MONEY WITH A MISSION

OR PROSPERITY WITH AN ASSIGNMENT



CHARLES AGYINASARE

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Contents

Introduction
The Question Of Money
The Reasons For Money Or Wealth
The Benefits Of Showing Kindness To The Poor
Good And Bad Application Of Money
Honour God With Your Substance And Get Your Increase
Conclusion
About The Author
Other Books From Author

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Introduction

Eccl 10:19 ***"A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things."***

I have doubts if there is anybody who does not harbor any desire to have money. If there is such a person, they would be very strange indeed.

At the center of many human activities is the quest for money or what money can buy. Multitudes migrate from one end of the globe to the other in search of better economic opportunities. A disturbing phenomenon lately is young people from some sub-Saharan states crossing the Sahara Desert in an effort to better their financial lots in well-off economies in Europe. Over the ages, governments, nations, kingdoms, organizations etc have committed effort and resources with the view to improving the economic lot of their people. Achieving financial liberty is one of the commonest pursuits of all men.

There seems to be an age-old fight between the wealthy and the poor, the haves and the have-nots, over the years. But I strongly believe there is a way out of poverty for any man. Anybody can make decent money provided he or she is willing to apply the rules. Through hard work and divine guidance, anybody can make honest money. Luck has nothing to do with it, but hard work and the help of God have everything to do with it. Matt 19:26 ***"With God, all things are possible."*** If men are willing and obedient, they can eat the good of the land, as the scriptures say. Isa 1:19 ***"If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."***

It is the utmost desire of God to bless and prosper all His children. God can make people financial high-fliers if they follow His instructions. He

ardently desires His children to thrive and enjoy good health. Most of the prominent men in the Bible were men of enormous wealth. Abraham was a superbly rich person and so were Isaac and Jacob.

With sufficient and relevant information, coupled with determination, we can lift ourselves from poverty to financial liberty. Wealth creation is not cheap, though quite easy when we know what to do. With diligence, reliance on God, and sacrifice, men can become prosperous in this life.

God Bless You

Charles Agyinasare

Chapter One

The Question Of Money

Many people wonder why a preacher should lay strong emphasis on money. Money matters make some Christians cringe with disapproval. They think that the Church is becoming excessively worldly discussing money. It is apparently lost on these folks that it is impossible to live in our ultra-monetized world without dealing with money. Then Mr. John Agyekum Kufour President of Ghana once said that "The nation is suffering brain drain due to the general lack of money in the nation." Money is therefore very important in the life of everyone. We cannot live in this world without of necessity using money. We are always paying bills, and many of us have huge bills to pay month in month out. Christians who think they should have nothing to do with money clearly need to think again.

The fact that money is so crucial in our daily living means that we should teach people about it. This will enable people know what to do to be financially independent, and how to apply same for maximum effect. It is my firm belief that everybody can easily experience financial liberty when they follow the instructions contained in the word of God.

I am specially commissioned by God to bring divine healing to my generation. The healing I am commissioned to bring includes financial healing. My gospel is a total gospel to the total man. The total gospel includes financial prosperity for all who believe.

Prosperity With A Mission

The believer's prosperity has a mission. God prospers the Christian in order to establish His kingdom through him. It is therefore very important to understand that God desires all His children to prosper. Over the past few decades, the "Word" and "Prosperity" movement has enabled the Church to expand evangelically and acquire more property than in all the two thousand years of the Church's existence. This is because faith and money were generated in the Church per the prosperity revelation. The Church cannot get anything from God without faith in God. Without hearing the word of faith it is not possible to live by faith. I teach about money with the view to generating faith in my readers, to enable them prosper financially. When we receive faith for prosperity, many of our problems are likely to cease. Whatever we have faith for becomes a possibility.

Lessons From Joshua

Josh 1:8 ***"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."***

From the above text, we can learn a very important lesson on success and prosperity. Joshua was a new leader just about to usher Israel into the Promised Land. God challenges him to diligently keep his instructions and prosper. God is always interested in the success and prosperity of His children.

In fact, the word of God sums up in one of my favorite scriptures thus, 3 John 1:2. ***"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospereth."***

God desires a threefold prosperity for His children. He is interested in our physical and spiritual well being just as He is of our financial wellbeing.

Prosperity Defined

The common definition of prosperity is "becoming successful in financial or material terms." Bank balances, stocks, bonds and other financial acquisitions characterize financial prosperity. To prosper means to have material goods in large amounts. Prosperity is more than having just enough of the basic needs of life. It implies having more than enough of all good things to be able to provide for every good work.

Ps.35:27. ***"Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant."*** In other words, the Bible says let God be extolled, let His name be magnified, because He has pleasure in the prosperity of His children. The text above clearly says God has pleasure in the prosperity of his servants.

Prosperity is the state of being prosperous. It again refers to the condition of being successful in material terms. To prosper, defined alternatively, is to flourish physically; to grow strong and healthy. There is an English statement normally used for nations, which says, "God has wonderfully prospered this nation." This statement means the nation is doing well.

The word "Wealth" is the synonym of prosperity, and it means abundance of valuable possessions or money. It is the state of being rich or having material prosperity. Now let us take a look at the definition of "rich" before looking at the definition of "poor" or "poverty." The word rich comes from a German word "Reich" which

was reinforced by an old French word "reeche." It means to have enough and be powerful. To be rich means to have a great deal of money, assets or wealth. It also means to be plentiful, to have in abundance or in large amounts. The Bible says the rich man's wealth or his abundant possessions is his strong city. In the physical realm, the rich man's possessions are his strong city or defense. On the other hand, the Bible says Pro 10:15 ***"the ruin of the poor is his poverty."***

Poverty In The Spotlight

Poverty according to the Merriam Webster's dictionary is the state of being poor or without competent subsistence: need: penury. Its synonyms are beggary, destitute and or distress.

The Bible does not commend poverty. It is not stated anywhere in the Bible that poverty is a virtue. It is not evil or a sin to be poor. However, to remain poor is bad enough. The Bible has nothing commendable to say about poverty or lack. Let us look at some things the bible does say about poverty.

Poverty Destroys.

Pro. 10:15 says ***"the rich man's wealth is his strong city, the destruction of the poor is their poverty."*** The bible says the rich man's wealth represents his strong city or defense. We are more protected when we are wealthy in a materialistic world than when we are poor. Poverty makes people vulnerable to many of the common dangers of life. Some of the dangers that can befall a poor man may not be able to easily destroy a rich man.

Being Poor

By definition means lacking sufficient money, or living below a level considered comfortable in society.

That means if you do not have sufficient money to live a comfortable or normal life you are considered poor. The poor man is unable to live a normal life. The dictionary says the poor person is worse than usual. The word "poor" also means low, inferior or sub-standard in quality. It also means lacking, or considered to be deserving of pity or sympathy. It is not desirable to find yourself in a position where people have to pity you or give you handouts. It should never be your desire to be taking handouts from people. To be poor means you deserve pity or sympathy from others.

God Does Not Want His People To Be Poor

You can't make poverty your friend or entertain thoughts of poverty. Just as I am angry at sickness, I am equally angry at poverty. This is because poverty doesn't make people come into the full experience of God's blessings. Some people's education is truncated due to lack of money. Other people's future is derailed due to poverty.

