

Course 125

Finances and Stewardship in God's house

An apostolic teaching of the Global School of Ministry - UK

Introducing Jehovah Jireh

Over the past few days, the Lord has been tugging at my heart the fact that His people need to know that part of Him which is covered, misrepresented and at times contentious when presented in a way that is out of balance. It is not that the Great Potentate and Creator of the Universe and all that are there in needs any introduction. However, when we consider how men have severely mis -represented Him and used whatever aspect of Him to advance their fancy causes, the necessity for a holistic understanding of God becomes imperative.

Back of the muddled understanding of the goodness of God and His willingness of provide for and bless His saints is the conflicting perspectives of Him advanced and emphasized by two distinct religious camps.

On the one hand is, strangely, yet true, the Holiness Movement. The Holiness Movement has over the years tended to help God to recruit more souls into the Kingdom by emphasizing Him as the Law Giver and Judge, sitting on a Throne with a big frown, waiting with a sledge hammer to bludgeon those in His house hold who stray off His prescribed path. This picture is reinforced by the supposition, which has become standard doctrine in many a holiness sect, that the only genuine reward a believer can expect in this world is to be kept holy and free of sin, counting the years, months, days and hours of life until the last breath is released. Then, the weary pilgrim wakes up on the other side of eternity to the embrace of Jesus and uncountable angels to enjoy the pastures of Beulah land with the saints triumphant. Poverty on earth is glorified as evidence of holiness and any talk of wealth, prosperity evinces uncomfortable groans and moans.

In many Third world nations, this rustic view of the lot of the believer as a rugged pilgrim who has absolutely no inheritance on this side of eternity is standard fare. Unfortunately, Overseers of Ministries in such places are living very comfortable lives while their parishioners are barely scrapping by.

The Prosperity Movement

At the opposite side of the spectrum is the Prosperity movement. Inspired by Jet setting preachers from America, this movement sought to glorify wealth to the degree that another gospel naturally evolved! Under their jaded understanding of the gospel, Jesus did all the suffering and dying so that we who He saved will do all the “enjoying” of the good life. Brethren were admonished to “go for it” with all passion and strength. As saints heeded this admonition, they made ship wreck of their faith with the out of balance preaching. Not a few were swept away by the spirit of the world when they “made it”. The so called blessings of the Lord became clearly something else because sorrow of the spirit and soul followed those who claimed to be blessed.

There were many cases of faithful brethren in Church getting breakthroughs in business which led to break up of their marriages and high spiritual values and ethical conduct. Many brethren who came into sudden wealth by applying the “keys of prosperity” they heard found their wives who suffered and laboured with them no longer attractive enough and began to live double lives.

The prosperity movement has morphed into the pseudo Kingdom movement offering a deadlier concoction to its unsuspecting victims. Saints are buying the logic that there is no need to look forward to the return of Jesus; that all there is to the Kingdom of God is here and now; that if only we can focus on “getting” the things of the Kingdom – security, peace and all other physical and psychological evidences of the Kingdom, we are fine.

Neither of these camps is correct! They misrepresent God, His Kingdom and essential nature. The Lord wants us to have a proper, biblical understanding of Himself as our Source and Provider. The Lord wants us to understand Him as a Covenant keeper and Care provider for His own. We will explore the attribute of God as Jehovah Jireh.

We will see the good God; the gracious and compassionate God who has a plan for His own in this present life and in the one to come. Let us stay tuned to know Him, have our faith activated and pray through to receive all He has for us in the now.

In so doing, let us realize that God does not release blessings that will hurt our spiritual values as His own children and saints or damage our personalities as citizens of the Kingdom. The whole object of God in blessing us to the overflowing dimension is to enable us to fulfil the very purpose for which He created, redeemed called us to be Ambassadors of Christ in this present life and co-heirs with Him in time and in eternity!

Introducing Jehovah Jireh – 2: When El-Shaddai became Jehovah Jireh!

It bothers on the absurd that we should be convincing any saint of the goodness and benevolence of God! The reason for this assertion is that this aspect of God ought to be of elementary knowledge to all His children! Unfortunately, saints of God have been weaned on the twin toxic poison of religion and the so called prosperity movement!

To believe in the creation account of Genesis chapters 1 and 2 and not see this fundamental nature and attribute of God is to stretch unbelief too far! Let us throw a bombshell here: before any other attribute of God is mentioned directly or inferred, Genesis takes us to the deeper recesses of the mindset of a God who yearns to bless, provide and care for a creature that He was yet to create, mankind! In effect, hold-your-breath, God is primarily a Benevolent, Caring and Providing Being who made all things available for man out of His Own goodness.

Travel the time capsule with us to the very beginning. Genesis chapter 1 provides an illuminating presentation of a God who goes out of the way to prepare the exact eco system needed to sustain life on this particular planet called earth. It goes on to show how God used the first five days to put in place all that the human He would create would require to survive on this planet ! Genesis 1(NLT):

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

3 Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light "day" and the darkness "night."

And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.

6 Then God said, “Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth.” 7 And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens. 8 God called the space “sky.”

And evening passed and morning came, marking the second day.

9 Then God said, “Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear.” And that is what happened. 10 God called the dry ground “land” and the waters “seas.”

And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, “Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came.” And that is what happened. 12 The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

13 And evening passed and morning came, marking the third day.

14 Then God said, “Let lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them mark off the seasons, days, and years. 15 Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth.” And that is what happened. 16 God made two great lights—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night. He also made the stars. 17 God set these lights in the sky to light the earth, 18 to govern the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

19 And evening passed and morning came, marking the fourth day.

20 Then God said, “Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind.” 21 So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that scurries and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird—each producing offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good. 22 Then God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply. Let the fish fill the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”

23 And evening passed and morning came, marking the fifth day.

24 Then God said, “Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals.” And that is what happened. 25 God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

Having prepared the enabling environment from Day 1 – 5, on the 6th Day, El-Shaddai, The all sufficient One stooped low to be Jehovah Jireh! Such a holy thought is evidently too mind blowing, if only we can grasp the import of what is unsaid! Here was a God who is sufficient in Himself in every respect from eternity past to that point in time reaching into the depths of Himself to create a need. It was a multi-dimensional need: to create a planet where He would create and plant humans, nurture them and lavish them with His unlimited goodness. Here was a God worshipped by hundreds of millions or billions of angels, seated in Majestic Splendour on the Throne.

One day, He left the glory of that star spangled Palace and stooped down on raw earth to mould an object conceived in His mind eye. Breathing His eternal Spirit into that lifeless being, the outcome was a living soul! Genesis 2: 4-7 “ This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5 neither wild plants nor grains were

growing on the earth. For the LORD God had not yet sent rain to water the earth, and there were no people to cultivate the soil. 6 Instead, springs came up from the ground and watered all the land. 7 Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person."

Saints, let us discharge every false humility and religiosity from our mindsets so that we can stay on the plain letters of The Word and apprehend what the Holy Spirit is saying in the Now. The dispensation in which we live is ordained to have penetrating insight into the mind of God for which reason He has clothed us with the mind of Christ. Saints, it is the mind of Christ that we need to know by the Spirit all that the Father has assigned to us! Romans 8: 9-11,15-17; 2 Corinthians 3: 12 – 18.

It is necessary that we ask the question: why did God create man, what was man purposed for? Before we give our religiously jaded answers, let us remember that God answered this question with His own words in Genesis 1: "26 Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

27 So God created human beings in his own image.

In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

28 Then God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground."

29 Then God said, "Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food.30 And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life." And that is what happened."

In Genesis 2: 15 the additional mandate to take care of the earth was given "The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it"

Saints, the point of all this introduction is this, if we have not lost you so far: God was manifesting one critical attribute of His in the entire creation story: The Great Provider aka Jehovah Jireh. In His office as Jehovah Jireh, it matters not who you are or who you are not for Him to bless you. He blesses of His own self and has no one to report to. He is the El-Shaddai, the ALL Sufficient One who reports to no one and owes no one any explanation for what He chooses to do or not do. In the past 22 years, He has revealed Himself to us. Now He has graciously chosen to release that revelation through us to you. Are you ready for an unforgettable encounter with this awesome and unique God?

Revelation begets Trust!

Those of us who are privileged to be adopted into the House hold of Faith as sons must never forget that there is a particular foundation on which we rest. It is neither the pomposity of Rome and its offspring, all the religious isms of this world. It is also not Judaism and the Mosaic Law.

