

Forward Series 4

Moving our Finances Forward

Text: 2 Corinthians 9:1,2 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: **2** For I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago; and your zeal hath provoked very many.

Forward thinking with your Finances: God wants us to be blessed so that there will be enough us and so that you can be a blessing to others.

We must think beyond ourselves and beyond the moment!

This is what a Blessed Life is all about: I have what I need for myself and an overflow to help others.

2Cor. 9:8 NKJV 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.

- Sufficiency for myself.
- Abundance for the work of God.

“If God wants us blessed, then why am I struggling so much with my finances?”

Some of us might feel like the people Haggai prophesied to: Haggai 1:6 NLT You have planted much but harvest little. You eat but are not satisfied. You drink but are still thirsty. You put on clothes but cannot keep warm. Your wages disappear as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes!

Moving Your Finances Forward?

1) Pass the Test.

James 1:2-4 NIV Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. **4** Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

a) Does God test us in the area of our finances? YES

See verse 1:9,10 NLT Believers who are poor have something to boast about, for God has honored them. **10** And those who are rich should boast that God has humbled them...

i) The brother in humble circumstances should not get a “poor me” mentality! (v.9)

Signs of a Poverty Mind-set:

- (1) You get jealous when others are blessed with money or physical things.
- (2) You think Getting is better than Giving.
- (3) You go to bed worrying about money most nights of the week.

Just because you are in a season of lack doesn't mean God has abandoned you.

ii) The brother in living with money should not get the “big head” but rather he should humble himself (v.10)

- b) God uses the financial circumstances of a person's life to develop maturity. James 1:12 "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial"
- c) God uses testing as a mean of releasing true riches.

Luke 16:10-12 NIV "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. **11** So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?"

- i) God is looking for people He can trust.
- ii) Universal Truth! Trustworthy People are Trusted with more.

There are people I trust so much I will give them the keys to my house while I am gone for a week. They have access to all my stuff! I don't trust everybody with that?

2) Break the Curse.

This financial struggle might be a result of a curse.

- a) What is a curse?
 - i) True Statement: a curse is a negative influence that operates in the world preventing people from walking in their rightful inheritance as children of God.
 - (1) The negative influence of the world that operates against us.
 - (2) It is the opposite of God's Favor.

God's favor is the positive influence of God's Spirit operating for us. A curse is the negative influence of the enemy working against us.
 - ii) Untrue Statement: all curses were broken at the cross"
 - (1) Gal 3:13 tells us that Jesus broke the curse of sin and the law over us
 - (2) This is true but not all curses have been broken.

b) Examples of existing curses.

- i) The Genesis Curse (Chapter 3). The curse on the ground still exist.
 - (1) Next month I have going to spray my lawn to keep the weeds, thorns and thistles out this spring.
 - (2) Men are still earning a living by the sweat of their brow
 - (3) Women are still experiencing pain in childbirth
- ii) The Curse of the tongue - Prov. 18:21 "The tongue has the power of life and death..."
- iii) Fathers (and mothers) can bring a curse on the family finances by crooked business deals.

Pro. 17:13 (NKJV) Whoever rewards evil for good... Evil will not depart from his house.

iv) There is a curse on people who hate the Jewish Nation.

Gen 12:3 "I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

c) You can bring a financial curse upon yourself... by loving money more than God.

1Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

d) The Spirit of Mammon.

Luke 16:13 NKJV No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

i) Mammon is an Aramaic word that means "riches"

ii) Robert Morris in his book "The Blessed Life" shows us that origin of the word "mammon" is found in Babylon.

Mammon was the Babylonian god of wealth.

The nation of Babylon can be traced back to the tower of Babel in Gen. 11. The tower of Babel came about because of pride and arrogance.

At the heart of this spirit we find an attitude that says, "man does not need God; instead wealth and riches lead to safety, control and power"

iii) Mammon is not money as many suppose. Mammon is the SPIRIT that rest on money.

Notice: Jesus said you cannot serve God and Mammon.