The Bible says the destruction of the poor is his poverty. Some common or curable diseases unfortunately kill some people today owing to their inability to mobilize funds to seek medical treatment. Inability to cough out a few dollars or whatever currency needed to run a laboratory test can easily lead to death for the poor. A common hernia operation, when unnecessarily delayed due to poverty, can lead to death. A person's inability to hire a good lawyer can unduly land him in jail. Legal charges are not for free. Many people in jail are there simply because of their inability to hire a good defense counsel. Very bright kids are on the streets hawking because their poor parents couldn't get them to school. Poverty has therefore destroyed the future and destiny of many the world over.

Many of the things people are guaranteed under the constitution are only available when they can afford them. Lack of money even works against a man's ministry or calling. The late Archbishop Benson Idahosa used to say "Anointing without money brings annoyance" meaning no matter how anointed you are, if you don't have the money to help you minister to people you get frustratingly angry. The gospel is free but money is the wheels that carry the gospel. When you are not able to mobilize funds to run your Church or ministry it does not matter how much unction you have, you may not make any headway in your calling. It is not true that some struggling pastors are not anointed. Some of them are not making much impact just because they do not have money to push their vision. I know very good teachers who could have run their own schools but are still working for others because of the lack of money. I know very good doctors who should be managing their own clinics but lack money to do so. The Bible says the destruction of the poor is his poverty. Look at the second thing the bible says about poverty.

Poverty Demeans

In Pro. 19:4 the Scripture says, ***"Wealth makes many friends but the poor is separated from his neighbour."*** Poverty demeans a person or makes people go down in life. The good book says wealth makes many friends but the poor is separated from his neighbour. This is because people normally see the poor as a nuisance, as a kind of parasite or leech that must be conveniently avoided. There are some relatives people do everything to avoid simply because they think they always come to make demands on them. I believe that in some instances we may be the Josephs God has sent into our families to bring relief and deliverance. It is my prayer

that God will greatly bless us to always be a channel of blessing to our families. It is my hope that knowledge from this book will help you rise to the place of financial greatness in your generation. Mother Teresa was a very rich woman who used her wealth and connections to help others. She chose to live simply but bless abundantly. She chose to use her blessings to bless other people. We are not blessed by God just to have what to eat and drink, but instead to have more than enough to bless others.

Poverty Reduces A Person's Influence

Poverty reduces a person's influence in society. The poor are wont to allow others to intimidate them. Do not allow people to put you down simply because you do not have what they have. Eccl. 9:13 ***"This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me"***

Eccl. 9:14 ***"There was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it."***

Eccl. 9:15 ***"Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man."***

Eccl. 9:16 ***"Then said I, Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard."***

In fact, when you are poor, your wisdom is even questioned by those who listen to you. "Why can't he use his wisdom to change his situation?" they ask. This is the unfortunate lot of the poor man who may have some wisdom to contribute. I am aware of how it feels like to be fully loaded spiritually, but not have any chance to express it. It is very frustrating to have what it takes, but lack the necessary resources to promote what you have. Much stuff I see in the lives of other

people seems lightweight to me. Nevertheless, these men have all the resources to push the little they have to go round the world. On the other hand, I know of men with much weightier stuff who do not have the needed resources to support what they have. The world may not get the chance to hear from some of the people who are well informed due to their inability to raise money to sponsor them. Without money, a person's influence is limited. You might have the greatest asset in the whole world, but if you do not have the money to promote it, your influence is limited. That is why you do not have to allow poverty to rule your life. I am yet to see a poor man who wins in any election. It is not the best candidates that win in elections but the richest ones. You might have the most wonderful manifesto in this world, but if you cannot reach out with it to the world, it will not amount to anything. A person's potential can be killed due to the lack of money. In addition, it takes money to take a person to the top in this life. I prophesy prosperity over your life in Jesus name.

Poverty Is Slavery

Poverty enslaves. In Pro. 22:7, the Bible says, ***"The rich ruleth over the poor and the borrower is servant to the lender."*** The rich always rules over the poor in our world. It is always true that the borrower is a servant to the lender. The righteous is not supposed to be ruled over. The Bible says the righteous man will leave an inheritance to his children and his children's children.

Prov.13:22 ***"A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children and the wealth of a sinner is laid up for the just."***

At the time that a truly righteous person is about to leave this earth, he or she must not leave debts behind. He must leave wealth as one of

the inheritance that benefits both his children and grandchildren. That is the heritage of the righteous. It is my hope that you will live to see your grandchildren and leave an inheritance for them. I know of people who are making it today due to the inheritance left to them by their parents.

I Experienced Poverty As A Kid

On the other hand, some others too are struggling because their parents didn't leave them anything when they were dying. In fact there are times when I talk about the hardships of the past but some people have no clue what I talk about. My own children didn't go through what I went through as a child. I had to walk from Teshie to Burma Camp in Accra a distance of 8.4 kilometres, if the school bus did not show up. I was just seven years old, and had to walk several miles to school. I had to carry water on my head for miles when I was growing up. They cannot identify with such hassles.

There were some of my mates who did not experience any of the things I went through. They came to school with a lot of the provisions they needed for school. Their stocks never run dry any day unlike some of us. I was constantly broke. What I went through is not the best any parent should wish for his children.

I know some ministers who started churches and did not have to suffer because of the kind of families they came from. When you talk about living by faith to some of these people, they do not get your drift. That is why you should never have an occasion to make your children deprived of what will make them giants in this world.

The Jewish Mentality

The Christian should leave a legacy for the children. They should be able to leave something substantial that the children will not have to fight over. The Bible says a righteous or good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children. Jews were programmed from birth to believe that poverty was not part of God's plan for them. They believe that they must leave an inheritance for their grandchildren.

It is my desire that the message in this book inspires you to live your life in such a way that you leave an inheritance for your children. I appeal to you by the mercies of God never to leave this world a poor person. Eccl. 7:12 ***"For wisdom is a defense and money is a defense."***

Eccl 10:19 reads, ***"A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes merry, but money answers all things."*** On the face of the earth, money is the answer to all natural things or demands. That is the reason why we all need money to live meaningfully in this world. If I can hold a gospel campaign in another city, I need money to run my adverts etc. to cause the crusade to succeed.

Remember The Lord In Your Prosperity

We are commanded in Deut. 8:11 thus: ***"Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; and when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage."***

In the above text, God instructs Israel that after they have eaten and are satisfied they should not

forget Him. This means that God was going to greatly satisfy them with much wealth.

As a Christian, God is going to feed you until you are well satisfied. He talks about building goodly (comfortable) houses. That means it is the will of God for his people to build good houses.

The scripture goes on to talk about God multiplying sheep and cattle, being an agrarian society; God was signifying that he was going to see to the prosperity of our business. Whatever the believer does is bound to prosper. Verse 13 talks about the multiplication of silver and gold. These minerals are symbols of wealth and luxury. It is the will of God for His children to have wealth. God is never against wealth for His children. Heaven is a place of unequaled wealth and riches.

I see God multiplying His children with wealth and power in these last days. Our finances are going to experience an upturn because it is the promise of God to bless and prosper His children. God is going to cause us to flourish more than we have ever known. God allows the rain to fall both for the sinner and for the saint, but if you are His child, He has a special favour for you. In addition, He will multiply what you have.

The scripture above says that, after we are blessed, we should not forget the grace of the Lord and start thinking that our prosperity is a result of our personal abilities. I want to state again that it is not a sin to be poor, but it is not good to remain poor. This is because when you are poor, many things work against you and you cannot help anyone in need.