Our roots go deeper to a man in who God found the single thing which was lost in Adam and Eve at the Garden: a revelation of who He is as Jehovah Jireh, the Great Provider and sustainer of His own. That revelation, when it is firm and sure in an individual, inspires absolute trust in God, the

very basis of any meaningful walk with God.

It was essentially this child like trust in God that Adam and Eve lost when the adversary came to tempt them in Eden. If careful thought is given to events of that dark day in the chequered history of humanity, we will not find it difficult to see that the core essence of the temptation at Eden was to cause mankind to mistrust God, believe Satan and trust in self! Read Genesis 3: 1- 7 carefully and this hidden truth will immediately scream at you!

The consequence of losing sight of or denying the Lord the honour of being a benevolent, caring provider of all the needs of His own is the tendency to retreat into self to become the real god of the human life. In effect, what Satan achieved at Eden and still achieves today is to make saints of God to look away from Him as the Source and look to themselves or other things/institutions as the source of their sustenance here on planet earth.

This is the ugly face of Idolatry 101! Whenever self-preservation rears its ugly head, know it for sure that an idol is seating on the throne of the heart. Fleshly idols of religiosity are more difficult to detect than those in the Kalahari desert of Africa or the groves of Asia. Put it this way: whenever the saint of God loses sight of the All sufficiency of the Grace, Provisions and Care of Abba Father, the next step is to bow to an idol.

The first idol is thus self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is the driving force which makes a saint unable to let go and trust God to provide shelter, job, food, marriage partner, clothes, and education. Self-consciousness makes us want to help God because we deem Him as too slow or old fashioned! It is in the bid to make our way for ourselves that we, for instance, construct our own expectations. Clutching at these carnal ambitions, a saint begins to play God.

When a young man decides the body statistics, educational level, profession and family background of who he wants to be his marriage partner, he is manifesting this self-god. When a young lady determines that what will give her happiness is to marry a man with a particular height, dentition, colour, age bracket, doing a certain kind of job and owning a certain kind of house and cars, she has simply told God that He is inadequate as a match maker!

Translate this into ministry pursuits and the scope of this idolatrous life style becomes truly mind boggling. Many there are who are good men and women but who simply refuse to acknowledge Jesus as the owner of the work. When ministry is done according to humanistic whims – and yet boldly claim that the Holy Spirit is leading – Satan is working over time! That saints will ascribe to the Holy Spirit such pernicious activities as running ministries based on worldly wisdom and fancies of men far removed from express provisions of the Holy Writ shows that arrogance comes to church regularly, dressed to kill!

That ministers will focus on gathering crowds and expect Jesus to bless their efforts; that the driving force and motivation in many ministries is money and power shows how poorly this last generation of saints know the Book.

In ability to trust God will cause a servant of God to preach to impress and not change people. In so doing, the true purpose of ministry which is to make disciples and subsequently transform them

into able ministers of the New Testament, fit for use as vessels of honour in the Master's hand is lost.

Arrogance manifests itself when we run this race as if there was no track record or frame of reference by which we will be evaluated. Arrogance ensures when saints of God catch the bug of relativity.

That is why God issued the dramatic call to those who are His in Isaiah 51:

1 "Listen to me, all who hope for deliverance— all who seek the LORD!

Consider the rock from which you were cut, the quarry from which you were mined.

2 Yes, think about Abraham, your ancestor, and Sarah, who gave birth to your nation.

Abraham was only one man when I called him. But when I blessed him, he became a great nation."

Let us therefore consider the event and action through which the man Abraham secured the badge of honour as father of the faithful. Saints, the way God walked with Abraham and deemed him a friend to whom He could commit deep mysteries of life then and through the ages is the basic minimum He expects from those of us who are begotten by the Blood of the Lamb, even the Word of God that is Jesus.

We will see from this account – in Genesis 22 verses 8, 14, the kind of revelation of God as Jehovah Jireh which should fill our consciousness. Where are you in the journey of life? What are the needs of your life? Can you look at the mountains of challenges and needs in the face and assert, with full confidence, that God will provide?

Genesis 22(New Living Translation)

Abraham's Faith Tested

1 Some time later, God tested Abraham's faith. "Abraham!" God called.

"Yes," he replied. "Here I am."

2 "Take your son, your only son—yes, Isaac, whom you love so much—and go to the land of Moriah. Go and sacrifice him as a burnt offering on one of the mountains, which I will show you."

3 The next morning Abraham got up early. He saddled his donkey and took two of his servants with him, along with his son, Isaac. Then he chopped wood for a fire for a burnt offering and set out for the place God had told him about. 4 On the third day of their journey, Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. 5 "Stay here with the donkey," Abraham told the servants. "The boy and I will travel a little farther. We will worship there, and then we will come right back."

6 So Abraham placed the wood for the burnt offering on Isaac's shoulders, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them walked on together, 7 Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?"

"Yes, my son?" Abraham replied.

"We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?"

8 "God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering, my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together.

9 When they arrived at the place where God had told him to go, Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood on it. Then he tied his son, Isaac, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood.

10 And Abraham picked up the knife to kill his son as a sacrifice. 11 At that moment the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, “Abraham! Abraham!”

“Yes,” Abraham replied. “Here I am!”

12 “Don’t lay a hand on the boy!” the angel said. “Do not hurt him in any way, for now I know that you truly fear God. You have not withheld from me even your son, your only son.”

13 Then Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught by its horns in a thicket. So he took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering in place of his son. 14 Abraham named the place Yahweh-Yireh (which means “the LORD will provide”). To this day, people still use that name as a proverb: “On the mountain of the LORD it will be provided.”

15 Then the angel of the LORD called again to Abraham from heaven. 16 “This is what the LORD says: Because you have obeyed me and have not withheld even your son, your only son, I swear by my own name that 17 I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. 18 And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed—all because you have obeyed me.”

Irrefutable Truths about This very God

In continuation of our discourse on Jehovah Jireh, let us today focus intensely on some irrefutable truths about this very God we speak of. If what we share seems elementary, please bear with us because there is virtue in simplicity!

Truth No.1: He created and owns everything.

It may sound trite, but please chuck out every religiosity and grasp the bare truth that the God you have to do with is the Possessor of Heaven and earth! Let your mind and heart be filled with this consciousness that He created all things by the exercise of His will, declaration of His tongue and in the case of mankind, by the exercise of His own craftsmanship! See Genesis 1: 1 – 31; Genesis 2:4 – 9. Abraham, father of the faithful had an awesome revelation of God as Creator and Possessor of Heaven and earth when he was still Abram.

Armed with this knowledge, Abram went to war with only three hundred and eighteen of his own trained servants to successfully rescue his nephew, Lot, from the hands of the marauding kings. When the King of Sodom suggested that he retained the spoils of battle, the one who knew the God he served, even Abram said in Genesis 14 verses 22 – 23 “I have raised my hand to the Lord, God Most High, the Possessor of heaven and earth, that I will take nothing, from a thread to a sandal strap, and that I will not take anything that is yours, lest you should say, “I have made Abram rich”. The confidence that Abram had in God as his sole source affected his attitude to everything.

That the Lord Himself wants us to walk with this same consciousness can be gleaned from the words of Melchizedek, King of Salem in his epic encounter with Abram when he was returning from that same battle in Genesis 14: 18 - 20. The personality who Hebrews 7: 1-4 revealed as a case of one of the Theophanies or physical revelations of God intoned in Genesis 14:19 “Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth”. May we, saints of the Last Days, catch this same revelation that the God we serve, even the One who invites and qualifies us to call Him Abba is loaded!

If we know, in our inward parts, that truly He created and owns all things, we cannot esteem His blessings more than Himself. We cannot behave like orphans abandoned to our own devices by an unfeeling, impersonal and uncaring God. We will rather face our tomorrows with great confidence; our prayer lives will shift from the “give me” whining and complaints to a life which rests in Him. Our prayer lives will change dramatically as we come to Him on the basis of a secure relationship as our heavenly Father! This was the point Jesus was making when He was teaching us the way to pray effectively with the pattern in Matthew 6:9-15. Note that prefacing His model is the relational phrase “Our Father in heaven”.

Truth No. 2: All wealth on earth belongs to Him and He dispenses to whosoever He wills

This again is a fact we must grasp and cling to. Whether you are broke, struggling or just scrapping by does not and cannot change this reality. He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. All good and perfect things belong to Him and are released by Him.

