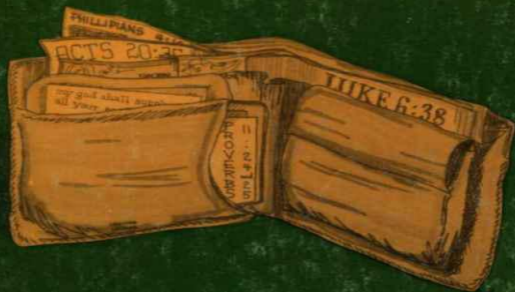


Don Gossett

# The Blessing of Bold Giving



## INTRODUCTION

**M**ore than a year ago, I recorded these words in my diary: "Even as the Lord has anointed me to write many books on praise, speaking the Word and fear, He is now clearly leading me to write books on giving."

This is the first book I have written since receiving that directive from the Lord. I pray it may bless you and stir your heart to be a "go giver" unlike ever before.

Don Gossett

## Chapter 1

### HOW TO MULTIPLY YOUR MONEY

**A**t the close of a radio rally I had been conducting recently, a young woman in Vancouver, British Columbia, came to talk with me. She had come to Vancouver from Saskatchewan, where she had been born and raised.

"All of my life I have known poverty," she stated. "My family and all the people I knew and grew up with were poor. Now, here in Vancouver, it seems that the same thing is true. My friends and acquaintances are poor. They have hardly an extra dollar for anything. There is so much that I would love to do for the Lord, but it really takes all that I have just to buy the necessities for my son and myself. I am bound by poverty, but I just believe that somehow God has an answer for me."

"I'm glad to hear you talking this way," I answered. "I, too, am convinced God has the answer to poverty. I remember how very poor my own family was back during the depression years. When my mother recently visited me, she reminded me that we were so poor that when our clock broke beyond repair, we couldn't afford to buy a new one! In our home there was never enough milk to have a second bowl of cereal for breakfast. If you wanted a second bowl of cereal, you had to save the milk from your first bowl—or eat your corn flakes dry. I know firsthand what it's like to be poor and unable to pay your bills. I too hate poverty, and I am convinced that I have found God's answer for it."

The faith in this young woman's voice stimulated me. I'm convinced she's on the road to overcoming poverty. As I thought of her statements to me and recalled my own early poverty-stricken home, I just wanted to reach out to help every Christian understand God's plan of prosperity.

God has a divine law of giving and receiving. If you want to receive financial help from God, you need to understand that it is the measure with which you give that determines what you will receive from God. The more you give, the more you get: God always sees to it that you get more than you give. Jesus said, "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 you mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38).

If you are not getting your prayers answered, you should take stock of the matter of your giving—particularly if it is especially your prayers about finances that seem to go unheard. God's Word says that withholding your tithes and offerings is tantamount to robbing God:

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me.

But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes (Malachi 3:8-11).

If you rob God of tithes and offerings, you are the loser in the long run. God says it emphatically, "Ye are cursed with a curse, for ye have robbed Me of tithes and offerings."

Tithing (giving one-tenth of your gross income to God) is a hard step of faith for many new Christians, but it is a step with which God commands us to prove Him. Besides tithes, Malachi says, we also owe God offerings. An offering is anything you give God over and above a tenth of your gross income.

Paying your tithes and offerings may seem like a hard thing to do at first, until you realize God's reason for asking you to do it. His reason for asking you to give to Him is so that He may give to you. God has bound Himself to give to people as they give to Him. If they give liberally, He will give liberally; if they are stingy with Him, He will be stingy with them. But God will give back whatever is given to Him "pressed down, shaken together, and running over." He will "open the windows of Heaven, and pour out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to contain it." Furthermore, God promises to rebuke the devourer for your sakes.

Wouldn't you like to have God's protection from unexpected and unnecessary financial calamities? You will—if you pay Him what you owe Him. If not, you will be like the people God spoke to in Haggai, who had been withholding tithes:

Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; AND HE THAT

## EARNETH WAGES EARNETH WAGES TO PUT IT INTO A BAG WITH HOLES (Haggai 1:6).

If you have been robbing God of tithes and offerings, don't go on with the firm disapproval of God upon your life. Pay up your tithes, give your offerings in the Lord's name, and know that God will do for you what He says He will. He will open for you the windows of Heaven, pour you out an overflowing blessing, and will rebuke the devourer for your sake! This is one place in Scripture that God actually invites us to prove Him.

Paying your tithes and giving your offerings are the only scriptural ways that God promises to open for you the windows of Heaven. Some of you are dry, barren and empty in your spiritual lives because you have been stingy with God. You are paying for your disobedience in spiritual leanness!

Someone will ask, "Do you mean that I have to buy the blessings of God by paying tithes and giving offerings?" Absolutely not. Money can't buy anything from God. But when you pay your tithe and give your offerings, you are cooperating with your Creator. God has said in His Word that He will be liberal to those who are liberal, and stingy to those who are stingy. He can't go back on His Word!

Withholding from God tends to poverty, the Bible tells us. God wants to produce tremendous blessings for you, spiritually, physically and financially. Thousands testify to this fact. Real giving is an act of faith. Failure to give is unbelief. It is giving place to the devil. I charge you: resist the devil and he will flee. Tell him he's a liar. Believe God's Word and be blessed. Listen to the devil's doubts and you will lose the financial blessing God wants to give to you.

I dare you to do something great in the realm of giving. God gives you a great challenge. He says, "Prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord, with your tithes and offerings, and see if I will not open for you the windows of Heaven, and pour you a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it, and I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes!" God simply says, "ProveMe."

I know a lady who was experiencing poverty. She had only enough money to pay her fuel bill, when she accepted God's challenge to "prove Him" with her money. Do you know what God did for her? He caused five times more money than she had given to come to her from unexpected sources, all because she dared to take God at His Word.

If you are experiencing poverty, you can give your way to prosperity. If you are poverty-stricken you can't do anything better than to give boldly to God! The matter of giving is simply a matter of whether you believe the Bible or not. People who do believe the Bible on giving obtain great blessings from God.

I am zealous for you to have God's best. Search out the powerful promises of the Bible on giving. Then act on God's Word.

Remember that God is not a man that He should lie. And God has promised that He "will pour you out a blessing (spiritual and financial) that there shall not be room enough to receive" if you will prove Him with your tithes and offerings. This is called a "prove God" offering.

I remember when I gave my first "prove God" offering. My wife and I were traveling from Chillicothe, Missouri, where we had just closed an evangelistic

campaign and stopped off at Carthage, Missouri, to visit the meetings being conducted by Evangelist Jack Coe.