We Need To Respect Wealth To Attract Wealth

I know some pastors' children who feel very bad about the ministry because they think God had

not dealt well with their parents. This is because their parents accepted poverty as part of the calling of God. What you do not respect, you cannot attract. Many people have no respect for wealth and wealthy people, hence their inability to attract wealth. This is the problem of many poor people. They tend to think that all rich people are crooks or dishonest. Some also think that rich people are arrogant and disrespectful.

I heard a story about a man and his dog. He was once angry at his dog, which never barked and insulted it. From that day on the dog always avoided him when he was home. This goes to lend credence to the fact that what we do not respect we don't attract.

Chapter Two

The Reasons For Money Or Wealth

Deut. 8:10 ***"When you have eaten and you are full, then you will bless the Lord your God for the good land which he has given you."***

There are reasons why God blesses His people. When we are not aware of these reasons we can abuse the purpose for which God blesses us financially. The believer is blessed to use his resources to serve divine purposes. In this section, we shall look at some major reasons why we are blessed.

In the book of Deuteronomy God promised to bless Israel with a good land. He then warned them not to forget His commandments, but to keep them after they prospered. God recounts how He led Israel through the wilderness, providing for them in difficult times. That implies that God blesses in spite of our circumstances. It is possible for God to bless our nations even in very trying times.

God Can Bless Despite The Economy

My nation Ghana was branded a HIPC nation by the Breton Woods Institutions. Irrespective of this unfortunate tagging, it was still possible for the individual to be blessed in Ghana. It is possible for God to squeeze water out of stone to bless His children. In the midst of HIPC God prospered His people who put their trust in Him. This may not happen because of the economic

performance of the nation. This happens because God does it. As God prospers His people, the economy will consequently improve. He fed Israel in the barren wilderness with manna for forty years. Sometimes God allows His people to go through challenging times with the view to testing or proving them. The reason God does this is to show Himself gracious in our lives. My Bible says all things work together for good to them that love God. "All things" do not work together for the good of everybody. "All things" only work for the good of those that love God and are called according to His purpose.

Be Careful To Credit God With Your Blessings

It is possible for people to say that the power and the might of their hand have made them rich or prosperous. It is very easy to think that you are a self-made person. It is very easy to say my intellectual capacity or diligence has made me prosperous. It is true that hard work and smartness are essential ingredients in wealth generation. And yet, natural abilities do not lead to prosperity outside the grace of God.

Hard work is one of the requirements for wealth generation. Hard work alone, however, does not make one wealthy. I know people who work very hard, but have very little to show for it. It is possible for Christians to become more prosperous than their unbelieving relatives and friends. This is because of the grace of God on their lives. Just because you are working hard does not mean you will be blessed. The divine factor has a lot to do with the prosperity of the believer. Many Christians have become the Josephs of their families because of the power of God at work in their lives. We are admonished in the Bible not to attribute our affluence solely to personal abilities. Believers shall be mightily

blessed of God, but they need to attribute their prosperity to God, who gives us power to make wealth. It is very dangerous to ignore the house of the Lord when we are prospered.

Some People Forget God When They Prosper

Some Christians refuse to take up assignments in the house of the Lord after they become prosperous. Their view is that they are now 'big men' in their companies and for that matter must not be bothered with such menial jobs like ushering and singing in the choir. They forget that it is the Lord who gave them grace or power to make wealth. Deu.8:18. ***"But 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 unto thy fathers, as it is this day."***

Power To Make Wealth

The first reason why God prospers us is in order to establish His covenant. He therefore gives power to His people to make money. The word "power" means "divine ability or enlargment." It implies capability to make or perform. When we receive this power, we do not struggle to make wealth. Power is God's creative ability to accomplish something. Power is insight or sensitivity from God to do a given job at a particular time in a particular way to make wealth. I explained wealth as "having more than enough." This includes material items like finances and all that money can buy. The Bible is saying it is God who gives the ability to make wealth in order to establish His covenant.

God made a covenant with Abraham and promised to bless his seed (descendants). He went on to promise to bless the world through the seed of Abraham. Christians are the children

of Abraham by faith in Christ. Once you receive Jesus, you automatically become a seed (descendant) of Abraham Gal. 3:29 ***"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."*** God then comes under obligation as a result of the Abrahamic covenant to bless you. That is what it means to establish the covenant. Every Christian as the seed of Abraham is destined to prosper because of Christ Jesus.

Establishing The Covenant Through The Gospel

Secondly, God establishes His covenant through the wealth of the Christian. The resources he gives to the Christian become a tool for the propagation of the gospel. Through our wealth, God desires the gospel to reach all men. This may take the form of the publication of Bibles in the different languages of the world, or the planting of Churches in all communities around the world. The holding of mass gospel crusades, the sending and sponsoring of missionaries. The world needs the Bible on cassette and CD. This can only become possible through the prosperity of the believer. The nations should have churches in all communities. We cannot have churches in every place if the people of God do not have money to fund Church-planting efforts. Governments do not plant Christian churches, and neither do Moslems or members of other religions. That is the reason why the Devil is never happy when Christians prosper. If the devil makes you accept the "prosperity is evil" message, we may not start churches in the nations of the world.

God is going to give wealth to believers to sponsor gospel programmes free on air. God desires the gospel to be heard all over the world. If believers who believe the gospel cannot fund

the gospel, the message will not be aired free to the world. It takes a lot of money to take the gospel to the international arena. In my ministry, we hold international crusades and these cost much money. Our ministry to Togo, Pakistan and other international destinations cost huge sums. Voluntary giving by Church members who are blessed by God helps fund our evangelical activities. The gospel must be published around the world before Jesus returns

Mark 13:10 "And the gospel must first be published among all nations."

Jesus Must Be Marketed Through The Prosperity Of Believers

We print posters, handbills, etc to advertise our gospel programmes around the world. Some people think we waste money doing all manner of print and electronic adverts. Nobody lights a light and puts it under a bushel. If we have good news, we need to publish it for all to hear. If the world markets tobacco, alcohol, etc. that ruin their patrons, I do not see anything wrong with advertising the Good News. We have not yet told the world a fraction of what Jesus can do. It is time the Church invest good money to advertise Jesus on every street corner. These are the reasons why the believer must prosper financially. This to me is the way to establish the covenant.

The Love Of God

Another reason why the believer should get wealth is the love of God.

Ps 35:27 ***"Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant."***

The equivalent of the above scripture in Matt 7: 11 (Amplified) says: ***"If you then, even as you are, know how to give good and advantageous gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven, perfect as he is, give good and advantageous things to those who keep on asking him."***

The Bible says that if we humans give good gifts to our children and our dependants, how much more will the perfect God give good things to us, His children. One of the good things God gives to His children is money. Money gives many advantages in life. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 8:9 that though He was rich, Jesus became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich. One of the benefits of our redemption is becoming rich through the substitutionary poverty of Christ.

We Are Blessed To Bless The Church

The third reason why God gives wealth to the believer is for him to become a blessing to the Church. In establishing His covenant, we spoke about the believer becoming a blessing to the world. In this section, we shall talk about becoming a blessing to the Church.

In Genesis 12:2, God told Abraham He was going to bless him for him to become a blessing. He says in the scripture, ***"I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you and make your name great, and you shall be a blessing."***

The Lord Shall Establish The Covenant By Making Us Great

One of the blessings of God is greatness. We are destined to become great through Christ. You have no choice as a Christian than becoming great. If you only believe the word of God, your

greatness is assured. Years after you are gone, the world should still be talking about you. You will be long gone but still speaking through your good works.

