

Money, Ministry and Kingdom Prosperity

Father/son order is the order of ministry. It is the establishing of this order which is necessary for the appearing of Jesus. Without the ministry of John the Baptist there can be no prophetic fulfillment of the coming Messiah. Elijah must come first; (*Mat 17:11 KJV*) *And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.* The Church world has been making pronouncements for the past two hundred years that Jesus was very soon and any day now going to rapture His Church. Many fully expect that Elijah will be walking the face of the earth before the “second coming” of Jesus.

What the disciples did not understand was that Elijah had come in the presence of John the Baptist, turning the sons hearts to the fathers and the fathers to the sons, making *straight the way of the Lord*. Jesus said, *Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.* Before the coming of the day of the Lord and the appearing of Jesus there must be a manifestation of Elijah to *restore all things*. This manifestation is the proper establishment of father/son order. (*Mat 11:14 KJV*) *And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.* To those willing to be set free from religious fables, this spirit of Elijah turning hearts of fathers and sons is in those who properly understand and implement father/son order.

This is a great thing. Since the time of John, *the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it*. True understanding of the Kingdom is coming to light in our day because there is a people desirous of seeing the completion of Malachi chapter 4 verses 5 and 6. In this day the Lord has sent Elijah not in the person of John the Baptist but in a company of sons who have the same pursuit that Elijah and John had in their days. Preparing the *highway for our God*, is not preaching to the lost the evils of their lifestyle as much as it is a straightening out of the people of God. The establishment of order in the Church. John ministered not to the heathen but to Israel – the disconnected people of God. (*Prov 16:17 KJV*) *The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul.*

John preached a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins saying; *repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.* The first thing we need to do when we understand that the Kingdom is present is to repent. Not cry our eyes out at some church altar for a momentary release but to really change. Only our changing into His image will ever bring forth the Kingdom of God. There are great obstacles and hindrances to such change.

There are those who are ignorant and corrupted, who pervert the truth of this father/son revelation for their own purpose leading the unsuspecting and young into yet one more layer of religious bondage. To those who do have a proper understanding and a heart to implement this order however, there are various pitfalls to the voice calling us to make the paths of the Lord straight.

We all want to see the world change but is the ministry willing to change? In a desire to come into order are we willing to come out of every religious fable and half truth that we have accepted as the Word of God? We want the Kingdom but are we willing to endure the spiritual shaking leading to that Kingdom? We want the power and promises of God but are we willing to endure the process and allow God to strip from us every preconceived idea that wars against the Kingdom? Are we willing to endure the internal process that will allow *the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ?*

The greatest test for the Church today involves the issue of money. The greatest obstacle to ministry seeking proper order is financial. The strongest hindrance to walking in Kingdom power is the power of the material world in the people and ministry called by God to bring forth the Kingdom. That much of the religious world is controlled by monetary considerations is of no surprise since even the lost readily see the hypocrisy and greed of religious leaders and their systems. It is perhaps their greatest hindrance to accepting the things of God. Why then would they want to be part of a “Christian” lifestyle that is so at variance with the Jesus of the Bible and so much like the mess they see in the world?

First let us establish that the issue is not prosperity. That God wants His people to be prosperous is abundantly clear in scripture. Why would a God who is Father to His children want them to be permanently subject to spiritual and material poverty? It is apparent from the Word that God's intention is to prosper us in every way, physically, spiritually, mentally and materially.

(3 John 1:2 KJV) Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. Our ability to prosper, as with most things in God, is conditional, dependent upon right attitude and right response on our part. God's desire for us to be in health and prosper is based upon the prospering of our souls. How our minds are conformed to His image is the key. Our material prosperity is determined by the prosperity of our souls. Will God materially prosper His people while at the same time letting their soul languish? Consider; Is 55:11; Pr 13:22; 1 Kings 2:3; Josh 1:7; Ps 1:3; 1 Chr 22:11; Pr 28:13; Ps 122:6; Dt 29:9.