Our car payment for the 1947 Ford we drove had taken almost all our money.

One night Brother Coe received what he called a "Prove Me" offering. He based the offering upon Malachi 3:8-11, the passage I quoted to you earlier.

Over and over Brother Coe emphasized the fact that this was the Word of God, not the word of man. This was God's challenge. God was warning His people to cease robbing Him by withholding tithes and offerings.

As Brother Coe read these words, suddenly it seemed that he was not speaking, but that God was speaking through his lips.

I needed to prove God. I needed to have God open Heaven's windows unto my life. I desired blessings which I would not be able to contain.

And I desperately needed to have God rebuke the devourer (Satan) for my sake.

I investigated my ability to give. In my wallet I had one dollar. In my pocket I had a nickel. I knew my wife had nothing. There was nothing in the bank. Nor was there any money hidden away elsewhere. That was it. My total finances were one dollar and five cents.

In order to make the step more real and personal, Brother Coe invited everyone to bring their "prove God" offerings up to the front, and lay them right on the Bible, which he had left opened at Malachi 3.

I knew God was challenging me to do something that seemed totally unreasonable. My wife was expecting our



first baby. I thought: "What if she should need something special? Or what if I had some unexpected car expense?"

I tried to figure an "out" in case this didn't work, but I knew it was carnal reasoning. I knew that if I allowed it to persist I would quench and grieve the Holy Spirit. I believe that many people miss God's best in the realm of Spirit-led giving because they resort to carnal reasoning, thereby quenching, resisting, and grieving the Spirit.

I could hear Brother Coe's words again, "Prove me, saith the Lord, and I will open the windows of Heaven unto you. I will pour out upon you an overflowing blessing. I will rebuke Satan's work of poverty from your life. And ye shall be delightful, saith the Lord."

I was only twenty-one years old. This was a new experience for me. Yet I could see I was clearly hearing the Word of God. I had trusted His Word as the sole basis of my salvation. I had claimed everlasting life on the basis of His Word. I had staked my whole life on His Word, in accepting His holy call to preach the Gospel.

Why couldn't I trust His Word in giving?

I looked at my dear wife seated next to me. I looked again inside my wallet at that lonely dollar bill.

What should I do? My delay gave the devil an opportunity to move in with a few of his subtle doubts. Cunningly he whispered to me, "This is foolish. You can't afford to give that dollar. Think of your wife. Think of your car. An emergency might arise. Don't listen to that preacher. Others have more money than you do. Let them give. Hang on to that last dollar of yours,"

By this time, I knew this was the voice of the deceiver, the devil. I had already learned that one of his most

deceitful devices is to instill the thought in people's minds that "others will do it."

Besides, I knew that God wanted me to give. The Christian has a need to give. Giving is one of the most wonderful spiritual experiences to be discovered in the Christian life.

Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

Yes, there is a tremendous blessing in giving. Those who have discovered this fact know the importance of obeying the voice of the Spirit, when it comes to giving.

Suddenly I arose from my seat and marched down to the front to place my last dollar on the Bible, as my "Prove God" offering.

When I let go of that dollar, and placed it down on God's Word, I was excited! I knew I had obeyed God. I was cooperating with my Creator in something big and wonderful. God and I had gone into partnership.

I walked back to my seat with a spring in my step. I even felt lighter because I had given that last dollar!

I drove from that service to the home of some friends who had invited us to stay with them. I was singing praise choruses all the way to their home.

I had thought that possibly my sleep might be interrupted with money worries. Not so! I had given. I had committed the matter into God's loving hands. My life, my finances, and my responsibilities were really all His, anyway. So I rested in peace.

When I awakened early the next morning, the Spirit of God was moving within my heart! God had opened Heaven's windows to my soul, and I was drinking in His

spiritual blessing. Even if I had never received any financial blessing from that offering, the spiritual blessings would have been worth it all.

"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fullness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Psalm 16:11). Money can't buy happiness, much less joy. God's blessings are priceless.

Later that morning, I walked to the post office to call for my mail. En route I met a Christian businessman whom I knew.

After greeting me there on the sidewalk, he looked earnestly at me and asked, "Don, how are you coming along?"

"Oh, just fine, thank you," I replied.

"Tell me: how are you coming along financially?" he asked.

"Oh, the Lord is good to us," I told him.

The Lord was good to us. We don't measure His goodness by how much money we have. No! The blessings of the Lord make rich and add no sorrow!

Then my friend said, "Well, you know I just feel impressed that I should do something to help you out in your good ministry for the Lord."

With that statement, he reached into his pocket to pull out his wallet. Nothing like this had ever happened to me, and I felt somewhat embarrassed. I looked up at the sky to avoid the appearance of being eager or inquisitive about what he was getting from his wallet.

When the man turned around to face me again, he grabbed my hand, and pressed a bill into it. I kept my

hand tightly closed around that bill, for this was part of the miracle God had promised me the night before when I "proved God" by my giving. I thanked him for this gift, and we bade farewell.

He was walking in one direction, and I was going in the other. I kept peeking over my shoulder to see when he was far enough away from me so that he wouldn't see me opening my hand to discover what was inside.

(I told my wife later that I just knew it was more than one dollar. It just "felt" like it was more than that! Besides, I expected it to be more than one dollar, for one dollar is the amount I gave. And God promised to give me a blessing too big to contain.)

When finally the friend was far enough away I opened up my hand, and there was a ten dollar bill! That was the biggest ten dollar bill I have ever seen! Not in size: it was standard in measurements. But because it was Heaven-sent, to me it looked like a hundred dollars!

I actually forgot about my trip to the post office! I nearly ran back to where my wife was, to share with her the fact that God had already restored ten times the amount I had given the night before!

That same afternoon, I was scheduled to speak at a minister's meeting. It was clearly understood that since it was a minister's meeting, there would be no financial remuneration for my preaching there.

But just before I spoke, the leader of that fellowship of ministers, Brother Gilchrist, stood up and spoke to the brethren with deep emotion:

"Brethren, as you know it is not our policy to receive

offerings for any of our speakers. We just never do. But today as I sat here on this platform, the Lord has spoken to my heart. The Lord has said we should receive an offering for Brother Don Gossett, who is going to speak to us this afternoon. I want everyone to obey the Lord, and we shall receive this special offering for Brother Gossett."

I was rejoicing inside, and I thought, "Hallelujah, God can change long-standing rules and procedures, if need be, to meet His servants' needs."