When Israel was leaving Egypt, God blessed them with much substance taken from the Egyptians. In the wilderness, these items were used to build the tabernacle. You can find that in Exodus 25:1-11, 40. In 1 Chronicles 22:5-6, God showed David the pattern of the temple, which was later built by Solomon. The Bible says it was a glorious and magnificent temple to behold.

We Are Called To Do Magnificent Things

Whatever God tells His people to do has always been glorious or beautiful. God will never call people to do ordinary things. In the same way, God demands that we use our resources to do magnificent things for Him. If you are putting up a church, it must be magnificent. It takes big money to do what God requires of us. If the structure God asks you to build is to seat just a handful of people, it must still look first-class and trendy. Our Head Office church is building a magnificent cathedral for God. Apart from it being a house of God, I see it being a major tourist attraction in the city of Accra.

The Angelus Temple In Los Angeles

I once traveled to Los Angeles to see the Angelus Temple, which was built in 1921 by a woman of God. It has become a national monument. In 1921, she built a 5000 seater auditorium which was filled to capacity on Sundays. She had a powerful miracle and healing ministry in her day. People were rising from their stretchers and throwing away their crutches.

We Are Blessed To Meet The Needs Of Needy Church People

The fourth reason why God prospers us is to meet the needs of the needy in the Church.

1 John 3:17 says, ***"But whoso has this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"***

The Bible says if you are resourced but refuse to meet the need of a needy brother, you lack the love of God. The word "brother" refers to a fellow Christian. To close your bowels of compassion against a needy Christian means you do not have the love of God. God expects the Christian to use part of his wealth to relieve the needy in the Church. If you do not show compassion to a needy brother when you can, you have disqualified yourself from the Christian faith. If you see needs in the lives of people in Church, which you can easily meet and fail to meet them, you are not a true Christian. You are an irresponsible user of God's money. You are misapplying the wealth that God has given to you if you close your heart to the brethren. You do not need a prophecy to give some of your numerous clothes to a 'naked' brother. The reason why God made you see the brother's plight is for you to use the wealth He has given to you to fix that problem. It is an act of wickedness to see such needs and fail for whatever reasons to do something about them. It is possible to belong to a big church and still feel terribly unloved. This should not be the case in a true Christian setting. It is sad to say that many Christians have more than enough to eat whilst others are on the verge of starvation in the same Church.

The money God gives the believer is not for his singular enjoyment. God blesses us with other Christians in mind. You cannot spend all that God gives you on yourself and still call yourself a Christian. This is a sin in the sight of God. There are sisters in our Churches who have been wearing the same dress repeatedly whilst some of us have more than enough to share but fail to show sensitivity. It takes Sunday morning for some women to decide on what to wear since they have more than enough. They cannot even remember the last time they wore some of their clothes.

I believe it is scandalous to live in the same neighborhood with a brother who does not have a car whilst you drive an almost empty car to and from Church.

I will not understand the meaning of the Hallelujah greeting you do in Church if you behave in this way. That, to me, is great hypocrisy. A brother you intentionally exposed to the danger of walking to Church should not be given a Christian greeting.

My Personal Experience

I remember many years ago, when I was a young minister assigned to minister to some Christians in a suburb far away from my home, I used to walk from where I lived to minister to these brethren. This is because I was poor and didn't have enough money to hire a car. Those I ministered to seemed to appreciate my efforts, but seldom gave me money to pay for transport.

This unfortunate phenomenon persists in many Churches today. Many young people who serve as ushers, singers, etc. greatly bless the Church with their selfless devotion. Church people unfortunately do not extend a hand of love to some of these faithful but longsuffering youth.

They are only quick to criticize them when they occasionally fail to perform.

Christians Must Accept Help From The Brethren

It is equally unchristian to feel too big to refuse help from Christians who offer it. When Christian help is not politely appreciated, it also amounts to misconduct in the sight of God. To impolitely reject Christian hospitality amounts to arrogance. It is the right of the believer to do good to another brother just as it is the right of the believer to receive hospitality from a caring or sensitive brother. If through pride you reject the charitable act of a brother, you have sinned as far as I am concerned. Some brethren are so blessed they can easily throw occasional parties for some distressed brethren in Church. These should be allowed in Churches. It is a way of righteously or responsibly spending the wealth God gives.

St. Stephanas Shows The Way

In 1 Cor. 16:15 Paul says, ***"I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints)."*** He says, "they have addicted themselves". An addiction is a habit you cannot break, and it says that in the household of Stephanas, they had an addiction to minister to the saints.

Dorcas, A Shinning Example Of Christian Hospitality

Acts 9:36-43 NIV

36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor.

37 About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room.

38 Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!"

39 Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them.

40 Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up.

41 He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive.

42 This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. 43 Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

There was a member of the early Church who unfortunately died. Her name was Dorcas. Members of the congregation went to Apostle Peter who was on a visit to their community asking him to do something about the death of the sister. Some dead bodies are quickly buried, but definitely not this one. This is because of the great hospitality of the sister towards the needy in the Church. May I ask if you have helped anyone since you came to the church? For the past five years, has anyone benefited from your hospitality? Some people only give their disused things. What hypocrisy is this? Do I need to remind you that you will reap what you sow? It is imperative that when we are giving to the precious people of God we give of our best. To give to the brethren is to give to Christ. The

leftovers you are giving to the brother is being given to the Lord.

Some refuse to show kindness to the brethren because of their past experiences with ungrateful brothers. You need to realize that what you do for the brother is done for Christ. The Bible never said when you show kindness you will be repaid with good. What the Bible says is that woe unto the person who repays good with evil.

2 Thess. 3:13 ***"But ye brethren, be not weary or tire in well doing."***

That person is cursed when he repays good with evil. Do not treat the person wrongly because he has treated you badly for the good you did. Always be willing to supply the needs of Church people when you have the means. If you do not know how to go about meeting the needs of the brethren just go and see your pastor and I know he or she will be in a position to give you direction. Some churches in small towns and villages can do with some of the things we in the cities consider second hand or off-fashion.

God Prospers The Believer To Meet The Need Of The Poor In Society

Another important reason why God prospers his people is so that they can meet the needs of the poor in society. This time we are not meeting needs in the church, but outside Church. In Gal. 2:10, the Apostle Paul says, ***"Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do."*** Paul was recounting how he met with the Jerusalem council, and was instructed to remember the poor. In Eph. 4:28 Paul says, "Let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." The Christian is

not supposed to be a thief but a provider of the needs of the needy in society. Those who pilfer at work should repent. It is sad to say that some Christians pilfer from their employers to line their pockets.

Chapter Three

The Benefits Of Showing Kindness To The Poor

Giving to the poor is one of the main reasons why God blesses the believer. In this chapter, I want to discuss some benefits of giving to the poor and some reasons why you should not maltreat the poor.

I have already given a definition of a poor man in a previous chapter. For the sake of refreshing our minds let me go over some of the definitions we saw earlier. We shall also add to these older definitions from other sources to bring the subject into clearer perspective. The Encyclopedia Britannica, Webster's dictionary, Oxford dictionary and Pictorial Dictionary of New Testament Words and Bible Words define "poor" thus: lacking sufficient money to live at a standard considered comfortable or normal in a society. It also means an inferior quality or standard. If we say that something is poor, it means it has an inferior quality or standard or considered to be deserving of pity or sympathy. Poverty is a state of being extremely poor, the state of being or having insufficient amounts. Therefore, when you find yourself having insufficiency of the necessities of life, you are considered poor.