Mammon is a false god that tries to get us to worship money and look to money to meet our needs rather than God.

It tries to get us to worship money and love things more than we worship God and love Him.

(1) All money has a spirit on it. It is either the spirit of God or the spirit of mammon.

(2) Money that is given to God through tithing has the Spirit of God on it – that is why it is blessed and has the power to multiply. And, this is the reason why it cannot be devoured once God blesses it.

Malachi 3:8-11 Will man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, 'How have we robbed you?' In your tithes and contributions. **9** You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. **10** Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need. **11** I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts.

The entire nation had brought a curse upon themselves because they were loving money more than they were loving God.

Money that has been submitted to God does not try to replace God and therefore, that money is blessed by God.

Money that has NOT been submitted to God has the Spirit of Mammon on it and it brings a Curse.

iv) Mammon is a spirit and that spirit talks!

- (1) When God says, I want you to honor me with your tithe... The spirit of mammon starts talking... You better not give that money, you won't be able to pay your bills.
- (2) When God says, I want you to buy that missionary a computer.... Oh no you can't do that you need a new computer yourself...
- (3) Mammon says, if you had the right clothes, or lived in the right neighborhood, or if you owned the right automobile.... You would be a success and people who respect you.

e) Jesus is not telling us we are to hate money. He is saying that if we love God we will hate the spirit of mammon. The greedy, lying, selfish, deceiving spirit that operates through the worship of money.

The Pharisees' Curse - Luke 16:13,14 NKJV No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."14 Now the Pharisees, **who were lovers of money**, also heard all these things, and they derided Him.

i) They saw money as power and they loved it. But Jesus said, God knows your heart!

(v.15) And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

ii) They were under the curse of Mammon! The Curse of Mammon is Deception! They were justifying their love for things.

f) How do I break the Curse of Mammon?

Jesus shows us how in Luke 16:9 NLT Here's the lesson: Use your worldly resources to benefit others and make friends. Then, when your possessions are gone, they will welcome you to an eternal home.

How to Break the Curse of Mammon?

- (1) Repent for putting your confidence in money rather than God.
- (2) Stop listening to the greedy voice of mammon and trust the word of God.
- (3) Begin to using your money for eternal purposes.

3) Learn how to Reap a Good Harvest.

2 Corinthians 9:1,2 For as touching the ministering to the saints, it is superfluous for me to write to you: **2** For I know the forwardness of your mind... your zeal hath provoked very many.

To move your Finances Forward you must Overcome A Bad Harvest

a) Understand the Universal Law of Sowing and Reaping.

i) Gal 6:7 "whatever a man sows that will he also reap"

- ii) Gal 6:8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.
- b) Think of it this way: Every action in your life is a seed sown! Good seeds produce a good harvest... and bad seeds will result in a bad harvest.

Every action is a seed planted! Eventually a harvest is coming. A good harvest or a bad harvest.

The fruit is the result of what you are doing now!

- c) Bad sowing and bad seed brings a bad harvest.
- d) Start Planting the Good Seed over your bad seed!
 - i) Reap a Harvest of Hard Work.
 - (1) God is not going to bless idleness or laziness. James 1:17 "... faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead"
 - (2) Sow seed daily: Your financial future will only be better if you are sowing good seed daily!
 - ii) Reap a Harvest of Obedient Faith-filled Giving.
 - (1) God wants to multiply the seed you sow 2Cor. 9:10,11 NIV Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. **11** You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.
 - (2) God doesn't want to take away from you – He wants to bless what you put in His hand!
 - (a) Fear keeps people "Need Conscious"
 - (b) Faith keeps people "Seed Conscious"
 - iii) Reap a Harvest of Faithful Stewardship.

1Cor 4:2 NKJV Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful"

Good Stewardship Includes:

 - (1) Start Tithing: the first tenth of your income.
 - (2) Start Counting: know what is coming in and going out.
 - (3) Start Spending Wisely:
 - (a) Daily needs
 - (b) Debt Reduction
 - (c) Savings