Those dear brethren gave me twenty-five dollars. I knew this was God's way of responding to my step of faith the previous night, when I dared to "prove God" with my last dollar.

That was not the end. Ever since then, as I have continued to give, God has continued to bless us spiritually, physically, and financially in a wonderful way. It took several years for us to learn how to trust Him fully, but how glad I am that I made a start that day! I was glad at the time, as well. The knowledge I had laid up treasures in Heaven, the assurance that I had obeyed the Lord—these were enough reward in themselves. But then God really did what He had said He would do. He opened up Heaven's windows. He poured out upon me an overflowing blessing. He rebuked the devourer for my sake. And He made me glad.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER YOU GIVE**

Make this a personal affirmation of God's Word. God will do what He says.

1 . I have proven God with tithes and offerings according to Malachi

3, and I now know that God will open the windows of Heaven unto me, and pour out an overflowing blessing that there will not be room enough to receive. I am praising Him for opening Heaven's windows to my soul and for His abundant blessing that makes rich and adds no sorrow.

2. Further, I know God has promised, in response to my loving obedience in giving, that He will rebuke the devourer for my sake. The devil is the devourer who would devour my finances, the harmony of my home, my peace of mind. I praise the Lord that He is rebuking the devourer for my sake!

3. I know that God is supplying all of my needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. I shall hold fast to this confession without wavering. James 1:7 declares that men who waver will not receive anything from the Lord. But I will not waver in my expectations that God will open Heaven's windows, pouring out the blessings that there will not be room enough to receive, and that He's rebuking the devourer for my sake. It is being done, hallelujah!

4. I have sown bountifully, so God declares that I shall reap bountifully. Bountiful blessings financially are mine, because God says so, and God is not a man that He should lie.

5. I have given not grudgingly nor of necessity, I have given cheerfully because "God loveth a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7). I know that if I were to withhold from God that it would tend to poverty (Proverbs 11:24). But I practice liberality in my giving and thereby He ministers to all my needs.

6. I am discovering the reality of the words of Jesus that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35). To be a cheerful, hilarious giver (II Corinthians 9:7) is the source of tremendous blessing, even greater than receiving. But as I give, the Lord just sees to it that it's given unto me, good measure, pressed down, and shaken together and running over shall men give unto my bosom (see Luke 6:38).

7. God's Word is His great "anti-poverty plan," to keep me in abundance of money and material possessions, to meet the needs of my family, and most of all, to give to the advancing of His Gospel world-wide.

## Chapter 2

### MORE ABOUT MONEY

The love of money is the root of all evil" (I Timothy 6:10; italics added). It is not the money which is evil, but the love of money which can do us in. Jesus said, "How hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter the Kingdom of God" (Mark 10:24). When we love money more than God—when we trust money more than we trust God—we're in trouble. We lose out on a chance to let God bless us financially in this life, and we may lose out on going to heaven in the next.

Jesus said, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:34-36). A man's soul, Jesus said, is worth more to that man than the entire world—and to save it, he must come to the point where he is willing to give up everything to follow God. Jesus put this transaction in terms of a balance sheet: profit versus loss.

The profit to be gained from doing God's will is more than just spiritual, although the spiritual gains to be made from obedience to God are of the utmost importance. But the Bible tells us that there is also a dollars-and-cents blessing to be realized from following God. Did you know that God pays interest? To those of us who, like Peter,



have left all to follow Him, He pays interest of ten thousand percent! Jesus said, "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, 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" (Mark 10:29-30).

God knows our motives. If we give to get, He will still give back "shaken together, pressed down, and running over," but if we give for His sake, the interest rate is even higher: it's "an hundredfold!"

One of the reasons God wants us to give—especially our tithes and offerings—is so that we can keep money in its proper perspective. He wants money to have its proper place in our lives.

Improperly handled, money can become our master. We can become so bound by worry over how to get it and fear of losing it that it can keep us from doing the things God wants us to do and being the people God wants us to be. "No man can serve two masters," Jesus said, "for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon ... Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ... for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:24, 31-33).

In the above passage from the Sermon on the Mount,

Jesus told the multitude that they could not serve money and God, but that if they would put God first, He would meet all their needs. If God has not been meeting your needs, perhaps you have not been putting Him first.

The Bible mentions three specific ways of not putting God first which are hindrances to financial prosperity. Left unchecked, these faults can nullify the principles I shared with you in Chapter One—and believe me, those principles will multiply your money if properly practiced, and if none of these hindrances are allowed to interfere.

The first of these hindrances to prosperity is as follows: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven ... do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do ... that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward you openly" (Matthew 6:1-4).

When we pray, when we fast, and when we give, the Bible says that we must be pure in our motives. If we do what we do for the sake of being seen by others, then being seen by others is our only reward. If, however, we do what we do in obedience to God, then God will reward us. If you have ever given tithes and offerings and have not been blessed, this may be the reason for it.

Another reason why God sometimes does not prosper people is that they are involved in sin: laziness, drunkenness, gluttony, or dishonesty.

"For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to

poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags" (Proverbs 23:21); "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth; and thy want as an armed man" (Proverbs 24:33,34). "Bread of deceit is sweet to a man; but afterwards his mouth shall be filled with gravel. . . an inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning: but the end thereof shall not be blessed" (Proverbs 20:17,21).

Certain sins, according to the Bible, carry with them the penalty of poverty. Just as God gives us more than we give Him in the way of tithes and offerings when we do good, when we do evil God takes from us more than we profited by our sin. People who do evil, the Bible says, "have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind," (Hosea 8:7).

By far the most common reason, however, that people sometimes don't prosper when they give their tithes and offerings is the same reason why people don't receive many of God's other blessings: they have not believed that God will do what He says He will do. This is where what you say is so important. Saying God will do what He has promised He will do just does something in your spirit. Say out loud, "My God shall supply all my need; He said to prove him and I have; I am expecting to receive back many times what I have given." If you continue to talk poverty, you will get poverty. If you talk prosperity—and you have done your part according to God's principles of giving—then prosperity is what you will get.

Why does God's Word bless some people and not bless others? The Bible says that when people hear God's

Word but do not believe it, "the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Hebrews 4:2). Often I too have been guilty of not mixing God's Word with faith.

Before one of my crusade trips to the West Indies, as we approached the departure date, I said to my wife, "Honey, our crusade schedule for the West Indies is less than a month away, and we don't yet have one dollar toward that journey. Jesus said to sit down and count the cost before you try to build a house. Maybe we had better not go now, with such a short time to raise money to pay all our expenses."