The truth is that God has a will. His will is inviolable, a reality that we humans inherited. The difference between our will and His, however, is that the will of Jehovah Jireh is not subject to any external situation or circumstance.

Translated to real life, God cannot be intimidated or coerced. Tears cannot do it neither the multitude of words spoken in prayer. This seems a tough one to say but the truth is that prayer does not change the will of God! Prayer is meant to mid-wive the will of God, not control it! That is why the best prayer warrior is the one who sets out first to know the will of God and then proceed to ask according to that revealed will! 1 John 5:14, 15. This is the grand secret of true prayer which has eluded many good but ignorant saints who have been fed the noxious doctrine that prayer can fetch them ANYTHING THEY IMAGINE AND WANT. This is simply untrue!

The will of God, however, is not grievous, neither is it obscure or hidden. God is a benevolent Being and His will is explicitly stated, in broad terms in the Holy Scriptures! Those who are serious about knowing His will need not go far to the religious cities of Jerusalem or Rome or anywhere else for that matter to seek it out. His will can be found in the living pages of the living bible! If you know His Word, you will know His will! Asking anything outside of His word is to tempt the Lord our God! Deuteronomy 17:19; Isaiah 8:20; John 5:39; Acts 17:11

Beyond the living Word is the reality that each of us is a living temple of the Holy Spirit of God where He who Created heaven and earth resides. 1 Corinthians 6:19. If only we can slow down from our fast paced activities; if only we can make it a priority to wait on Him; if only we deem it absolutely necessary to hear and know the will of God before proceeding to ask anything from Him or to put a step forward on anything or project, there is no doubt that we will hear clearly from God!

His sheep is ordained to hear His voice and to have the capacity to avoid the snares of “other voices” or the voice of the enemy. John 10:27. The grand secret of how to worship God in spirit and in truth is to allow the Holy Spirit to develop a deep bond of relationship between us and Jesus so much so that we dare not think outside the scope of what He allows.

Truth No. 3. God releases His blessing to all of His creation, regardless of proximity!

This sounds strange but is very true! All of the creations of God receive of His charitable heart. Yes, even unbelievers and agnostics receive good things from Him. Jesus puts it this way in Matthew 5:45 "...for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good", and sends rain on the just and the unjust".

This aspect of Jehovah Jireh riles religious people to no end. The religious spirit would expect God to bless those who call on His name and punish those who do not. Unfortunately, this is not so. A classic example of the graciousness of God and His willingness to bless all, irrespective of their personal devotion to Him is found in the way He blessed Ishmael and his off springs with stupendous wealth following the plaintive cries of Hagar. Till today, descendants of Ishmael are still enjoying the quantum of wealth released to them by Jehovah Jireh, even though they reject Him and His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ! Genesis 16: 1-16; Genesis 21: 8-20. Not many people have also considered the depth and breadth of the compassion of God even on Cain, the first murderer on earth who was clearly an outlaw. Genesis 4: 1 – 15.

The goodness of God ought to lead its recipients to repentance. When they do not respond positively, His goodness stands as a witness against them on the last day!

To ask God to bless you and withhold His goodness from any other creature of His, no matter what you think they did to you is to come to equity with unclean hands! Purveyors of so called "dangerous prayers" must beware for the Lord whom we have to do with is not a boy that we can order around! The God of the whole universe is not a bouncer we can retain to do the dirty job of dealing with our real or imagined "enemies"! He could well decide to bless them, in spite of our angry prayers!

Irrefutable Truths about This God (2)

Stop Press: Just a few places exist for saints who are led to be part of Open Gates 2011 January 7-9 in London, England! It's a unique convocation where Body Ministry –saints releasing what God put in them and receiving what He put in others feature strongly. Come and receive a sneak peek into the days ahead, be refreshed spiritually and interact/network with saints of like precious faith from various regions of the world – Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia and Oceania. If you believe Matthew 24:14 and Acts 1:8 calls us to take the gospel to every nation on earth and make disciples, this is where to be and start a critical year in the annals of history! Send an expression of interest to imfcoordinator@yahoo.com

Truth No. 4: While hard work is good, it is not the best way to receive from Him!

Hardwork is certainly good. It is the ethical way to be blessed. Sweat through any mountain and it will give way. Put your biceps against any challenge and it will be moved. After expending strength, sweat and grit, you will be rewarded with the prize of success! This model of getting blessed has ample support in the Holy Writ. It was the order God Himself instituted after the fall of man! In Genesis 3:17 – 19, God pronounced this verdict on mankind, following the repudiation of His original plan that Adam and Eve would simply live by His Grace: "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you. And you shall eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread

till you return to the ground. For out of it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you shall return”

Running through the book of Proverbs are various passages which extol diligence and hardwork. Those who are diligent will stand before princes and kings, not mean men!

Beyond hard work, there is another surer route to the top. It is the way of “favour”. The way of favour is paved by grace or the un merited goodness of God. Favour gives you what you are unqualified for; Favour takes you beyond your natural capacity; Favour causes men to give you a job or rise first before even asking for your credentials. Favour is what we need saints to tap into the best that Jehovah Jireh has to offer!

The favoured one has no business investing time, effort and money on cosmetics in order to locate your Adam. Adam will come even from the ends of the earth to find you! The one clothed with favour will scale walls and run through the proverbial troop, without a scratch!

Favour is the portion of the redeemed of the Lord. In Galatians 3:13, 14, the Word states that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law so that we will walk in the realm of the covenant blessings Abraham enjoyed with God stated in Genesis 12:3 and Genesis 22:18. The Seed God spoke of in both Genesis 3:15 and Genesis 22:18 is Jesus Christ. Colossians 2:14 asserts boldly that on the Cross, He wiped away every ordinance which was contrary to us and against us!

If you have never walked in favour before, it is not God’s fault. Ignorance of your covenant right in God is one of the things which will make a saint to suffer needlessly in the area of the body and finances, though the spirit and soul will be saved for eternity! Hosea 4:6. Jehovah Jireh is waiting to clothe you with favour! Are you ready for this new breath of fresh air, a season when you will find favour with God and human beings? Firstly walk in understanding of who you are in Christ and who He is in you. Secondly, go out of your way to show mercy to people – even those who do not deserve it! Proverbs 3: 1-4 Thirdly, begin to also bless the poor for in so doing, you are lending to God who will repay you! Proverbs 19:17; Psalm 41: 1-3.

Truth No. 5: The best place to meet Jehovah Jireh is on the Mercy Seat rather than in the Ark!

Many good Christians fail on one stumbling stone: they are fond of looking for Jehovah Jireh inside the Ark! The Ark of the Covenant which God asked Moses to build was an exceptional piece of divine furniture. Let us get a picture of this precious asset in Exodus 25: 10 – 22 and Exodus 37: 1 - 9. The Ark was made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold, showing that it was not the ultimate place. Inside the Ark, Moses was to place the Testimony or Word of God and Aaron’s rod which budded. To cover the Ark was the Mercy Seat made of pure gold with the two cherubs, also made of pure gold. God did not offer to meet Moses and the High Priests inside the Ark but on the Mercy Seat! (Exodus 25: 21, 22). Let us break this down to glean some timeless truths about how Jehovah Jireh deals with sons of men.

- The mercy of God is higher than His judgements. As James 2:13 puts it, Mercy rejoices against Judgement! Saints, on our own basis, none of us is pure before God. It is His gift of righteousness that we wear like a robe which makes us right in His sight! We should never lose sight of the fact

that we came into the Kingdom on the basis of His unmerited favour and are sustained by same. When needs come our way, let us also learn to approach the Throne of Grace, even the ultimate Mercy Seat with humility, counting on His compassion and caring heart.

It is significant that the place from where God rules the universe is called “The Mercy Seat”. That is where we are urged to come boldly to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need! Hebrews 4:14-16. Let us not forget the spiritual dictum in Romans 9: 15: “I will have mercy on whoever I wish to have mercy and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion”. God also states explicitly in Romans 9:16: “So then, it is not of Him who wills or who runs, but of God who shows mercy!” Understanding and walking in this truth will redefine the attitude of saints to the various quests of this present life.