1. Giving to the poor delivers from trouble.

A major benefit of giving to the poor is that, God delivers the giver in the time of trouble. Ps. 41:1-2 says, ***"Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble. The Lord will preserve him, and keep him alive; and he shall be blessed upon the earth: and thou wilt not deliver him unto the will of his enemies."***

The text above clearly states that when we give to the poor God will deliver us in the time of difficulty. My mother used to tell us, "I am doing this good so that one day, per chance if you are in trouble in a strange land, somebody will help you." She was in the habit of feeding people in the neighborhood. I used to wonder as a little child why my mother showed all that generosity to total strangers. I didn't know where she had such a strange philosophy. I learnt later that my great grandfather took the Methodist Church to Nzemaland in Ghana. She surely may have learnt this biblical principle from the grandfather or the father who may have been raised by such a Christian pioneer.

2. When you give to the poor, you are lending unto the Lord.

Pro 19:17 says, ***"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he has given will he pay him again."*** When you give to the poor, you lend to the Lord. He who has pity on the poor

lends to the Lord. Imagine if God owes you; He will always pay back with a premium. What we give to the Lord by way of kindness to the poor will be paid back to us.

3. If you give to the poor, it will bring you joy.

Pro 14:21 says, ***"He that despiseth his neighbour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he."*** When you do good to people, some joy comes with it. You are obligated by God to prosper, because there are so many people suffering in this world. There are so many in the church in need. When we give to them God releases special joy in our hearts. The joy of the Lord is our strength . This means that when we give to the poor we receive strength. What a joy it would be to be able to build a school, for instance, and offer scholarships to majority of the students. This is one of the things I aspire to in life. What a joy that, through me, many people have a better life. You should come to a place where you are so prosperous that you give scholarships. Some people are very bright academically, but due to as little as the equivalent of ten dollars, they cannot continue their education. Many of the folks hawking on the streets of many Third World countries should have been in the universities, but for money. Just because of the equivalent of one hundred dollars, a student in Ghana can miss going to the university. What an opportunity it would be to be able to sponsor such a person to go through a university education. What an

everlasting joy and gratification it would be!

4. Giving to the poor honours God.

In Pro.14:31 the Bible says, ***"He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his maker, but he that honoureth him has mercy on the poor."*** If you honour God, you will have mercy on the poor. When you bless the poor, you are blessed yourself.

In Pro 22:9 the Bible says, ***"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor."*** The bible says if you have a bountiful eye, you will be blessed because you will give your bread to the poor. There are some Christians who will rather throw away food than give it to the needy. They would rather throw away their food than to give it to their security man or somebody in their community. Please be a blessing to somebody. The Bible says, ***"He who gives to the poor, will gather the wealth of the wicked."*** God will give it back to you. In Pro. 28:8 the Bible says, ***"He that by usury and unjust gain, increaseth his substance [or wealth], he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor."*** That shows that God has an eye for the poor and expects you to bless them. When you die, people will not remember you for what you acquired, but for what you did not keep. Memorials are built for people who gave to others, not for those who spent all they had. Even amongst your relatives, you find that those who died and did not become a blessing to anybody are secretly cursed. By the time you leave the earth, you should be remembered for what you

did for the benefit of others. It should be your desire to bless your village with a new school building and scholarships to many needy children. You should believe God to prosper you so that you can build a clinic in your village.

You should believe God to prosper you, so that you can do something worthy for your community. Our ministry has a school in Damongo, a rural community in Northern Ghana. Some members of our Church have personally put up schools, orphanages, aged homes, clinics etc. to alleviate the suffering in their community.

Eight Reasons Why You Should Not Maltreat The Poor

Now let us look at eight reasons why we should not maltreat the poor. When you maltreat the poor, there are things that happen to you, and I want to show you from scripture.

1. God will always remember the poor

God will always remember the poor and so you do not have to maltreat them. In Ps. 9:18 my Bible says, ***"For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever."*** The Bible says the needy will not always be forgotten and what the poor is expecting shall not elude him forever. To the poor man, God is saying it shall be well; the one who is down today can become a

'somebody' in the nearest future if they apply the word of God.

2. God will fight for the poor

Ps. 12:5 says, ***"For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him."*** God is saying that if the needy sighs or cries, He will arise and fight for him. That is why you do not have to maltreat the poor simply because he is poor. An Akan proverb says, "The tailless animal enjoys the protection of God." God himself fights for the poor who cannot protect himself. If you oppose the poor because he is poor, you will have God to contend with. Eccl. 5:8 "If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for he that is higher than the highest regardeth; and there be higher than they."

God is here talking to judges. God says that if you see the poor oppressed and justice perverted, He will deal with the situation. Some judges take bribes; court registrars extort money to bend the rules against the poor; files go missing from the registers of the courts. Make no mistake, for God Himself is watching, and the judge of all the earth shall do right.

3. God reserves goodness for the poor.

God has good reserved for the poor, and so never maltreat them. Ps. 68:10. ***"Thy congregation hath dwelt therein: thou, O***

God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor." The poor man will not eat poor food all his life. God will show mercy to the poor in due time. Do not maltreat the poor or look down on him simply because he is poor. There are people who treat the poor as if they are second-class citizens. This is a great sin in the sight of God. The Christian should make it a point to show respect to people irrespective of their social status. It is the grace of God that has put you where you are, so be humble. Some people behave as if the breath in their lungs didn't come from God. My Bible says when God withholds our breath we are no more. When you go to the mortuary, both rich and poor people are packed together. Some people see the poor and laugh at them for no apparent reason.

4. God punishes those who maltreat the poor.

Do not mock the poor just because he is poor. The Bible says that Whoso mocketh the poor reproacheth his Maker: and he that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished. Do not rejoice or be glad when troubles befall people. Some heartless people rejoice at the calamity of others. This is a great sin in the sight of God.

The Bible says we should not engage in such unchristian behaviour as it amounts to reproaching God who made the poor. It is imperative for Christian parents to warn their growing children never to engage in such immoral actions. Simply because somebody is poor does not mean he is evil.

5. God hears their cry

Do not maltreat the poor because God hears them when they cry. Pro. 21:13 tells us that ***"Whosoever stops his ears at the crying of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."*** When you maltreat the poor and you cry to God in your day of trouble He will not hear you. So, when you meet the poor, do not mock them.

6. God will plead the case of the poor against you

It says in Pro. 22:22-23 that, ***"Rob not the poor because he is poor, neither oppress the afflicted in the gate. For the Lord will plead their case and spoil them."*** The Bible says do not maltreat the poor because he is poor. There are times people take advantage of the poor worker and pay them a pittance for their labor. The bible says we should not deny the payment of the person who has worked for us. God is a just Judge, and He will judge you if you maltreat the poor. Do not discriminate against the poor. It is very easy to discriminate against the poor since their appearance normally gives them away. Sometimes their body odor can also clearly give them away. His inability to use deodorant to tone down his body odor can be responsible for this. This however should not justify discrimination. James 2:1 says, ***"My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of person. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect***

to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?"

It is therefore clearly evil in the sight of God for people to be unjustifiably discriminated against. Some churches unknowingly discriminate in the way they do things in the name of order and protocol.