My wife, however, has always possessed unconquerable faith and the belief that God will do incredible things if we have a positive attitude of faith. She answered my negative thinking with, "Now, Don, you know that God has laid this mission field upon our hearts. There's no possible way we can bypass this trip, for we did not call ourselves to this task. This is the Lord's call, and He will provide!"

I began to affirm Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." From that time on, as I drove my car from place to place, and several times throughout every day, I boldly stated these words, repeating them again and again: "My God shall supply all my needs!" How those words freed my spirit! They strengthened my faith and changed my attitude. Repeating this Scripture to myself, believing, and talking to God worked the miracle I needed.

On two previous missions to the West Indies, we had had to cut short our trip because of lack of enough money

to continue. On this trip, however, we fulfilled our entire schedule because God supplied our every need. What was the difference this time? I firmly believe that it was the fact that we clung tenaciously to God's Word, and God, hearing our words, felt fully obligated to perform it.

My wife is a constant source of inspiration to me in this matter of God's supplying our needs. Back in 1961, at the same time that I was conducting another crusade, my wife and children were all living in Victoria, British Columbia. Even though the Lord was wonderfully blessing the crusade, the love offering for sustaining my ministry was small and inadequate. This created critical financial problems for all of us; we badly needed more money for paying bills and for maintaining living expenses.

One weekend I went to Victoria to visit my family briefly before returning to the crusade. Because I had so little money to leave with my wife, I was beginning to feel frustrated. We spent the night talking to God, face to face.

Finally, Joyce prayed, "Dear God, Supplier of all our needs, You know that we have a big problem here. We have very little money. In fact, I don't see how we'll manage this week. Perhaps You no longer want Don to continue in this crusade. If You don't, we will understand. We are sure that whatever Your reason would be, it would be a good one. Now, if You do not meet our financial needs, we will give up this ministry to somebody else. We want whatever You want."

Joyce, like Moses of old, had talked right out of her heart to the Lord. And I am totally convinced, as was confirmed very shortly, that our Heavenly Father was well pleased with His child for talking to Him so freely and

unashamedly. Her words and God's promise made the difference.

That prayer turned the tide for us, spiritually and financially. Never again were we so poverty-stricken, either in faith or in finances.

One day, while I was standing in the airport in Tortola, I began to talk to a man who turned out to be a salesman. At first, we talked the small talk of two strangers, about why I was there, about why he was there. As we talked on, we realized that we had much in common: we were both Christians. Finally, he told me that he had a story that he wanted to tell me, a completely unexplainable one by most standards.

"I'm not a strong believer in dreams," he remarked, "but something happened to me a few years ago that has remained a mystery to me to this day.

"For a number of years," he continued, "I had been traveling for a large wholesale company out of St. Louis, Missouri. On one of my routes, I had one very particular old friend named Brother Benton. The whole town called him that. He nearly always had an order for me. But whether or not he had, I always felt better after making my call on him. He was always so cheerful, and he talked so pleasantly. I could see my customers only twice a year, and I always looked forward to the days I would see him.

"On one visit I sold him a much larger order than he had ever given me before, but I did not hesitate to recommend the house to fill the order. I knew that he was universally loved and respected in that town as a sincere Christian. He would not keep alcoholic beverages or tobacco in any form in his store. He had always told me

that his Bible condemned both, and he would have nothing to do with them. No amount of talking or any offer of liberal discounts from the tobacco and liquor companies could induce him to deviate from that rule.

"About six months after I had sold him that large order, my head office notified me that his bill was unpaid and that I should call on him as soon as possible and collect it. I hurried over my territory and went in person to look after the matter. When I reached his store, he was not there. Another man was taking his place. I learned that a short time after he had placed that order, he had become ill, and that he and his family had all been sick at different periods for some time. His illness had lasted several months, and he was still confined to his home. I did not see him, but he sent me word that the matter would come out all right in the end.

"He had suffered more losses than he had realized; another six months went by, and the bill was still unpaid. I wrote to my head office and told them the condition of things. At that time, they held up all proceedings against him. Six more months went by, and I was told that I must go at once and either collect the money or enter suit against him. I had no choice in the matter, but I'll tell you, I had some rebellious thoughts.

"The night before I arrived at his town, I could not sleep. I spent several weary hours rolling and tossing on my bed, trying to figure out some way to avoid closing on my old friend. I knew that he was a good man who had his back against the wall through no fault of his own.

"While tossing on my bed, I must have fallen asleep. I dreamed that I was calling on my old friend and that we

were sitting in his family room, with all his family around. He turned to me and said, "We are just about to have our morning devotional service; we will be glad to have you join us."

"I replied, 'With pleasure.'

"He then said, 'We'll read the Twenty-third Psalm.'

"He began to read, but I was astonished at the words I heard! I had learned that Psalm long ago in Sunday School, and I will never forget that 'The Lord is my Shepherd.'

"My heart rejoiced as I heard the words he read, although I had never heard them that way before! He read, 'The Lord is my Banker; I shall not fail. He maketh me to lie down in gold mines; He giveth me the combination of His tills. He restoreth my credit; He showeth me how to avoid law suits for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk in the very shadow of debt, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me; thy silver and thy gold, they rescue me. Thou preparest a way for me in the presence of the collectors; Thou fillest my barrels with oil; my measure runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will do business in the name of the Lord.' Having read the Scripture, he knelt down and prayed. I had never in my life heard such a prayer. He nearly took my breath away when he asked his Heavenly Father to bless me his friend.

"With his 'Amen!' I awoke with a start!

"I had previously planned to call on my friend at his home early in the morning. I got up, dressed, and reached his home just as the sun was coming up.



"He met me at the door with a smile and a hearty handshake. He said, 'Come in, come right in. We are just going to have morning prayers, and we will be glad to have you join us.' He introduced me to his wife and children. He took up his Bible and said, 'We'll read the Twenty-third Psalm.' He read it in a clear, strong voice, but he read it just as it is written in the Bible. I cannot tell you my feelings and thoughts as he read. We knelt in prayer, and he humbly made known to God his wishes; but his prayer did not sound like the one I had heard in my dream, though he appeared to have covered the same thoughts. He told the Lord he owed some money, and that it was past due; he asked that a way might open so that he could pay it that very day. He then prayed for me. While I was on my knees there, I resolved that for one time in my life, I was going to disobey orders!

"After prayers, we both went directly to his store. Just as we entered the store, a young man met us, saying, 'Brother Benton, Father sent me over to tell you that he would take the house and lot that he is interested in buying from you, the one that he talked about the other day. He told me to give you this money and to tell you that he will pay the balance when you settle.'