Is it not this God who picks people like Joseph from the dungeon and installs them in palaces of Kings? Is He not the one who picked the ruddy faced, clearly unqualified youth (in the eyes of parents and siblings), David, out of the backside of the wilderness to become King of Israel? What of the unqualified Moses? The tempestuous Peter? The murderous Saul who was to, as Paul, become the most outstanding vessel in pushing the cause of the very gospel He despised? When all else seem to have failed; when you do not seem to have the right credentials or connections for that job, marriage or business, why not celebrate your emptiness so that Jehovah Jireh can fill you up with His own glory which settles everything?

- To approach God out of a sense of entitlement because we kept away from certain sins that loom large in the mind of saints is to be legalistic with God. This is why many “good” Christians who pray well seem to struggle with receiving blessings from God! Saints, let us cease to be legalistic with God for by the deed of the law no one can be justified! Let us chuck the spirit of religion in the bin and hold God in the reverence and love that is His due. Legalism does not hold water with Him!

Truth No. 6: Jehovah Jireh has committed Himself to those who will pray in faith!

Saints, what we want to share here may seem paradoxical to one of the issues we discussed in No. 2 that prayer cannot change the express will of God. Paradox is the way of Jehovah Jireh! Who has known His mind to be His counsellor? In His own word, God states that He gave this very piece of real estate called planet earth to man as an inheritance! Genesis 2:15 Psalm 115:16. For that reason, God, who exalts His Word above His own name, has a track record of doing things on earth in partnership with mankind! This is one of the reasons why God had to be incarnated as a human for the sake of redeeming mankind!

Saints, that is why God looks out for praying men and people who trust Him. He gives such people a sneak peek into what lies ahead and recruits them to mid-wife that which He had purposed! Ezekiel 22:30. In Genesis 18, we see a demonstration of this divine principle. In verse 16 -19, God mused about Abraham as a reliable vessel and faithful companion on earth. In verse 20-21, God informed His friend that the cup of Sodom and Gomorrah was full. God knew there was a righteous man, Lot, within the city walls and certainly had no intention of destroying him with the wicked. However, God wanted us to see why intercession is necessary as a midwife of His will. In verses 23 – 32, Abraham went into earnest intercession. Ultimately, Lot and his

family were delivered. Genesis 19: 1-25; 2 Peter 2:6-9

Let a holy company of men and women of faith and prayer arise in these last days to pave the way for the King of Kings and Lord of Lords to do what He has already purposed to do, according to the good pleasure of His will! Let us intercede that God shall be revealed to the elect remnant as Jehovah Jireh so that they stop fretting and trust Him for all their needs and be thus delivered from the entrapments of the world around! 1 John 2:15-17; 2 Cor. 6:14-18. Let us also intercede that as many as are ordained for salvation shall connect to His grace and mercy.

Truth No. 7: 6 Kinds of People Jehovah Jireh wants to empower!

Jehovah Jireh needs extended hands through which He manifests His Kingdom authority and sufficiency in the now on earth!

This thought certainly sounds out of this world and it truly is! The God who sits on the Throne of Majesty is looking for human vessels on earth through which He will manifest His person and nature. On the other hand, He is looking for vessels through who He demonstrates the sufficiency of His Kingdom as a tangible entity in itself! The Kingdom of God is real but in this present time, it is manifested through individuals who wilfully respond to the invitation of the King of Kings Luke 17:21. In this present life, though such citizens of the Kingdom live with others who are not part of it, their source of sustenance is their King, not their jobs, businesses or other mundane activities of life.

Citizens of the Kingdom are called not to love this world but to be separate from it according to 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, 1 John 2:15-17. That we are a Kingdom separate from the world around us is sealed by this revelation in 1 John 5:19: “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one”

The Lord is serious about this search because the days of dropping manna or quails from the sky ended with the wilderness experience of Israel. We are in a dispensation when God has purposed to work through human vessels to deliver His personality and goodness. Those human vessels are, essentially ambassadors of His Kingdom who need to demonstrate its self sufficiency.

Ambassadors depend on their home countries and its leader, not their hosts for sustenance. We are a “sent people” and He who sent us has all it takes to sustain us and decorate our lives to manifest His glory! John 15:16; John 17:9, -18, 20; Acts 1:8.

Let us remind ourselves what was shared in Truth No.6: “In His own word, God states that He gave this very piece of real estate called planet earth to man as an inheritance! Genesis 2:15 Psalm 115:16. For that reason, God, who exalts His Word above His own name, has a track record of doing things on earth in partnership with mankind!”

Today, we shall examine six profiles of the kind of saints God is actively looking for to supernaturally empower as vessels of manifesting His personality and His Kingdom Wealth.

When the Lord finds such people, He uses them as channels of distributing His largesse to the less fortunate both in the House hold of faith and in the society so that none of His creation will suffer lack.

• 1. He looks for saints who love Him above all else

There is one rule of God which has not and will never change on this side of eternity. That rule is that His children will be known by a supreme love for Him above all else, including their own

lives and the blessings He releases to them. This supreme love translates into willing obedience of His Word and submission to His will. In the days before the flood, God found this attitude in Noah and preserved him and his family alone. Genesis 6: 1- 8. In the days of Abraham, God found this in him, though the man lived amongst people of extreme idolatry. God separated him from his roots to start a peculiar ethnic group. Genesis 12: 1- 4; Genesis 17:1-4. When God found it necessary to give the Law to Israel, the very first commandments articulated in Exodus 20: 1 – 7 focused on loving God supremely. Jesus was to echo this principle in answer to the question of the Scribe who inquired on what is the great commandment in the Law in Matthew 22:35-37. In laying out the ground rule of the Kingdom He came to inaugurate, Jesus made it clear that anyone who sought to enter therein must willingly deny his or her soul pre-eminence so that He alone would be enthroned as Lord. Matthew 16:24 – 26. Love of God is thus possible only when the self-life of the soul is willingly surrendered to be crucified!

• **2. He looks for saints who genuinely love all kinds of people**

Love of God must translate into love of human beings. True love is unconditional and we must press into this realm! Jesus summed up the second great commandment as “Thou shall love thy neighbour as thyself” Matthew 22:39. For good measure, Jesus proclaimed in verse 40 that “On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets”. One deficiency of modern day denominationalism is that saints can love those who fellowship with them in the same local congregation or who are under the same label but hate or despise those of different persuasions. Love of saints must be without precondition John 13:34, 35; John 15:12. He who loves God, says, John, the apostle of love, must love the brethren too. 1 John 3:10 – 23; 1 John 4:7-17,20,21

• **3. He looks for saints who seeks first His Kingdom above all else**

The Kingdom of God is the realm of life under the exclusive primary rule or authority of God. God is looking for people who will make it the very core of their life and pursuits on earth to advance the cause of the King; expand His Dominion amongst men by proclaiming the good news of eternal life for as many as will embrace the saving grace in Christ Jesus; Live daily by the provisions of His Word which is the Constitution of the Kingdom and consciously walk as His Ambassadors to their generation and community. The lifestyle of the Kingdom in them distinguishes them from other people in their neighborhoods and workplaces/businesses. When the Lord finds those who walk in the four dimensions of the Kingdom, He takes it upon Himself to be their source and to provide for all their needs. This is the import of the words in Matthew Chapter 6. In verses 9 and 10, Jesus made it clear that considerations of the Kingdom should precede our need for bread and butter. The reason, as Romans 14:17-19 states is that the Kingdom of God is not about what to eat, drink or wear but essentially a lifestyle or culture of being clothed with the righteousness of God; living in His Peace which passes all understanding and being joyful because we know that all things work together for our good, even those that seem adverse at the moment! Romans 8:28.

In the same Matthew 6, we see that from verse 25 – 34, God has ordained that as Kingdom citizens focus on their primary assignment of living out, representing and proclaiming the Kingdom of God, they will be provided for by their King and even decorated with all the things that people around them strive for. What an exceptional deal which calls us to abandon arm of the flesh and rely on Jehovah Jireh to provide all our needs?

• **4. He looks for those filled with the spirit of compassion on the poor**

God desires to provide for the needs of His own children as well as all His creatures. He is in heaven and we are on earth. We are His Ambassadors on earth through which He fulfills all His good pleasure. If we allow ourselves to demonstrate His heart which is compassionate and full of tender mercy, the needs of other people – both in the household of faith and in the society will touch us deeply. We cannot see a need in the life of a brother or sister and be insensitive, if we truly are filled with the Holy Spirit and have the mind of Christ. This tendency to see the need of brethren as our need and empathizing with them in their troubles was a core hallmark of the early Church. The Lord was well pleased with them and consequently showed up big time among them in signs, wonders and in manifesting His glory upon them. Acts 2: 41 – 47; Acts 4:32-37. In Psalm 41:1-3, God says those who consider the poor are blessed of Him. In Proverbs 19:17, it is written: “He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord and He will pay back what he has given”. James 2:14-16 decried so called faith without corresponding work of mercy. 1 John 3:16 – 23 emphasizes this principle.