The Bible says God has no respect for persons. In the house of God, we are all one in the sight of God. It is possible for the rich man and the poor man to sit side by side in the Church. In the house of the Lord, everybody is important. That is why you should come to the house of the Lord and lift your head high with pride and delight. Be confident in the house of the Lord because He is for you, and not against you. Read James 2:1-13 and it will teach you how to properly treat the poor in the congregation. James 5:4 reads, Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of saboath. God hears the cry of the poor.

7. It brings a curse

Proverbs 28:27 says, ***"He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse."*** The Bible says if you have pity on the poor you will be blessed, or you will not lack. I knew a family with four physically deformed children. It was said that when

their father went to the Second World War, he intentionally killed a deformed person. When he came back, four of his children were seriously deformed. I am not suggesting that people with deformed children may have done something wrong.

John 9:1-3 ***"And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.***

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. The Bible says if you do not have mercy on the poor, you will bring a curse upon yourself.

Deut. 15:7-8 reads, ***"If there be among you a poor man of one of your brethren within any of thy gates in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not harden thine heart, nor shut thine hand from thy poor brother: but thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shalt surely lend him sufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth."***

The Bible says we should learn to minister to the needs of the poor man and not harden our hearts unto him.

1. Chapter Four

Good And Bad Application Of Money

Eccl 10:19 ***"A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things."***

Money is neither evil nor good by itself. The use to which money is applied determines its character. Men use money either for good or bad purposes. Money does not use or apply itself. It is said that money assumes the life and character of the owner. When a righteous man gets money, he is very likely to use it for righteous purposes. The same holds true for the unrighteous man. In this chapter, I will share some of the uses of money. This is because money answers to whatever we make it to answer. I may not be able to list all the possible uses of money but we shall look at some of the common ones.

Good Uses Of Money

To Live A Dignified Life

Man is created to live in honor and dignity. The deprivation and grinding poverty in the world is not what God intended for man. The hunger, thirst, nakedness and disease we see around are the handiworks of the Devil. It is not possible to live in true dignity without money. God therefore gives money to

facilitate a dignified life for man. With money we can take care of ourselves and our families, educate our children, and afford decent accommodation. Squalor and homelessness are the lot of the poor. The unfortunate rise in streetism in our towns and cities is mainly due to poverty. Fewer children will be on the streets of many Third World nations if the level of poverty curtails.

For National Development

Nations, which are not able to create wealth normally, lag behind in development. Poor infrastructure, low levels of per capita income and high levels of poverty are the lot of these nations. Majority of the citizens of poor nations are far behind the rest of the world. Developed nations are developed because they have managed to create wealth for the common enjoyment of their people. Money is needed to build schools, roads, bridges and the other critically needed infrastructure. Children will be seen attending classes under trees when governments are not able to generate enough money to build schools for them.

This will lead to high levels of illiteracy resulting in low-level human capital. This will perpetuate the cycle of poverty for a long time. Productivity is largely a product of the quality of human capital available.

To Build the Kingdom of God

The gospel is free but the free gospel is preached with big money. The gospel must be preached in all nations. This is not possible without good money freely contributed by church members. A poor church finds it almost impossible to

send missionaries and undertake other Kingdom business.

Poor churches are not able to support their ministers to serve full time. We do not preach the gospel for money but no pastor can do the work of God without eating and drinking. The minister needs a life to be able to work the works of God. The gospel cannot go on radio and television without money. American Christians are able to sponsor missionaries around the world because they have money above the person in the underdeveloped nations. Their NGOs quickly respond to needs anywhere in the world because of the strength of the American economy.

The favour of blessing is on those who favour His cause Psa. 35:27 ***"Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant."***

God places wealth in the hands of those love him so that the kingdom can be built. The bigger your kingdom dreams the larger your business and career coast will become.

To Undertake Social Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every good citizen, especially Christians, to lend a hand to the underprivileged in society. The poor, sick, orphaned, aged and the rest of them deserve the love and care of the Christian. When we are not able to take adequate care of ourselves, we cannot lend a hand to others. We therefore need

to prosper in order to undertake this very important societal responsibility. Christian organizations like World Vision are able to help the poor and vulnerable in many nations because they are able to generate money for such purposes.

You cannot be a good Samaritan if you don't have the means to help. The Good Samaritan had the means to meet the needs of the wounded man. Luke 10:33 ***"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him."***

Poverty is no vow of humility

Luke 10:33 ***"Set him on his own beast – (car or vehicle) brakets mine. The priest and Levite did not have a jalopy."***

Poverty did not help anybody.

Luke 10:34 ***"And brought him to an inn, and took care of him."***

You cannot do much when you are broke. We cannot reach and help the world broke.

Luke 10:35 ***"And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."***

The neighbour had the means to show care

Luke 10:36 ***"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?"***

Evil Uses Of Money

Self Destruction

Those involved in self-destructive

lifestyles like drug use, alcoholism, fast lifestyles, etc. do so because they have money to spare. It takes a lot of money to support a drug lifestyle. A big time cocaine addict for instance can dissipate $1000 a night on drugs. Some people will quickly go off to live dangerously any time money comes their way. Like the prodigal son, they will take off with such speed to uncontrolled living until every dime is spent in a most frivolous manner. Some people got drunk, killing themselves and others in the process, after winning big on the national lottery.

Promotion of Evil

Money assumes the character of the owner. When a good man gets money, he can do more good. In the same way, when an evil man gets more money, he can also sponsor more evil. The terrorists in the world have become a force to reckon with because they have people with funds to support them. Gay activists are able to spread their God-blaspheming philosophies in the world, because men of substance are behind them. Pedophiles and sex tourists can come to the shores of Third World countries to carry out their nefarious activities because they have money to spend.

Opposition to the Kingdom of God

Many of the organizations and individuals who oppose the Church are well positioned financially. Some have sadly run Churches out of town in certain communities.

1. Chapter Five

Honour God With Your Substance And Get Your Increase

Will you take the prescription your doctor gives you?

Will you do as your lawyer says concerning your court case?

Will you do what your mechanic says on your car?

What about your security adviser?

If your answer to the above questions are yes, then as your spiritual counselor take my prescriptions for your harvest.

You have to depend on the Word of God like you depend on the word of your doctor, lawyer or mechanic etc.

Prov. 3:9-10 "[9] ***Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:***

[10] ***So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.***

Honour means esteem or respect. To honour God with your substance is to give something that gives glory to God. When giving to God an offering it should be one that will bring honour and glory to Him. Your giving to God should show how much you esteem Him. Mal. 1:8-14 "[8] ***And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is***

it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.

9 And now, I pray you, beseech God that he will be gracious unto us: this hath been by your means: will he regard your persons? saith the LORD of hosts.

10 Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the LORD of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand.

11 For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts.

12 But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, The table of the LORD is polluted; and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible.

13 Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.

14 But cursed be the deceiver, which hath in his flock a male, and voweth, and sacrificeth unto the Lord a corrupt thing: for I am a great King, saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen."

In the above scripture we see that God is displeased with giving Him an offering that is not honourable. He wants us to give Him our best.

Gen. 4:1-5 "[1] ***And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the LORD.***

[2] And she again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

[3] And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD.

[4] And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering:

[5] But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."

Abel's offering was accepted above Cain's because he brought an honourable offering - the firstlings or best of his flock.