"The old man took the money. Tears began to roll down his cheeks as he turned away. He wrote the young man a receipt for the money and gave it to him. He then turned to his ledger and began to figure. He turned to me and said, 'Will you kindly receipt this bill?' I saw that he had added interest for all the months that he had not been able to pay. When I told him that I had been instructed to forgo the interest, he declined the offer. He said that he

wanted to pay all his just debts and that he was grateful for the extra time the company had given him. I took the money and sent it in to my office in St. Louis.

"At the same time that I had been tossing on my bed that morning, my old friend was on his knees in his room, pleading with his Banker for a loan. I was very much gratified when he got it, and ever since that day, when I become discouraged, I apply the Twenty-third Psalm as the remedy."

When things are going well, it is easy to call the Lord your Shepherd and vow to follow Him all the days of your life. To all of us, though, comes the times of walking in the valley. Then God takes our measure. He still wants to hear us say, "My God will supply all my needs," and mean it. Brother Benton's faith was fixed firmly on God, and his words proved it. God honored him by fulfilling his need.

## **GOD GIVETH WEALTH AND HEALTH**

This "power poem" is one some will not easily trust. It has been looked upon to be "unspiritual" to have wealth. And even the gift of health from God is generally pictured as not likely to be obtained.

The word "wealth" means resources, competence to meet our obligations. God doesn't promise to make us millionaires. But He does provide for our every need (Philippians 4:19) and assures our prosperity and good success if we live by His Word (Joshua 1:8). Delight in the Word of God, meditate in it and God says that whatsoever you do will prosper (Psalm 1:1-3).

Jesus said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto

you" (Matthew 6:33). Jesus was here speaking about our material provisions (food, raiment, shelter). Jesus did not say that if we seek first the kingdom of God, all these things will be taken away from you. No, He said all these things—our material provisions shall be added unto us!

The Bible says, "It is God who giveth thee the power to get wealth" (Deuteronomy 8:18). And it is Satan's business to impoverish our lives, to ruin our Christian effectiveness in paying our obligations. Satan seeks to bring us to embarrassment in financial matters. Agree with God; disagree with the devil!

God says, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" (III John 2). This is God's "big wish" for us, His children, that we may prosper and be in health, even as our souls prosper! How do we prosper in our souls? (1) By Spirit-led prayer, and a positive praise life; (2) By studying God's Word and confessing the Scriptures boldly; (3) By witnessing with our lives and lips of Christ to others.

When so many of God's people are afflicted and poverty-stricken, and the work of God is reduced to a standstill in some quarters because of lack of finances, it's high time we affirmed these scriptures quoted here, to receive the benefit of God's gifts of wealth and health.

Daily speak it boldly: **GOD GIVETH ME WEALTH AND HEALTH!**

## Chapter 3

### LIBERALITY IN GIVING

The most joyful Christians are those who know the blessing of bold giving. They dare to respond to God's Word, to see the Lord do what He says He will do ... "I am the Lord, I change not... PROVE ME now herewith (with your tithes and offerings), saith the Lord of hosts . . . I WILL open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes" (Malachi 3:6, 10-11).

I dare you to put God to the test in your giving. When you give in this manner, God has given you permission to affirm boldly, "I am proving my God. He is pouring me out an overflowing blessing. He is rebuking the devourer for my sake!"

Harry Wiltbanks was one of the most successful Christians I have ever known. His testimony for Christ was strong and influential. During one crusade, Joyce and I stayed in his home. One day he told us his "success" story.

Coming out of World War I without God and penniless, he received Christ as Lord and Savior. Reading the Bible, he began to take God's Word at face value. He asked the Lord for a job and got one. He read God's promises concerning giving and began to tithe and give offerings, too. He was undenyng in his faith ... God must bless him, spiritually and financially. God is not a man that He should lie! Harry Wiltbanks began to receive abounding blessings!

This continued through many years ... the man giving scripturally, and God pouring forth His blessings. The result was that by giving, Harry was instrumental in winning multitudes of souls all the time. Now he is home with the Lord, reaping his reward.

The Bible says that when we give, we are honoring the Lord. The result again is God's promise that He will reward you with plenty (Proverbs 3:9-10). When you give of your substance, recognize that you are actually "honoring the Lord," and you can expect the reward of "plenty" as God blesses you materially.

What is bold giving? It is liberal giving (Proverbs 11:25); bountiful giving (II Corinthians 9:6); cheerful, ungrudging giving (II Corinthians 9:7); blessed giving (Acts 20:35); devil-defeating giving (Malachi 3:11).

What is the blessing of bold giving? It not only opens the windows of heaven (Malachi 3:10), but its reward is "given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom" (Luke 6:38). God promises you plenty shall be your reward, spiritually and materially. But most importantly, your bold giving sends the Gospel forth to the winning of souls and the meeting of needs.

The opposite of bold giving is fearful giving. "I was afraid to trust God's Word for many years," a Christian man told me. "Fear compelled me to give dimes when I should have given dollars. I found no joy in giving because of this spirit. Finally, I began to give cheerfully, liberally, ungrudgingly. How abundantly God began to bless me! I indeed found the blessing of bold giving, and how my Christian life was transformed!"

Dare to abandon yourself to God's promises in your giving. You will not only "lay up treasures in heaven," but you will experience tremendous joy here below. I have known many blessed people in my life that have had the courage to give liberally in this manner and have seen God do wondrous deeds in response to their obedience to His Word. One such man was my friend, Evangelist Velmer Gardner of California. His testimony of tithing has always blessed my heart.

"We were in the heart of the depression. My father died and left no insurance, so it fell on my older brother and my lot to provide for our mother and five brothers and sisters. Men by the thousands were out of work. We were so poor that every morning, as I started to look for work, I would have to put cardboard inside my shoes to keep my feet off the ground. I couldn't afford five cents for shoe strings, so I used wire to keep my shoes on.

"One day a friend came and said, 'I think I can get you a job in a big box-factory.' I was really thrilled. Hundreds of men daily were trying to get a job there, but he got me in. We were twenty-five miles from home at this factory and stayed in a little cabin by the river. I started work for the tremendous sum of twenty dollars a week, which was really a lot of money in those days. God spoke to me all week about tithing.

"When I came home that Saturday night I said, 'Mother, I feel that I should tithe. I know we're poor and need all I can earn, but I want to go on with God.'

"My mother cried, and said, 'Son, you walk with God; He will take care of us.'