• **5. He looks for those who will regard themselves as stewards of His Providence**

The Lord is also actively looking for those who will not seek wealth for its own sake or as a means to fulfil their lusts of the things of this world. Those who love money in this way will sin against God. 1 Timothy 6: 6-10. Money is not to be idolized or served. Money is rather meant to be a servant of the purpose of God for the redeemed. Those who will use money as a servant are those who realize that God is the source and giver while they are mere stewards of His grace! To the rich, God charges in 1 Timothy 6:17 – 19 that wealth can actually be deployed effectively to do good on earth which will amount to a good foundation for the eternal phase of the Kingdom.

• **6. He looks for saints who will believe His word and trust Him to fulfil them**

God is trustworthy and faithful at all times! He is Covenant keeping God. Those who come into Covenant with Him are always assured that He will fulfil His part. When He entered into a Covenant with Abraham, God manifested Himself to the man who became the father of the faithful as Jehovah Jireh, the Great Provider! With the children of Israel, God told them that He is the Only Source and gives them power to get wealth. In effect, covenant people do not get wealthy by struggle but by receiving what the Lord has packaged for them!

Deuteronomy 8:18. A study of the whole of Deuteronomy chapter 8 is needful to understand the context of Jehovah Jireh to the nation of Israel. If He did it for them under the old Covenant, how much more shall the Lord do it for us of the New Covenant which is founded on better promises? In Matthew 7: 7 – 11, Jesus guarantees that the needs of citizens of His Kingdom will be met, if they trust God and release their faith in prayer. That is why the Lord said that we should never be anxious or worried concerning material needs! Matthew 6: 25 – 34.

Two extremes have defined attitude to money in the household of faith. As we now proceed from looking at Jehovah Jireh, our God who provides to discuss the issue of Finance and stewardship, in His House, it may be necessary to outline in detail, some of the features of those two extreme positions and their impact on saints.

The Holiness Movement

The first negative attitude is that of scorn and disdain for money championed largely by the Holiness Movement. The Holiness Movement tried to help God by inserting words He never put in the Holy Writ. Where 1 Timothy 6:10 says “The love of money is the root of all evil”, the Holiness Movement made it out through various preaching and teachings that money in itself is evil. So saints were scared of money in itself and thought that the best way to show practical holiness was to live in and celebrate lack!

Poverty was thus given free rein to the point of developing a tap root of systemic lack which has plagued generations of saints till today, even though they had sound testimonies of genuine salvation. The evidence of this state of affairs is the large army of begging saints on various social media – using all kinds of strategies to seek support, not for kingdom advancement, but for basic sustenance.

We all must realize that our spirit man transitions, instantaneously, on conversion from darkness to light and from death to life eternal in Christ Jesus. As we grow in grace, giving the Holy Spirit right of way, He uses the Word and circumstances of life to sanctify our souls wholly. Our physical body however is substantially prospered or not depending on our understanding and applications of the laws of holistic prosperity. If the physical body is not given the right balance of nutrients, exercise and rest, it will decay or crumble. If we put a yoke that God did not give us on the physical body, it will snap and the spirit and soul can be negatively affected. Undue poverty can therefore rank equally with ingestion of liquor, cigarette, drugs and other harmful substances and immorality, as abuse of the BODY which happens to be the Temple of the Holy Spirit! Our body was bought with a great price by the precious blood of Jesus Christ and so we must ensure that it is not misused or overstressed by, among other things, poverty which is not a virtue in itself! 1 Corinthians 6:18-20.

The Prosperity Movement

On the other hand is near idolization of money by the Prosperity Movement. The mantra of this group is another addition to the essence and meaning of scripture. The favourite text is taken from Ecclesiastes 10:19: “Money answers all things”. So saints set out to acquire the capacity to answer all things and “finance the gospel programme”. They deem God as inadequate and an old senile fellow who needs help!

The outcome is inadequate spiritual preparation before seeking wealth leading to massive backsliding, handling the word of God deceitfully for private gain and generally affirming the truth of what the Holy Spirit enthused through the mouth of Paul of Tarsus in Philippians 3:17-19: “Brethren, join me in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. For many walk, of which I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame – who set their mind on earthly things”. Speaking further, the Holy Spirit used Paul to state emphatically in verses 20, 21: “For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself”.

Personal Consecration

There may be some people who God will test their hearts by asking them to give up wealth or pursuit of wealth so that He can be their self sufficiency. That is what is called personal consecration. Personal consecration of a vessel should not be turned into a doctrine. Otherwise a good deed done as unto the Lord may become an instrument of error and satanic deceit! In the year 1997, God effectively and suddenly made my wife and I millionaires! We did not look for the wealth neither did we covet it. But because God had ordained it , wealth literally came looking for us as we sought first His Kingdom and focussed intensely in the will of God and His assignment for our lives!

When that wealth came, the Lord tugged at our heart to test whether we could release it joyfully and without struggle! By His grace we passed the test. We released it and He became our Jehovah Jireh, meeting us at the point of need in a literal sense. The Lord then took us into another paradigm that we consider greater than accumulation of money: Jehovah Jireh provides the ALLOCATION for every ASSIGNMENT, right on time!

Since then, we have gone forth into every assignment from Him with that same confidence, knowing assuredly that He Himself has already made provisions and decided before hand the vessels He will use to meet the needs. We therefore do not fret over money neither do we give it any room to put us under pressure. As a matter of fact, non availability of specific funds for any assignment has been to us an ultimate sign that we are running ahead of God or trying to do His spiritual work in the flesh! Without fail, God has provided everything needed for every level of the assignment He has placed in our hand concerning mobilizing and networking the remnant; teaching to disciple the saints; training, equipping, activating and releasing labourers into the vineyard.

This was a personal consecration so we did not turn our experience into a doctrine. We recognize there will be brethren God has assigned to be mighty Kingdom entrepreneurs operating with the economic wisdom of Joseph to turn around dead corporations, communities and nations. We know there will be vessels God will empower to run Kingdom venture capital corporations which will advance seed funds to extremely talented and gifted saints who have great wealth building ideas but no start up funds. There will be saints who will operate in the spirit of Daniel and serve God in high political offices. These are not going to get into office through contentious political jockeying which overheats their national political landscapes!

The God of heaven will literally lift them from where they are to where He has assigned them through the same kind of favour and grace which was evident in Joseph, David, Daniel, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel and others too numerous to list here. With this scriptural approach, we can discuss money in the atmosphere of holy reverence for God and complete rest in His providence as Jehovah Jireh. We will stay true to the spirit and letters of the Word as we share what the Lord will download this week. Pray for us to receive all that God has for His saints and to faithfully share same, without interference from the soulish realm or Satan. Bind all distractions of all sorts, amen! Matthew 18:19; Ephesians 6:18,19; 2 Thessalonians 3: 1-3.

Having laid the foundation, let us now break down this life application course. The Global School of Ministry Course 125 will cover some core issues. The course examines the place of money in God's house. Avoiding the outlandish claims of the prosperity gospel, this course presents a biblical perspective of the role of money in the church and how God finances His own assignments as a matter of obligation, choosing whom it pleases Him to use as vessel.

We will thus answer these critical questions:

- What is money?
- How useful is money in establishing and expanding the Kingdom?
- How are finances of the Kingdom generated?
- What are tithes, offerings, covenant seed?
- Can some offerings and fund raisings honour and dishonour God?
- Who should handle finances in the household of faith?
- When mammon seats on the High Altar: signs that something has gone wrong.
- Should you continue to "sow" into a ministry whose practices and lifestyle dishonour the name and integrity of our Lord Jesus Christ?

What is Money?

Simply put, Money is a means of exchange. By this we mean the way the world is organized, monetary value is put on many of the things that are done to sustain life on earth. When somebody goes to work, value is placed on the education, experience, skills and time the individual expends in the work place. That value translates into wages or salary paid at the end of the week, fortnight or month. In the same vein, an individual may have a creative idea and translates it into a work of art. When people who need that product place a particular value thereon it translates into how much they are willing to pay to possess it. Using the same analogy, when a person has a business idea to meet a particular need or add value to what people receive from other businesses, the price tag that is placed on what they have done becomes their compensation. When the sum total of their gross sales exceeds the investments they made to develop and market the product or service, the difference is called return on investment or profit.