Gen. 3:17 ***"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;"***

Cain's offering was rejected because the ground was cursed, so any offering from the earth then was cursed. Anyone at the time who gave an offering of a farm produce, that offering was regarded as cursed. Farm produce was only accepted as an offering after this curse was lifted.

Gen. 8:20-22 "[20] ***And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar.***

[21] And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not

again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done.

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

God said in the verse 21 that "I will not curse again the earth" or, in other words, "My curse on the earth is no more from this time, and everything that comes from the ground is accepted". Since then an offering of farm produce became accepted.

In the verse 22 God says seedtime and harvest shall always exist as long as the earth remains. Seedtime is honouring God with your substance. Giving Him your best, giving sacrificially.

Psa. 126:5-6 ***"5 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.***

6 He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

Seedtime is always crying time or sacrificial giving. Those that sow in tears or with crying are those that give, albeit very painfully. Weeping never makes a pleasant time except they are tears of joy. Giving sacrificially is not pleasant. Sowing time is weeping time, it is sacrificial time, it is when you lose something from you. It is when something precious goes out from you. It is when you are bringing your best unto God. There will always be seedtime. There will also be a harvest after seedtime.

Mark 10:29-30 "[29] ***And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,***

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

Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament words says "In this lifetime" for "now in this time"

Don't give because of the hundredfold return but in love and obedience to God and because of love for people. The hundred fold is a benefit of our giving. The hundredfold means hundred times the bulk measure not just one hundred percent. No bank pays like that. I am believing for the hundredfold return on your giving and a thousand fold more .

Deut. 1:11 ***"The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you!"***

You can never walk in God's abundance if you try to hold onto the first blessing He ever gave you. Life is made up breathing and exhaling, giving and receiving, sowing and reaping. Every breath you take is only possible because you are willing to give up what you already possess.

It is only the liberal soul that God blesses Prov. 11:25 ***"The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself."***

Eccl. 11:1-6 ***"[1] Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.***

[2] Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.

[3] If the clouds be full of rain, they empty themselves upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.

[4] He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.

[5] As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.

[6] In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

If your clouds become full of rain, the rain will fall on the earth. Israel at this time was an agricultural society and God was talking about a natural principle here. They used to plant their wheat and their corn by throwing it or broadcasting it. If you were sowing and the wind was blowing, it could blow it away into another person's farm. God is saying if you observe the wind you will not sow. If you considered the blowing of the wind you might miss the farming season. And if you did not sow you did not expect a harvest.

What does it mean to observe the wind? It is to look at the economic crisis you are

in today in the nation or the world. That may be the way the wind is blowing but don't look at the wind. Every time God wants you to go over to the other side you face a contrary wind Matt. 14:22-24 ***"22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.***

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

God wants to give you abundance but the devil, knowing that, has created contrary winds against you. If you do not stand on the word of God but observe the wind, you will not sow. Don't look at your circumstances but instead stand on the word of God and sow in tears because forever His word is settled; and it is yea and amen, so don't observe the wind.

When you observe the cloud you will not reap. In harvest time you don't allow the gathering of the clouds to scare you; otherwise you will lose your harvest. Don't look at the circumstances, keep on sowing and remember that in every harvest is also the seed for the next season. We should not look at the clouds but at the word and honour God with our substance. As we do not know how a child is formed in the womb, it is the same way we do not know how God multiplies our seed and gives us a harvest.

Don't observe the wind, sow in the morning and in the evening give or do

not withhold thy hand. You don't know which will bring the harvest - whether your tithes or crusade offering or giving to the Bible School or the poor. Seedtime is sacrificial time. It is when you feel the pinch but do not run away from seedtime.

Tea Spoon Breakthrough

2 Cor. 9:6-10 ***[6] But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.***

[7] Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

[8] And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:

[9] (As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever.

[10] Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;)

Your harvest is dependent on the seed you sow. The story is told of an African king who asked his subjects to come and work for him with all the equipment necessary. They came with wheelbarrows, spades, shoves, buckets, and some brought teaspoons. After the work he asked them to converge before a room and asked them to enter one by one and use their implements to fetch the reward. In the room was gold dust for reward; the ones with the wheelbarrow entered and came out with it full, and so did the ones with the bucket and shovel. The one with the

teaspoon began to weep saying, "I wish I came with something deeper", but he was only entitled to what he brought to work and fetched with. He was only entitled to a teaspoon reward.

If you sow sparingly you will reap sparingly. God gives seed to the sower or God gave you the resources you have today. He multiplies your seed sown. When you do not give anything and God multiplies it you get nothing.

2. Murmuring destroys your harvest
3. Complaining takes out all the blessings.
4. Learn to give bountifully.

Prov. 3:9 ***"[9] Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:***

[10] So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

In those days barns were storehouses; today we have bank accounts. So you can interpret it as a harvest. When the widow brought what she had to Elijah, her storehouse never ran dry for three and a half years etc. Any time she went to her store there was something. May the Spirit of God multiply your seed sown and fill your bank accounts with plenty.

God's System

Don't Stop Giving Because Of Phonies

There are people who abuse the principles of sowing and reaping because there is the good and the bad. If you believe it, it will work. If you don't, it will not. People preach for different reasons. Php 1:15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

Php 1:16-17 ***"16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:***

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel."

There are two systems at work:

1. The worldly system

   The worldly system keeps people under bondage. It's system is bill consolidation, credit counselling, debt transfer etc. You borrow money only to have to borrow more money to pay for the money you already owe.

   Therefore you owe to the lending company to pay interest too. Some companies dont accept debit cards, they only push for credit. The world's system is controlled by Satan John 12:31 ***"Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."***; John 16:11 ***"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."***

   What you see, feel, touch, smell and taste.

2. God's system provides prosperity, peace and the spread of the gospel

John 18:36 ***"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."***

The system of truth or the word(Kingdom of God)

God's system operates. Gal 6:7 ***"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."***

Sowing and reaping is applied to every area of our lives. Sow a seed, reap a harvest. What you sow determines what you reap

If you keep buying by credit card, you will harvest debt accumulation.

It is not wrong to get a loan to get out of a difficult situation but dont make it your lifestyle. Choose whether to operate God's system or the world's sysytem. Rev. 3:15-16 ***"[15] I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.***

[16] So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

God's system is based on giving and receiving. It is the exact opposite of the world's system

Luke 6:38 ***"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."***

Your job won;t pay enough to take care of you. Your job is an avenue to gather seed to sow into the life of those around you so you can reap a harvest. Give to live, and then live to give Matt. 13:3 ***"And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow."***

A farmer has to sow seeds, if he wants a harvest. he cannot harvest by hoarding his seed, learn to live giving.

Do it cheerfully without murmuring 2Cor. 9:7 ***"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."***

Reluctant giving leads to a feeling of a sense of loss. Sowing a seed is not a sense of loss but gain. You release something in order to get a hundred fold return. Start sowing and make it a way of life, don't sow to clear your conscience or out of guilt. Give expecting a harvest and talk harvest not lack. It is natural for you to breath in and

breath out, let it be natural with you to sow and expect a harvest.

1. Know that when you give, you are sowing
2. Sow into good ground that is a church, some anointed ministries, special projects, the lives of other believers and other men of God, your man or woman of God etc let God lead you when you give.
3. Allow your seed time to grow Mark 4:26-27 ***[26] And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;***

   [27] And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.
4. Your harvest will come after your seed grows deep into the ground of your heart, plant the word of God in your heart and it will water your seed for a harvest.
5. Sow into the lives of others with a similar need Lk 6:38(b) ***"For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."*** What you want done to you do to others
6. Sow continously into the lives of others. It will move the hand of God.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let me share with you a few things that make people poor. Poverty is not an accident; it is a product of the choices we make in life. The things we do and the things we fail to do are responsible for how we turn out in life.

