God has taken away the livestock of your father and given them to me.*

As a result of this, no matter what Laban did or how he tried to structure Jacob's pay package we see in Genesis 31:7 that God would not allow him to be hurt:

> *Yet your father has deceived me and changed my wages ten times, but God did not allow him to hurt me.*

The blessing of God on Jacob was as a result of his obedience to the word of the Lord which secured and settled the blessing of God over his life and business dealings. He prospered so much that the Word says he became greatly prosperous. Genesis 30:43 declares:

> *Thus the man became exceedingly prosperous, and had large flocks, female and male servants, and camels and donkeys.*

Jacob went from a man who was running from his brother Esau for his life, to one who had great wealth and prosperity. He left his father's house in fear of his life and because of the wealth

transfer that occurred, he returned with great riches and prosperity. Genesis 32:9-10 shows that which Jacob recognized had come from the hand of the Lord:

> *Then Jacob said, "O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, the Lord who said to me, 'Return to your country and to your family, and I will deal well with you': "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant; for I crossed over this Jordan with my staff, and now I have become two companies."*

Jacob left with very little and because of the blessing of the Lord returned with great riches.

The Lord loves to take those who have nothing and make them rich for His glory. This is what He did with Abraham. Abraham would take nothing from anyone, because he knew God was jealous to get glory from his wealthy state. Genesis 14:22-23 shows Abraham's heart concerning wealth and riches. He knew it was God who would bless him and trust him with prosperity:

> *But Abram said to the king of Sodom, "I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, "that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, 'I have made Abram rich."*

Abraham realized that God was jealous over making him rich. There are many that God desires to make rich for His kingdom

purposes. He will take them from nothing, like He did Jacob and trust them with great wealth, when they learn to consecrate their businesses to the Lord.

Our riches are not the result of hard work or even our own ingenuity. They are the result of God's blessings as He entrusts us with the wealth transfer for the purposes of His kingdom. Job 8:7 declares that it doesn't matter where we start. If we are already a successful business owner, when we get the blessing on it in, it will go to a bigger place for the purposes of God. If we are those who are only beginning, God will place His hand on the business and cause it to grow with supernatural favor and increase:

> *Though your beginning was small,*
> *Yet your latter end would increase abundantly.*

God loves to take that which is small and make it big. When this occurs, He receives all the glory for it. The Lord is searching the earth for those He can show Himself strong in behalf of. (II Chronicles 16:9) When He finds them He moves in their lives and businesses because He knows He can trust them. As we *give Him* our dreams, visions, businesses and ventures through firstfruits and consecrate them and align them apostolically, He will trust us with His riches and use us to finance the kingdom in the earth. Our businesses will become vehicles that are His for the wealth transfer. He will use that which we have been entrusted with as stewards to cause the shift to take place in the marketplace.

Go ahead, take the plunge and step into the new realms of business that God has ordained you to walk in. You will be glad you did and so will the Lord and His kingdom. There is a

great shift and transfer coming. Let’s be a part of it by consecrating our businesses and all we love through firstfruits and by aligning ourselves with the present apostolic movement that is happening around the world.