Money therefore is the modern way to pay for a skill, business idea, service or product. From a Kingdom perspective, this is where the problem lies. Many people including well meaning saints tend to focus their attention on the particular channel through which money comes into their hand as the source of the money. Once this notion takes root in the mind, corruption occurs immediately and in the eyes of God, the person is engaged in idolatry.

The activity through which money comes is not the source of the money. It is a mere channel! There could be various channels through which money comes into the hand of a child of God. However, there should be no doubt or equivocation as to the source of money. Money is a gift from God. Jehovah Jireh is the One who alone provides all things, including money, for His saints to meet their needs and those of others! Deuteronomy chapters 8 and 28:1-4 are beautiful scriptures which reveal the covenant commitment of God to provide for His own. In Deuteronomy 8:18, we learn that it is God who gives His people power to get wealth which is used to establish His covenant with His people.

How useful is money in establishing and expanding the Kingdom of God?

The Kingdom of God is the realm of life which is subject to His authority. It is the totality of saints who have not only accepted Jesus as Saviour but have wholly submitted to Him as Lord in spirit and in truth. The word Kingdom is a combination of two concepts. In a Kingdom, there is a KING or supreme ruler who exercises authority over a group of people and territory known as His DOMINION or DOMAIN. The Kingdom is ruled or governed by a CONSTITUTION of written rules or unwritten conventions. Every Kingdom relates with other kingdoms through AMBASSADORS who are personal envoys or representatives of the KING.

Translated to the present phase of the Kingdom of God, Jesus is the King of the Kingdom, a role that was sealed by His incarnation, passion, death, resurrection and ascension to heaven. Right now, the Kingdom of God is lodged in the hearts of saints who have received Jesus both as Saviour and as Lord. Luke 17:21. These saints live another worldly life because though they are physically citizens of nations where they were born or live, in reality, the Supreme King they know is no other than Jesus. His opinion determines all they do: from the lifestyle He prescribes to the spouse they marry, how many children to bear; course to study in school; business to engage in or job to do. His opinion affects their tastes, what they purchase and how they spend the money He gives them through the channel He chooses to use to make the provision. John 17:6, 9-11, 14-16, 20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-16; 1 John 2:15-17.

At this present life, the Kingdom of God is manifested in our lifestyles, attitudes and commitment to its expansion to enfold more of our natural brothers and sisters, relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbours and others whose path cross with us but have not yet known Jesus as Saviour and Lord and who essentially are lying under the influence of the Prince of the Power of the air. They may be very powerful politicians, affluent, well-educated and even famous sports people, actors, actresses and icons of society. By the influence of Satan who blinds hearts, they are unable to see the Kingdom of God and therefore cannot enter into it. 1 John 5:19, 20; 2 Corinthians 5:9-21.

It will take our total yieldedness and determined release of our entire beings to He who is the ruling King of our hearts before He can use us to bring His glorious light to shine into the hearts of such people. To reach them will therefore will take all resources which money can acquire. The word says by prosperity is the Kingdom of God spread abroad. It must be noted that when tax collectors asked Jesus to pay up, He who is Lord of all did not remonstrate with them. He did not call forth money from heaven. What He did was to direct Peter to go fishing, catch a particular fish which had the exact amount of money needed to solve the present problem Matthew 17: 24 - 27. This offers real food for thought that needs to be mulled over.

Jesus was showing a core principle of the Kingdom in this present life: money will be needed to solve problems. Just as Peter did not do anything until Jesus gave specific directions, we also learn that there is a DIVINE ALLOCATION for every ASSIGNMENT. Furthermore, we understand that the direction of God will lead us to discover His ALLOCATION that is needed to solve any problem we meet in life and ministry. May we learn and practice this principle, always! Even as you study, pause for a moment and let the Holy Spirit reveal to you the particular fish which has the particular sum of money you need to meet the need that is before you. Only believe!

When God showed the pattern of the Tabernacle and its divine furniture to His servant Moses, He also elected other vessels, namely Bezalel and Aholiab to be the recipients of the gifting and skills required to construct the structures Exodus 31: 1-11. The professional skills and capacity to build the sensitive furniture without charging fees became their own contribution towards the most significant project of their time.

God does not want any of His children to covet the prosperity of the unrighteous! This principle was established in Deuteronomy 23:6 and has been a consistent pattern for His saints who are called out of the world. Woe, says the Holy Writ, to those who go to Egypt for help. As Amos 5: 4-6, says, “Seek me and live, But do not seek Bethel Nor enter Gilgal, Nor pass over to Beersheba; For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, And Bethel shall come to nothing”.

Jesus will come back at the exact hour, minute and second which is sealed in the mind of the Father to put down all rebellion and establish the practical governmental and territorial phase of the Kingdom when He will rule and reign with saints triumphant who will have specific responsibilities as Councillors, Mayors of Cities, Presidents of Nations reporting to Him who is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Matthew 24:36, 44 – 51; Revelation 1: 5-7; Revelation 5:9,10.

Pray for us to receive all that God has for His saints and to faithfully share same, without interference from the soulish realm or Satan. Bind all distractions of all sorts, amen! Matthew 18:19; Ephesians 6:18,19; 2 Thessalonians 3: 1-3.

The Kingdom Laws of Money (part 1)

In this present life, there are some fixed laws concerning money. Knowing and applying them will cause them to work for you.

1. God is the true source of money and indeed all good things. True wealth flows from the Lord to His covenant people as an act of His love and grace. In providing us with money and other material things, the Lord wants His people to be blessed and balanced rather than suffer sorrow that comes from emptiness of wealth that wearies the spirit, soul and body. He it is who gives us all good things, graciously so that we can meet our needs as well as fulfil the assignments committed to our trust. All through history, God blessed and blesses the righteous so that they are able to fulfil the mandate He gave them as well as demonstrate that He is a good God. Let us examine these scriptures in depth and see what the Lord has to say: Genesis 1: 26 – 30; Genesis 2: 15 – 18; Genesis 12: 1 – 3; Genesis 22:17; Genesis 33:11; Genesis 39: 1-3; Exodus 23:25; Leviticus 26:4; Deuteronomy 28: 1 – 13; Deuteronomy 29:9; Joshua 1; 1-8; 1 Chronicles 22:13; 2 Chronicles 20:20; 2 Chronicles 26:5; 2 Chronicles 31:21; Nehemiah 2:20; Job 8:7; Job 22: 21 – 30; Psalm 1: 1-3; Psalm 103: 1-3; Psalm 112: 1-3; Proverbs 3: 13 – 16; Proverbs 8:12 – 21; Proverbs 21:20; Proverbs 28: 20; Isaiah 30: 23; Joel 2:26; Amos 9:13; Zechariah 10:1; Malachi 3:10; Matthew 6: 25 – 34; James 1:17; 3 John 2. The Lord Jesus Himself promised that those who truly give up all else to answer His call to discipleship and ministry, will be blessed a hundred fold in this present time. Matthew 19:27 – 29. Jesus never wasted words. He always meant what He said and said what He meant! Let us not attempt to devalue His words. Are you serving God

faithfully, proceed to release your faith and pray without ceasing until every promise of His, including the hundred fold blessing in this present life manifests. However, do not set your heart on the wealth as an end in itself. The Kingdom wealth He will bring into your hands is to facilitate fulfilment of every assignment He committed to your trust!

2. Our relationship with God should never be displaced or subordinated to our quest for money. If that becomes the case, the saint has backslidden to first degree idolatry. Israel was raised as a covenant nation for us to learn vital lessons of how to keep our relationship with God free of any other love. The warnings to Israel to beware of misplaced priority concerning prosperity should speak clearly to us upon whom the end of the world has come. 1 Corinthians 10:11-14; Deuteronomy 6:10-12; Deuteronomy 32:15; Hosea 4:7. Agur, the son of Jakeh, in his epic prayer to God for balance in Proverbs chapter 30 declared: “remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches – feed me with food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny you and say ‘who is the Lord?’ or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God” (verses 8, 9).