There is much truth in what many have said "the Church of God has a poverty mentality". That God wants us to be in prosperity is not the issue but how we understand what prosperity is, how we arrive at that prosperity and what attitudes and actions our quest for prosperity generate are of concern. In our quest for the Kingdom, is it possible that we are trying to put new wine into old wineskins? The poverty greater than financial is the poverty of he who *layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

Could it be that our attitudes about money are a great hindrance to bringing forth the Kingdom? Could it be for all our "faith" preaching, the ministry and saints are by and large as bound by the materialism of this world as are the lost? Is it possible that the Church in trying to have faith for things has a lack of faith in God? Maybe, just maybe, the attitudes and teachings we've come to associate with prosperity have more to do with our desire to control our future and our natural world, independent from trust in God, than they do about true faith? Is what we call faith for things, faith at all or just our attempt to manipulate our material world?

There is no way to talk about money and the Church without mentioning tithing. Mark Hanby in his video, "Levi's Genes", clearly demonstrates the indispensable place that tithing holds in connecting the generations of God. Religious ministries, in tithing to themselves or to systems, have actually thwarted the blessing of God on those who tithed into their ministries. The admonition is against an out of order ministry who demands tithe but does not understand the tithes purpose or how to properly handle it. In this article we are not going to lay again the foundation and principals of the tithe but we do need to make the following point clear.

People who don't tithe will never get their spiritual life in order. The act of tithing properly, not out of obligation or necessity, but cheerfully, (right attitude, third dimension), helps free us from the control of the material world. The purpose of tithing is not to make us rich. There are many financially rich people in and out of the Church who never tithe. The idea that those who don't tithe will automatically be poor is as much a lie of religion as the idea that those who do tithe will without exception become rich. This attitude is often nothing more than an attempt to extort money from the fearful and unlearned.

Some ministries teach the tithe with the unspoken goal of justifying their earnings or as a means of maintaining and increasing the income of their churches. These types of ministries are usually either very insecure or very unlearned in the provision of the Spirit. Doesn't it strike anyone as odd that the ministry in many places has to continually prod and goad the people to give? Is this an operation of the Spirit or an act of the flesh? If these ministries dealt with the tithe issue honestly they might find that the Spirit is quite able to supply that which threatens and pleases and need have such difficulty bringing forth. Of course this would require ministry to submit to proper order, to teach the biblical purpose of the tithe, (the purpose is not to take care of the priesthood, that is a result), and to help the saint mature in his spiritual walk.

Much of modern ministry has become so transparent in their quest for money. In word association games, the words money and hypocrisy are among the first words that enter the public's mind when referring to ministry. Why aren't the first words, dedication and love or honor and concern? Is it because much of ministry lusts after money with the same vigor as their worldly counterparts? Are the words of Micah 3:11, true today? *The heads thereof judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money: yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, is not the LORD among us? none evil can come upon us.*

Paul thought it necessary to warn his ministry son about the proper attitude of ministry toward money. *(1 Timothy 6:8-11) And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many*

sorrows. *But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.* Is money in ministry bad? No, but if in a ministry's quest for monetary gain it wars against such spiritual qualities as godliness and patience then it is wrong. Paul finds it necessary to warn Timothy of these things. Could most ministry even hear such an admonition from the Spirit or from a ministry father?

And again Paul tells his son Timothy; *(1 Tim 6:17 KJV) Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;* God has given us the material world not only to enjoy but to have dominion over as long as it is a result of our trust in God and not a mere desire for riches.

(Heb 11:26 KJV) Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. Moses had dominion over his natural world as a prince of Egypt. He gave up this wealth for a spiritual wealth. Even so God delivered the riches of Egypt into the hands of the Israelites for His purpose yet their religious minds turned this wealth into idolatrous objects. How like the wealth of today's world in the hands of many ministry's, produces only idolatry.

If the natural world is a window on the spiritual then we must learn how money in the earthly realm equates to its counter-part in the heavenly.