"On Sunday morning I gave two dollars for my tithe

and that night I put one dollar offering in the basket. Oh, how happy I was that I had obeyed God. Immediately, he began to bless my soul; the air seemed fresher, the grass greener, the flowers prettier, the birds sang more sweetly. I felt better. Why? Because He was opening the windows of heaven upon my soul.

"I went happily to work the next day, and, when I arrived at the plant, there stood the foreman, waiting to see me. They called him 'Old Grump.' No one had ever seen him smile. He was the terror of the whole crew. He hollered, 'Come here, you.'

"The devil sneaked up and said, 'Now don't you wish you had that three dollars to get back to town on? You're fired!'

"With fear and trembling, I stood before 'Old Grump'. With a very stern look on his face he said, 'I've been watching you work.' Then I was really scared.

"He continued, 'We just bought a new electric box-making machine, the first ever invented. My boy will operate it and you will be his assistant. You'll receive an increase in pay of thirty-three and a third percent.'

"I shouted, 'Hallelujah!' so loud in my soul that the devil nearly fell over himself getting away from me!

"Saturday night, when I returned home, I joyfully announced 'Mother, God has proven Himself; I got a raise!'

"That Sunday I had more tithes to pay and a bigger offering to give. The next Monday morning I went back to work and, to my horror, there the boss stood again.

"The devil said, 'Now listen, you can just shove me so far, then I start in. You had to testify about what God did when you started tithing, so now you have lost your job.'

This is the end.'

"With fear and trembling, I stood before the boss. He almost smiled as he said, 'We just bought another machine yesterday; you can operate this one. You will get twice as much money as you have been receiving.' The devil left on roller skates for hell!

"Within six weeks I was making more money than any man that had been there for twenty years, including the boss himself. Don't tell me it doesn't pay to tithe.

"God will bless you financially, spiritually and physically. Since that time, God has blessed me with health. He has taken care of my every need, and the windows of heaven are still open and His blessing is thrilling my soul. I would not stop tithing for anything in the world.

"Luke 6:38 says, 'Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over!'

He will give you what you deserve, then He will press it down, shake it together and run it over. No wonder David said, 'My cup runneth over.' Yours will, too, if you give to God.

"I can still remember when I was just a small freckled-faced boy, headed for the little country grocery store. I would walk up to the candy counter longingly and say, 'Gimme a penny's worth of jelly beans!' The old groceryman's heart would move with compassion, and he would take a small bag and fill it up with nice red and black jelly beans. As I saw the bag fill up, I had only one ambition in life, and that was to get behind that counter, take that bag and gently shake it. I knew if I could, I'd be



able to get a few more black jelly beans in! I wanted all I could get.

"Friends, that is exactly what God will do. He will press it down, shake it together and run it over. Hallelujah!"

Many Christians today run into the problem of believing that tithing is right in their hearts; yet they listen to the devil's protests that with the rise of the economy—food prices, housing, clothing—they could not possibly afford to tithe and still provide for their families. Believe me, that is a lie from the father of lies himself. Especially in this day and age of the "failing dollar," we cannot possibly afford not to tithe. In a time when Satan's inflation is running rampant in the world, we only have God on our side to rebuke the devourer as we tithe in obedience to His Word. There is no stronger foundation, no greater surety in this time of financial difficulties than the Word of God. But sometimes it takes quite a bit for the impact of God's Word to reach some individuals.

There is the testimony of one dear country preacher who learned the faithfulness of God's Word in an unusual way. He explained to his congregation how God dealt with him concerning the importance of tithing.

"Many years ago when I was a country missionary, the famous Baptist businessman, H.Z. Duke, who founded the Duke and Ayers Nickel Stores over a wide area, came to this county. Speaking to Christian laymen, he urged men and women everywhere to try God and see if He would not make good His promises to bless them in material things when they gave tithes and offerings to His cause. After Mr. Duke had spoken at one community, I

took him in my buggy to another community. Mr. Duke said to me, 'Brother Kuykendall, do you believe in tithing?'

"'I certainly do,' I said. 'I believe in tithing and I preach it myself.'

"'But, Brother Kuykendall,' he continued, 'do you practice tithing?'

"'Sadly, I had to answer, 'No, I do not. I believe in tithing, but I cannot practice it. You see, I have thirteen children at home. Every meal fifteen of us set down at the table. I receive only \$125 a month, \$1500 a year salary. (Even many years ago that was a meager amount.) I have to maintain my own horse and buggy for constant traveling. It is just impossible to take care of all the needs of a family of fifteen out of \$125 a month and have money left to tithe. So I believe in tithing, and I preach it, but I cannot practice it.'

"'Mr. Duke was a very kindly man. He said, 'Brother Kuykendall, would you like to tithe? Would you tithe if I back you up financially so you could be sure you would not lose by it?'

"'Nothing would please me more,' I said.

"'So Mr. Duke made me the following proposition:

"'For the next year, I want you to set out to give God at least \$12.50 every month, as soon as you get your salary. Then, if you feel led, you may give more. I promise you that if you need help, I will give it. Simply write me a letter and say, 'Brother Duke, I'm giving a tithe, but I miss the money. I need it for my family. I've given so much thus far. 'I promise you that I will send you a check by return mail. Are you willing to try tithing on that basis?'

"'I hesitated a moment, moved with emotion, and

Brother Duke said, 'I have thirty-two stores. I have plenty of money to make good my promise. I will be glad to do it. Will you risk me and start tithing on my simple promise that I will make good any amount you've given, any time that you find you miss it and need it? Will you trust me about it?'

"I gladly accepted his offer. I said, 'Yes, Brother Duke, I've wanted to tithe for a long time, but I felt I simply could not do it. Now, thank God, I can tithe, and I'll be glad to. And I will not feel like a hypocrite when I tell others they ought to tithe.'

"So I started tithing for the first time in my life. Every month I took out, first of all, one tenth of my salary and gave it to the Lord's cause; then, as I felt led, I gave more. In the back of my mind, I always had this thought, 'Mr. Duke promised me he would simply make it up any time I need it. He will send me the money if I simply ask him for it.'

"But a strange thing happened. It seemed our money went further than before. I would preach in some county community and somebody would tie a crate of chickens on the back of my buggy. Somebody would put a ham under the seat. Or a godly woman would put some home canned fruit in my buggy.

"A neighbor farmer said, 'Brother Kuykendall, God has blessed me so much that I cannot get all my corn in the crib this year. I have an extra wagon load that I cannot keep. May I put it in your crib for your buggy horse?'

"Another neighbor drove over with a great hay wagon full of hay for the cow.