3. Money is therefore best when it is seen and deployed as a servant and instrument of destiny fulfilment.

Any time this perspective is lost, money becomes a master that should be sought at all cost, pleased, given undue attention and consequently brings leanness of soul and spiritual poverty. At this point, love of money creeps in. When money is made in this environment, it engenders pride, haughtiness and fear of loss. This can affect peace of mind and fear of losing life, losing the money or other unhealthy phobias can develop. 1 Timothy 6: 5 – 10.

4. The gifts of God should not be merchandized. Monetary value should not be allowed to stand between a sinner or saint and divine revelation or receipt of the grace and gifts of God.

This law was instituted expressly by Jesus Christ Himself and demonstrated in His earthly ministry. In Matthew 10 Jesus sent His twelve disciples on mission to preach the gospel of the Kingdom and to demonstrate the power of the Kingdom through healings, deliverance. In verse 8 He expressly commanded “freely you have received (the power to heal the sick, cleanse lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons) freely give”. Those who set aside this plain ordinance of Christ risk rejection on the last day or open themselves up for satanic manipulation. In Matthew 7: 21 – 23, Jesus warned “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness”

It is possible Jesus was speaking of this day and the absolute mess to which the Kingdom message has descended. Jesus says the principal reason why many who did and do great things in His name will be denied entry into the eternal phase of the Kingdom is that they were lawless! Ministers of the gospel who have acquired fame and popularity for preaching and teaching powerfully and doing great and mighty things in the name of Jesus may miss it because they opted to live and act according to their personal preferences and thus put themselves outside the rules of ministry that Jesus put in place. Is it not a shame that the most expensive books, CDs and DVDs in stores are

those supposedly promoting the gospel of the kingdom? Is it not scandalous that a minister will barefacedly merchandise the gift of worship and copyright songs given by the Holy Spirit for the Body?

Saints, Babylon has come to Church and sits at the very altar as the abomination of desolation! It is time to flee from the spirit of mammon which pervades crusades and other Christian meetings where fund raising has been elevated into a professional art. These days, prophetic meetings where you receive personal prophecies are even hawked and people pay tickets to attend! Across the world, people line up for hours to buy tickets to participate in prayer meetings and worship experiences!!! Who will chase out the merchants that are polluting the temple???

Saints, those who have received a revelation from the Holy Spirit for the House hold of faith can release them and trust God to bless them! Even if some value should be placed on books and songs, these values should take into consideration the poor who need them. Let us fear the Lord and not act as if ministry is a happy go lucky institution where anyone can just do anything and get away with it.

For those who place a price on their “preaching engagements” there is no doubt that they are in danger of worship at the altar of Mammon! Any preacher who charges a fee for his or her services is in error. If such people do not repent and make restitution while alive, they may discover, rather too late that they have deceived themselves!

The foregoing however is not license for saints to invite preachers, use their reputations and anointing to make money or add converts and then treat them shabbily! Jesus Himself, in the same Matthew 10 where we read said clearly that a labourer is worthy of His hire. That is why the Lord charged His disciples to travel light and accept whatever hospitality that is offered them. If you invite a preacher, make every honest effort to treat him or her very well, for the sake of the Lord who called them! Matthew 10: 9 – 13, 40 – 42. In 1 Thessalonians 5: 12, we are urged to recognize and esteem highly, those who God uses to labour among us. In 1 Timothy 5: 17, 18, we are commanded to give double honour to leaders who labour in the word and doctrine. As the Lord uses ministers to thresh out the corn, their mouths should not be muzzled because they who live at the altar should be taken care of from the altar. Ministers have responsibilities to their families and should not be driven to despair. All who serve God should be well treated by their congregants otherwise stagnation in finances of the saints may result. 1 Timothy 5: 17, 18; 1 Corinthians 9: 7 – 14.

As those called to be His imitators, we cannot brush aside this vital aspect of His remarkable life and ministry. It was the attitude of One on assignment that drove Jesus to lay aside His glory in order to be incarnated as a human. He went on to suffer lack, homelessness, verbal abuse, physical abuse, torture, death and burial in a borrowed grave – all for our sake. His life was poured out so that salvation will be available, free of charge for all of us. It took Mary, Martha, Lazarus, the other women who deliberately provided food for Jesus and His disciples. We must follow His excellent example.

Kingdom Economics

One big shame that is upon the kingdom movement is the laziness to discover the full extent of our identity and the responsibilities God expects from us. We need to go beyond agitation-propaganda and tossing around the term “Kingdom” carelessly while living according to the dictates of the Satan controlled world economic system! The truth, pure and simple is that true saints of the Kingdom of God are those who have responded to the call of God to come out of the world system and embrace their true and full identity as citizens of His own Kingdom. John 17: 9-18; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 2: 1-13; Colossians 1: 12 – 18; Colossians 2: 13 – 15; 1 John 2: 15 – 17; 1 John 5: 19-21.

In this scenario, God is the Sovereign Ruler over His people offering them everything that pertain to life and godliness. These include righteousness; peace and security; the joy of connecting with and to Him and His own type of prosperity, based on His own kind of economic system, amongst others. Romans 14: 17-19; 2 Peter 1:3.

In effect, though we are physically in this present world, we are not really of it. We are primarily citizens of the Kingdom of God and then citizens of the nation where He planted us as His own ambassadors! This dual citizenship is at the heart of any proper understanding of the paradox of the Kingdom of God in this present time. John 17: 15,16.

The Jews are a typical example of a people who understand dual citizenship. It does not matter where a Jew finds him or herself on planet earth, it is branded deep down in the psyche that one is first and foremost, a Jew with a non negotiable commitment to the peace of Jerusalem and well being of Israel. Flowing from that consciousness, the Jew literally works under the weight of the burden to be a sent one from God to the gentile nation where he or she is planted. The Jew realizes, even as a youth, that to excel in his/her business, profession and contribute to the advancement of civilization will only bring empowerment which will ultimately be passed on as goodwill and blessings for Israel and other Jews. This unwritten law in the heart of all true Jews was branded in them by God through the years. This is why Jewish communities are tightly knit till today.

Having said that, we must now address the fact that every Kingdom has a policy towards economic activities and instruments, including money. The monetary policies of nations and groups of nations vary. The Federal Reserve of America pursues a monetary policy which is opposite that of China. Even among allies such as the United States and United Kingdom, their monetary policies at this present time are worlds apart largely because the various governments at The White House and No. 10 Downing Street are pursuing opposite economic policies.

Jesus Himself pointedly drove home this notion of a disconnect between the world and His Kingdom in terms of goals, policies and styles on a number of occasion. In the case of payment of Temple Tax, Jesus asked Peter a question on how the kings of the earth set out their tax policies Matthew 17:24, 25. In Matthew 20: 20 – 28, Jesus took exception at the worldly concept of leadership which manifested in the way the sons of Zebedee and their mother lobbied for the positions of honour in His Kingdom. He then went on to contrast the world’s concept of leadership with His own Kingdom concept.

In the world, money is idolized. In the world, money is a master so much so that the more of it you have, the more comfortable, secure, powerful and happy you are. For this reason, the world economic system encourages you to ‘go for it’. By this is meant, “get it, with all your strength and as much as you can”. In the process, human rights of people are violated. Employees are basically used to make huge profits which the entrepreneur uses to live the ‘good life’. Stripped bare of all pretensions, the world economic model is meant to empower the stronger, richer and more cunning.

This is why there has been a massive exploitation of natural resources of primitive peoples and tribes by more developed people and nations. The wealth of many countries was built by a systematic exploitation of the ignorance of tribal chiefs in Africa, Asia and the original first nations of the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Southern Africa. Till today, generations of people from the exploited tribes wallow in abject poverty while off springs of their exploiters have secure funds and assets running into billions of dollars that are programmed to last ad infinitum.

This systemic injustice has been covered by layers of ‘Christian religion’ to produce what we call western economic models. Those economic models are based on the concept of economics as the science of managing scarcity. Western economics postulates that the resources of the world are static or diminishing while the population is ever increasing. Consequently, there is a need to study the contrasts between limited supply and ever increasing demand. This ‘scarcity management model’ is what triggers off the pristine instincts of man to acquire as much as he can for self-preservation!

Kingdom economics proposes a contrary concept. Kingdom economics first recognizes that God made heaven and earth. Being an intelligent God, He provided sufficient natural resources to sustain human life until Jesus will return to rule and reign over this earth. Flowing from this postulation, Kingdom economics says that God has a specific, tailor made purpose for all His creation. However, because of the rebellion of Adam, all mankind comes into this world with an original seed of that rebellion running in their veins. Consequently, man would normally tend to what gratifies the flesh and self until he comes into a life changing acceptance of the gospel of the Kingdom.