One of them is laziness. In Proverbs 10:4, my Bible says, ***"He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand, but the hand of the diligent maketh rich."*** The Bible says if you deal with a slack hand or have a 'laissez-faire' attitude towards your job you will remain poor. Prov 13:4 ***"The soul of a lazy man desireth, and hath nothing; but the soul of the diligent shall be made rich."*** Laziness is the first hindrance to wealth creation. No matter how much a person prays, desires and confesses the word of God, if he or she does not sit up to work hard, he is a sure candidate for poverty. The lazy man is never going to rise from the ditch of lack. There are two kinds of laziness, namely: physical, and mental laziness. Physical laziness is the refusal to physically exert yourself. On the other hand, mental laziness is the failure to engage the mind in any productive activity. Laziness also comes as self-centeredness. Long slumber, procrastination and gluttony are major features of laziness. The lazy person is a champion at the game of putting off work until it is "convenient." He always has very good plans, which he is always postponing to act upon. He is so full of excuses as to why he is not doing what he is supposed to do to better his lot. It is too dangerous, too far away, and takes too much time to do, the lazy man says. Complaining about his tools and co-workers are some of the favorite characteristics of laziness. The lazy man enjoys his sleep, pleasure, unproductive chatter

and idling. Laziness is a major carrier of grinding poverty.

The second thing that leaves you in poverty is pleasure. Proverbs 21:17 says, ***"He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man, he that loveths wine and oil shall not be rich."*** If you unnecessarily love pleasure, i.e. always indulging yourself when you should be working, then you will be poor. Beloved, there is a time for enjoyment. If all you do is spend your time indulging in pleasure, you will never stop struggling in life. God instructs the lazy man to learn from the ant the art of diligence. Ants gather their food in the summer in preparation for the coming of winter. Now there is a time to indulge and a time to work. When you spend all your time making merry as a young man, you will have nothing to depend upon in old age. Now that you are young, it is not time to lazy about. Successful people succeed at a price.

A few months ago, I had a serious health problem. I experienced grave pains in my head and threw up frequently. Sometimes I felt extremely ill after preaching in church. Irrespective of what I was experiencing, I still spent time reading my Bible, doing my research, praying, and preaching. I did this to show the Devil that he could not make me forsake my duties with the flimsy excuse of pain in my head. Apart from my wife, a few senior pastors, and my personal doctor, nobody knew about my challenges. With unflinching faith and great determination, I held on to the Lord until I was healed.

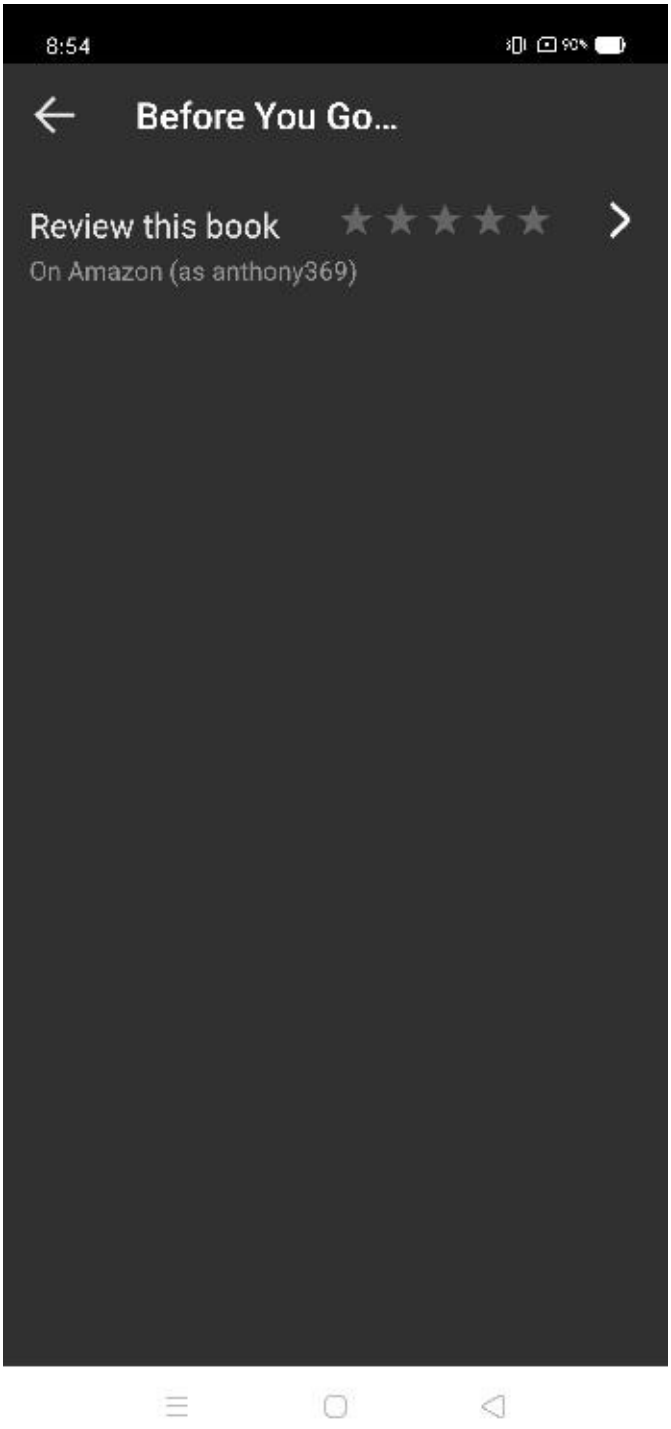
Laziness will always use the least pain in the body as an excuse to absent from the job. Such an attitude surely leads to poverty and shame. Life is not a bed of roses. Success does not come cheap to anyone. Successful people pay dear prices to make it in life.

I encourage you to pay the appropriate price to succeed or prosper. Pay the price to succeed. The bible says the hand of the diligent will bear rule and will be rich.

The next thing that brings poverty is lack of good judgment. If you do not make good judgments, you fail to prioritize. If you do not prioritize well you stand the risk of becoming poor. Some people have their priorities wrong; thus, their inability to make the most of the opportunities God brings their way. When they are supposed to be in school, they rather spend their time and money on frivolous things. They prefer riding in a car to paying money to acquire new skills. When the time comes for those new skills to get them new and better jobs, they are found wanting. This is what I call misplaced priorities. Others also use their money to buy the trendiest clothes instead of investing in well paying investment portfolios. Many do not pay heed to the scripture that says in Proverbs 13:23 that, ***"Much food is in the tillage of the poor, but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment."*** It says there could have been food for the poor, but lack of judgment leads to much want.

It is my utmost desire that you learn the art of prioritization in order to make the most of life. Listen to me, you are destined to prosper and succeed but if you do not make good use of your time, you cannot become rich. God wants to overwhelm you with abundance to meet the needs of the poor. You do not have to stay poor; you must rise to enjoy God's provisions. I can see you flourishing like a palm tree by the riverside. Amen.

To learn how to leave rags to riches get my book **Indisputable Keys to Wealth Creation**


8:54
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