"It was very strange, but that year we had no doctor

bills. The children's clothes didn't seem to wear out so quickly. It was a happy time. I never yet had to call on Mr. H.Z. Duke to make up the money I had given to the Lord in tithes.

"Then one day when the year was almost gone, and the test was about over, I suddenly realized with shame that I had believed what H. Z. Duke had said. He promised to make good anything I lacked by tithing, and I believed him. But my heavenly Father had made the same promise, and I had not believed Him! I had taken the word of a man when I did not take the promise of God! Now I had proven God's promises and found that He took care of me and my big family on a small salary. I found that \$112.50 per month took care of our family better, with God's blessing, than \$125 did without being under the blessed covenant which He has made with those who seek first the Kingdom of God through tithes."

That godly country preacher stood there before the congregation weeping. With deepest emotion he said, "Now I have tithed for many, many years. My salary has increased year after year. We've always had enough. We've never been shamed. The greatest spiritual blessing of my life, aside from salvation, has been in learning to trust God about daily needs for my home and our big family."

God has proven to everybody who has ever tried Him that He would keep His promise. He provides for those who bring Him the first fruits, those who give tithes and offerings those who boldly seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, allowing the Lord to add blessings of abundance to their lives!

## Chapter 4

### ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT FINANCES?

**W**orry about money problems! How often I experienced this worry in the past. Has worry over financial matters robbed you of your song of joy? God's Word assures us of freedom from financial worries. Read these sixteen reasons why you need never worry again about finances.

1. "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

2. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Luke 11:9).

3. "Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better than the fowls!" (Luke 12:24).

4. "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (I Peter 5:7).

5. "The Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11).

6. "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things" (Matthew 6:32).

7. "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (John 16:24).

8. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:30).

9. "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Psalm 37:3).

10. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psalm 37:25).

11. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matthew 7:11).

12. "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Luke 12:31).

13. "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked" (Psalm 37:16).

14. "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12:7).

15. "If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you?" (Luke 12:28).

16. "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things" (Luke 12:30).

Summary: As we live by John 3:16 for assurance of salvation, we can boldly live by these blessed verses to have provision for every financial need. Expect daily fulfillment of these words of God as long as you live! This is the God of Provision who can get you out of debt and keep you there! Praise Him!

## **LIBERALITY IN GIVING**

As you meditate on these dynamic words of God, you are assured that through liberality in giving, you can

experience the joy of bold Bible living.

1. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (Matthew 25:40).

2. "Whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward" (Mark 9:41).

3. "He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack" (Proverbs 28:27).

4. "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday" (Isaiah 58:10).

5. "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

6. "The generous man will be prosperous, and he who waters will be watered" (Proverbs 11:25 New American Standard).

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" (II Corinthians 9:7).

8. "Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hand be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (II Chronicles 15:7).

9. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble" (Psalm 41:1).

10. "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" (II Corinthians 9:8).

11. "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given him will he pay him again" (Proverbs 19:17).

12. "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" (Luke 6:38).

SUMMARY: You now know that God promises you prosperity and plenty because you are liberal in giving unto Him. This makes your giving a noble privilege! Have you praised Him for enabling you to be a bold Bible giver?



## Chapter 5

### WHAT MONEY CRUNCH?

The knocking continued as I hurried to the front door. When I finally opened it, I was met by a lean, businesslike man with a well-set jaw.

"I'm here to collect your car payment," he announced flatly.

My heart sank for a moment as I told him that we didn't have the money to meet the payment right then.

"Well, then," the man said, "I have no other choice but to take the car."

"Oh, that can't happen," I pleaded. "We need that car. Besides, I've never had that happen, and I just can't have that. Will you go back to your company and request a five-day extension? You could phone, but we don't have one. I'm sure that I can get the money within five days."

The man hesitated for a moment. His face seemed to soften. "All right," he said pessimistically. "It so happens that I'm on my way back to the office now. I'll see what I can do about getting an extension for you. But don't get your hopes up. I'm almost certain they won't go along with it."

"How soon will you be back?" I asked anxiously.

"Sometime this afternoon—likely to repossess the car!"

I watched the man go down the walk. As he started to get into his car, he looked over the top and yelled, "You'd better get your personal stuff out of that thing before I get

back. I won't have time to wait." With that note, he got into his car and drove off.

My wife had gone to a funeral only minutes before. I was caring for our four small children. So I was left to face this situation alone.

Quickly, I had to make a decision. I looked out at the car in front of our house. Should I go out and clean out the personal contents? No, I wouldn't do that.

Then another decision had to be made—without delay. Either I could panic, resign to failure, and watch the car be taken away, or else, I could turn my faith to God, and trust in Him with my whole heart.

I'll admit that I was tempted to doubt. But my wife and I had been nourishing our hearts on God's Word, and the truth of Philippians 4:19 flashed to my mind: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. "

I made my decision: I would practice what I had been preaching. I would dare to confess God's Word aloud. I would not waver in my faith. I would not yield to the evidence of my senses. (The senses always war against the Word: I had "heard" the man say he would likely have to repossess my car. I could "feel" deep anxiety about this urgent matter. My imagination told me I would soon "see" the car taken away from me.)

But God's Word was above the evidence of the senses. His truth was superior to natural truth. I would take my stand boldly with God's Word.

I began to say over and over, "My God shall supply all of my need." I kept on saying it with courage and

conviction.

As this Scripture fell from my lips, my heart was beginning to agree. My confidence was rising. In a short time, I was shouting it: "My God shall supply all of my need!" It gushed forth like a fountain in my spirit. "My God shall supply all of my need!" I said it over and over. It was not a song of desperation or unbelief. It was a song of sheer joy. I knew it was gloriously true.

As I continued to confess this Scripture aloud, coupling it with joyful praises, I could almost "feel" the money in my pocket! The Word alone generated this kind of awareness.

While I was yet confessing, praising, and singing, another knock came to my front door. When I opened it, there stood a taxi driver.

"Since the office was unable to reach you by phone, I was sent here to inform you that there is a money order at the telegraph office for you. If you will come down and sign for it, you can receive the money," the taxi driver politely stated. (Our town was so small, taxi drivers often delivered messages for Western Union.)

I thanked him for this message and assured him I would be down to the telegraph office to claim the money as soon as I could.

After watching him pull away from the curb, I closed the door and began to praise the Lord again. I just knew that it was He who had acted on someone, somewhere, to send me that money. As I stood there praising the Lord for His faithfulness, I heard yet another knock at the door.

When I opened the door, I was met by the bill collector, and another man whom I assumed had been

brought along to drive away our car.