Money is the means by which we rule and control our natural world. The old adage, "money is power" rings true in the natural world. If we have money we can take a trip, buy a house, purchase a new wardrobe.

Money is power, it gives us control over our natural world and it gives us power and influence in the lives of others. Money makes things happen in the earthly realm. It allows the building of factories, the financing of new medicines and is an essential part of every advancement experienced by our society. If you have money things get done, without it there is little progress.

The Spirit manifested by faith and operated under grace is the heavenly counterpart to money in the earth. The Spirit through faith is how things get done in the heavens. With it we can subdue kingdoms, heal sickness, multiply bread, control the natural elements and dispel every power of darkness. Whatever money can do in the earth the Spirit through faith can do in the heavens and on earth exceedingly more so. The Spirit is the power of the Kingdom; Romans 14:17.

From Old Testament examples to the teachings of Jesus and Paul, the topics related to finance are perhaps the most plentiful of any of the teachings found in the Bible. This of course is by the design of God, but why? It must be that our understanding of money and its proper use is essential to our spiritual development.

If the ministry doesn't learn how to properly acquire and use money, will it ever learn how to properly acquire and use the things of the Spirit? If the natural reveals the spiritual, then the issues related to money ought to be the greatest teacher as to the operation of the Spirit in our lives.

To properly acquire money requires labor. We can increase our amount of money through investment. If used properly it can change peoples natural lives. If we want to buy a material possession of this earth we must exchange money for it. Our financial order is a measurement of our rule in the earth, the more money we have the more rule we generally have. It forms the basis for those things passed down to the next generation through inheritance. Those who claim another's money or what it can purchase are called thieves. As the standard of living increases in society so does the supply of money.

So what are some of the lessons we can learn from money about the operation of the Spirit through faith? Though the Spirit we can change the natural and spiritual lives of people. All spiritual possessions are acquired through the use of the Spirit through faith. Our spiritual order determines the measure of our rule, the more order we possess the more spiritual rule we generally are able to demonstrate. The things learned in and given by the Spirit to us form the basis for the inheritance we have to pass on to the next generation. Those who claim credit for the work done by the Spirit are thieves. As the supply of the Spirit through faith and rule, (anointing), increases so does the spiritual standard of life in the earth.

Buy the truth, and sell it not; It is more blessed to give than to receive. Spiritual possessions are of greatest value. Maybe one reason that the religious Church has never learned to procure the full measure of the Spirit is that it has never studied the lessons of money? Perhaps it has taken something that should be understood in the Spirit and made it purely natural. This is what being under the law is; taking the spiritual things of God and living them out as though they were natural. Was this not the fate of Israel in the wilderness? They would not follow the Spirit of God so they were

destined to become ensamples for us upon whom the end of the age has come. If our destiny is the Kingdom then our attitudes are going to require a major spiritual adjustment.

God wants the Church to acquire, control and use the wealth of this earth but to do it in the Spirit and not as a means of fulfilling the lust of the flesh. There is no way the Kingdom can manifest as long as those through whom it should come are controlled by the deceptions of the material world.

A Christian buys \$6,000 worth of lottery tickets under the pretence that he will give half the money to the work of God if he wins; this is deception. A saint is taught that if he follows the prescribed method of tithing, God will be forced by His Word to make him materially rich; this is deception. People are taught that the highest demonstration of faith is material wealth; this is deception. People believe that they can circumvent any financial trial God may be using for His purpose by sowing financial seed; this is deception. Saints unwilling or unlearned in trusting God, or in fear of the “impending economic collapse”, which has been predicted for at least 30 years, think they can control their material world through tithing; this is deception. A Pastor is so afraid of loosing income or making the Church payment that he instills fear in an effort to shake funds from church members; this is deception. A Christian believes that his material possessions are proof of his spirituality; this is also deception.