Before either man had a chance to say even a word, I smiled at them and said, "Listen, fellows, I know where I can get the money right now. There's just one problem though; I'm watching our four little children while my wife is at a funeral. If you two gentlemen wouldn't mind watching the kids for me, I can be back with the money in a few minutes."

Both men glanced at each other, and looked a bit hesitant. Finally, the collector spoke up. "OK, sure, I guess we could stay with the kids. It's a bit unusual—but if you can get the money, then why not? Just hurry it up."

My heart was by now fairly bursting with praise, as I pulled on my coat. I had the money; I had free babysitters; I had everything I needed!

When I arrived at the telegraph office, there was the wire. My heavenly Father had spoken to a man over six hundred miles away to send me \$150—almost twice the amount needed for the car payment.

Later, I found out that this man had first thought that he would send the money through the mail, but the Spirit impressed him to wire it to me. The amazing thing is that the very time when he was led to wire it to me was the same moment that I had started to praise God for my situation!

It never occurred to me until later that, in the natural, I had done a rather dangerous thing to leave the children with those two strangers. But, then, the babysitters that God provides are bound to be reliable, aren't they? And I still maintain that there's nothing to fear when God is in control.

At any rate, I have learned that those who live on Praise Avenue are showered with the best of heaven's blessings. Praising God in the midst of flat bank accounts and hard times opens the windows of heaven and keeps you happy in Jesus.

How well I remember the bills that piled up during my wife's sickness back in 1953! Stricken with rheumatic fever, she was so sick that I finally had to leave the field of evangelism in order to care for my family. I couldn't leave my wife alone in that condition, nor did I have the money to hire someone to stay with her.

Weeks passed, and I had no income. I mortgaged our furniture, but soon that money was used up, and I had no money at all. Still, I determined to keep praising the Lord.

During this time of dire poverty and hardship, I was exploring God's Word like never before, hoping to find some answer to our problem. Then one day I happened to turn to II Corinthians 9:6-8, and there God spoke to me in a way that I'll never forget:

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully .

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

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.

Words can't describe the feeling that I had when I read that passage. Here, Paul was describing God's plan

for man's spiritual and financial prosperity. As I read the passage, I noticed that there were three major points in his message.

First, we reap what we sow. If we plant a little, we reap a little. If we plant a great deal, we reap a great deal. When I thought about our poverty, I realized that this passage threw the responsibility right back on me. If I was reaping very little income, it was just because I hadn't been "planting" enough.

Then Paul emphasized that we must be cheerful in our giving. God wants His children to "plant" their money with praise and thanksgiving, not with a grudging heart.

Finally, Paul pointed out that when God gives us extra financial blessings, He wants us to share them with those who are less fortunate, so that they too will thank Him for His goodness.

Well, after I read that passage from Second Corinthians, I promised God that I would be a generous giver if only He would supply us with something to give. And He did exactly that. After being without a single dollar of income for more than a month, I finally received five dollars through the mail. It came from a friend whom God had moved upon to share our burden. Cheerfully, and with praise in my heart, I gave the Lord a generous portion of that money.

Immediately, God moved on the scene again. A woman whom I had never met from Evanston, Illinois, sent me twenty-five dollars. I wrote her to thank her for her gift. When she replied, she sent me a money order for a hundred dollars!

Praising the Lord ever more, I gave a good portion of

these amounts to the Lord's work also. Sure enough, the Lord continued to bless us, both financially and spiritually.

Then came the unforgettable Sunday evening when the Lord healed my wife as I read to her the twenty-seventh Psalm. She boldly got out of her bed, stood up, and confessed, "The Lord is the strength of my life."

Although the Lord beautifully healed my wife that Sunday, there naturally followed a period of regaining lost strength. Meanwhile, my dear mother and dad came from Oregon to care for our children. That left me free to return to the ministry.

For ten consecutive months, I received a hundred-dollar money order from that dear woman in Evanston. I praised God for every cent of that money, gave away a portion of all she gave me, and gradually got caught up on my bills.

Now, I could have just played safe and used all that money for my bills. A lot of us are tempted to do that at times, aren't we? An old story from the deep South illustrates this very clearly. It seems that a ragged farmer was standing on the steps of his tumbledown shack when a stranger stopped by for a drink of water.

"How's your cotton coming along?" the stranger inquired.

"Ain't got none," replied the farmer.

"Didn't you plant any?" asked the stranger.

"Nope," was the reply. "'Fraid o' boll weevils."

"Well," continued the visitor, "how's your corn?"

"Didn't plant none," came the answer. "'Fraid there wa'n't goin't' be no rain."

The visitor persevered, "Well, how are your potatoes?"

"Ain't got none; scairt o' potato bugs."

"Really, what did you plant?" pressed the stranger.

"Nothin'," was the calm reply. "I jest played safe."

Perhaps some of us have been "playing safe" with our money. And God will permit us to do that, if that's what we choose. We can keep it all for ourselves. But if we want to reap a good harvest of blessings, then we need to plant in faith—and water with praise. That's the way to prosperity—both spiritual and material.



## **CLOSING WORDS**

In your life of giving your money away, lift up your eyes to faraway places to give the Gospel, too. Please remember the Lord's work in India.

Don Gossett

**Don Gossett**

## **The Giver's Creed**

I live to give for I "remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" Acts 20:35.

I live to give cheerfully unto the Lord. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" II Corinthians 9:7.

I live to give according to the measure of the blessing of the Lord I have received. "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which H? hath given thee" Deuteronomy 16:17.

I live to give for this is the love way. "God so loved the world that He gave... John 3:16. "Christ Jesus loved us and gave Himself for us" Galatians 2:20.

I live to give tithes and offerings. The results are evident... the open windows of heaven, overflowing blessings that there's not room enough to contain, the rebuke of Satan for my sake plus other benefits. I affirm with Jacob, "Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee" Genesis 28:22.

I live to give freely because the Lord has given so much to me. "Freely I have received, freely I give" Matthew 10:8.

I live to give for giving is the essence of living. I "give

and it shall be given unto me, good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over shall men give into my bosom. For with the same measure that I mete withal it shall be measured unto me”

Luke 6:38.

I live to give for this is the life of sowing and reaping. “But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly, and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully”

II Corinthians 9:6.

When I live by this creed—/ live to give—I will never live in lack. When I live to give my money away, God sees to it that I always have enough for my needs, yes. More important, I always have enough for God’s purposes through me.

This Giver’s Creed is also produced on a beautiful scroll, one of a series available **I** at \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Order from I nearest address on page 2.