How the people of God handle finances and their attitude toward money may be the greatest trial testing their relationship in the Kingdom. Some feel that material wealth is contrary to God’s will – a poverty mentality. Others feel that the highest demonstration of God in their lives is to give them material riches. Both these views, though opposite, lead to the same end – a hindrance of the rule of the Spirit in the earth. It may be that as *the Kingdoms of this earth*, are becoming, *the Kingdoms of our Lord*, (the millennium?), that it must involve an increasing monetary control of God’s people. Does anyone think that the eternal organization of the universe will be founded on a monetary system?

(Rev 3:17,18) Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

This scripture is not a warning against the Church possessing wealth but it is a warning against the Church’s reliance on wealth and its preoccupation in obtaining it. This is the last condition of the church spoken of in the book of Revelation before John is taken up higher and shown things which would happen after the church age – the Kingdom of heaven being next. It is a Church that possesses material wealth but can’t see its own wretched condition.

What should the Church do? It should buy some things. It is going to have to let its natural wealth become transformed into spiritual by purchasing gold tried in the fire – the image of Jesus formed in us through a purification process. It is going to have to purchase white raiment – pure untainted righteousness. And it is going to have to anoint eyes with salve – begin seeing the heavenly through the natural world. If this is what the Church’s relationship with money is purchasing, then it will bring forth a higher dimension, if not it will remain poor, blind and naked.

In many of Jesus’ parables and teachings He uses illustrations of money. He was showing us in many ways the importance of money to our spirituality and ministry. He spoke the parable of the talents and minas to show us that walking in the Kingdom involves how we handle the possessions given us by the Lord. The one who hid his money in the earth – sown in the earth it could have no heavenly return – was called a wicked servant. God does care about how we use what is given us. Jesus, spoke about an unjust steward to teach us that if we cannot be faithful and wise in the use of money there is no way God can trust us with what He calls, *true riches*. He also spoke the parable of the lost sons – there were two of them you know. One son who is like ministry that hungers after money for its own lusts regardless of its responsibilities to the Father and the other who, like some ministries, does not realize or use the wealth given by the Father.

(Luke 18:18-24 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very

rich. And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

Jesus speaks of a rich young ruler. Though many spiritual patterns could be spoken from this let's consider the following: This was a rich young ruler. Remember Isaiah chapter 3 and 1st Corinthians chapter 4 from other articles about the boy leaders and babes who rule over God's people? This can be looked on as a type of the boy leaders who are placed over religion. They have rule. They are young; without fathers or order and without sons. They are rich; they possess material wealth.

When immature ministry learns this wealth must be used for the Kingdom they become very sorrowful because of the control money has over them. They want eternal life but the *deceitfulness of riches*, hinders the putting of their wealth under the control of Jesus. How many think their wealth is in His control but if Jesus asked them to do the same thing, He asked this ruler, they would certainly believe it to be the voice of the enemy?

Jesus response to the ruler's unwillingness was, "how hard it is for those with riches to enter the Kingdom". This is not saying people who are rich cannot enter the Kingdom but rather, it is telling us that all riches, if we are to enter the Kingdom, must be under the control and direction of Jesus.

(Mat 21:12 KJV) And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves.

In this occurrence Jesus went into the temple. What did He do there? He cleansed it. How did He cleanse it? By dealing with money issues. What is the spiritual understanding of a temple? It is each of us or in a larger sense the Church; 1 Cor 3:16; 12:27. What is Jesus coming into His people and His church to do? To cleanse them from the corruption of money in all three dimensions. 1. He cast out them that bought and sold – those who make the work of the church financial – buying and selling the souls of men. 2. Overthrew the tables – turned religion upside down in their efforts to exchange spiritual wealth for money. 3. The seats of them that sold doves – overthrew the authority and position of those who sell the things of the Spirit.

This is the cleansing that must take place in us and in the Church to prepare for the entrance of Jesus – the Kingdom of God. The house of God that is a den of thieves must become a house of communion and relationship with God.

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