Those who come into this life changing transition from darkness to light are now expected to accept certain imperatives concerning the economic system the King has put in place to provide and care for them in this present life, preceding when they will experience the fullness of His providence in the hereafter. These imperatives are as follows:

- The God we serve is creator, controller and owner of the entire universe. He has everything figured out and until Jesus returns, has set out how to sustain all who are called by His name.
- All saints who make God and His Kingdom a priority have a secure provision for their real needs. Matthew 6:25 – 34; 2 Peter 1:3
- God is the source of all blessings for the redeemed. He has however ordained for us to engage in specific jobs, businesses, professions, activities He already has ordained to use as channels to bless us.
- Through prayers and faith we come into understanding of the various channels of blessing ordained for us. Matthew 7: 7 – 11. In other words, a saint should never enter into any business,

profession or activity based on what he/she heard, feels or saw other people do. Doing likewise will take such a saint outside the will of God.

- There are those God has set apart as instruments of bringing in plenty who will become channels of bringing in large volume of money. Such people will understand that theirs is a divinely assigned role which they will accept with joy. 1 Timothy 6: 17 -19.
- In effect, not every saint will be rich in this present life. However, if they are saints indeed and have a contented heart, all they need for sustenance has been provided. 1 Timothy 6:6-8.
- God has enough to meet all our NEED but not enough for all our GREED!

Money can be clean or unclean.

The motive with which money is made and the process by which it is acquired can make money clean or unclean. If money is made for its own sake, to secure power over the less fortunate or to secure happiness, it is corrupted by that base motive. In the same way, money is corrupted if acquiring it involves deliberate sins against God and man such as cheating, lying, usury(lending for interests that are exploitative) or paying workers a pittance or withholding their wages just to make more profit! Psalm 15:5; Matthew 19:16 – 26; 1 Timothy 6: 5 – 10; James 5:1-6

The essential nature of Kingdom Economics

The superiority of Kingdom Economics to the worldly system can be summed up thus: It is about yielding to Jehovah Jireh to use you as an instrument of manifesting His Love and care for His saints and for humanity. Jesus explained it in one of the shortest statements He made, incidentally to Paul the apostle: “It is more blessed to give than to receive” Acts 20:35. Kingdom economics therefore is not about acquiring more money or assets but about yielding to and allowing God to use you as a channel of adding value to the lives of others. Those who are so yielded are proved first by death to self and complete submission to the will and purpose of God.

In Kingdom Economics therefore profit is not the primary motive of enterprise. It is to add value to people, dress the earth and keep it (Genesis 2:15). It is about being subject to God as an instrument through which He causes things to be preserved from the corruption of poverty and abject lack. It is this kind of consecration which excites Jesus! Whenever He finds vessel that have died to self and are willing to trust Him completely and allow themselves to be channels of blessing others, God commits all of His good pleasure, favour and treasures to them! There are no limits to the degree of blessings and success that can be committed to them. Those who are proved in the realm of consecration can be trusted to handle wealth without backsliding! This is why being in the Market Place is a rare privilege. All those who allowed God to use them in the market place had this distinguishing mark: all of their being and lives were poured out like a drink offering to the Lord. He empowered and used them to fulfil His divine purpose. Such was the case with Joseph, Joshua, Daniel, Esther, Nehemiah, Zerubbabel and a host of witnesses who God used in the public space.

That a Christian runs a business or is a professional does not make that person a market place minister. It is only those who embrace the divine concept of Kingdom economics that can refer themselves as Market Place Ministers on assignment for the King of Kings where He has planted them!

One final word on this section is necessary. Jesus never used anyone in the ministry who was not first proved at the place of Kingdom Economics. He always required those who made it into His circle of influence to renounce the worldly perspective of self sustenance and come to a place of absolute trust in God. The innermost three – Peter, James and John passed the test when they left all and cast their lot with Jesus – in life or in death. The other 9 who made up the 12 with them did likewise (save Judas Iscariot of course). The 120 who followed Jesus for 40 days after His resurrection and an extra 10 days after the Ascension in the Upper Room for the baptism of the Holy Spirit all passed the benchmark!

Those who want to live for Jesus in this day and age must accept that His Words are dependable. From this stand point, they do not struggle with receiving His yoke joyfully. Matthew 11:28-30. This root of Kingdom economics has not changed and will not change!

Let us proceed to examine some other salient aspects of this course in a question and answer format.

• **How are finances of the Kingdom generated?**

From what has been said so far, it is God Himself who provides the finances needed to run various operations related to the present phase of His Kingdom on earth! Abraham rightly prophesied to Isaac when the lad asked him for the what would be used for the sacrifice “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for the a burnt offering”. That statement in Genesis 22:8 should be the attitude of every servant of God whether in the five fold ministry (Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor or Teacher) or in the Market Place.

It is entirely up to God to decide the channels through which He brings in the finances and the pattern of the inflow. We run into problems when we think God does not know our needs, is too slow in responding to need or that perhaps the money we need to do ministry or Kingdom business is not coming because we have not prayed or fasted enough. It is equally dangerous to think that the problem exists simply because, somehow God, did not forgive us for something we did in the past. Satan is a master at casting God in a bad light to saints under pressure.

Any time a minister does wrong, conviction, repentance and confession should not be delayed by even one minute so that Satan does not dull the spiritual senses or lay the foundation for condemnation in future. When sin is truly repented of, it is blotted out permanently and God keeps no record of it again! This is what is called justification. Maturity in Christ is evidenced in our ability to walk in the atmosphere of true liberty which comes from justification in His sight. Proverbs 28: 13; Micah 7: 18,19. This is why God wants us to trust and rest in Him, even when the going gets tough and darkness seems to hover Psalm 37: 3-7; Proverbs 3: 5,6! Paul the Apostle understood this principle and for that reason, He knew how to celebrate every kind of circumstance with the declaration of faith that “all things will work together for good”. Romans 8:28-39; Philippians 4: 4-13.

God is at liberty to decide that finances of a particular ministry will come largely from the consecrated offerings and faithful tithes of saints in business while in another ministry it could be from saints who are salary earners. It is not in the nature of God to leave His ministers on a limb, depending on human governments to provide for running His house. God can and often gives the

riches of the gentiles to His set apart ones! It is up to God to decide how He wants to do it by, for instance, giving favour with business in the environment or governmental policies like Gift Aid in the United Kingdom (Government pays Churches 28 percent of funds they generate through contributions of taxpaying congregants and visitors). Churches engaged in community outreaches like feeding programmes, shelter and after school programmes can find favour to receive grants to deliver such ambassadorial services to their host communities.

Tithes, et al

- What are tithes, offerings, covenant seed?

Tithe: Simply put, a tithe is one tenth of the earning of a saint which is exclusively given back to God as evidence of commitment to the Sovereign rule of God. A tithe, when given with the right heart and motive is simply an act of true worship!

Contrary to what many suggest that tithing is legalistic and of the Old Covenant, the truth is that tithing preceded the Law! Tithing was first introduced and approved by God about four hundred and thirty years before the Law was given. God used the man who we are told to emulate, even Abraham, the father of the faithful to institute it in Genesis 14:18 – 20. A careful observation of what transpired there is as follows:

- Melchizedek, King of Salem met Abraham on his way back from his successful battle to rescue Lot his nephew. Abraham was obviously famished and needed refreshment. Melchizedek the King of Salem took the initiative of providing for the needs of Abraham. It is important to remember that in the Book of Hebrews 7: 1-28, this same Melchizedek was clearly postulated to be more than a mere man. We are told that He was, in fact, a case of God appearing in human form or theophany! In effect, God first provided for Abraham in Mechizedek.

- Let us bear this first principle in mind: God it is who provides for His people in His office as Jehovah Jireh! As a follow up, God wants all ministers who receive tithes on His behalf to INVEST first in the lives of the saints. Give the saints good spiritual food, water them with serious prayers and affirm them into their destinies. Jesus asked Peter “FEED MY SHEEP” John 19: 15 – 17. Any minister who is not truly feeding the sheep and exercising due diligence for their well being is not qualified to receive tithes on behalf of God.

- Without any demand or prompting, Abraham gave Melchizedek a tithe of all! As we know from the life of Abraham, he loved God and was sensitive to the voice of God. Abraham saw beyond the human form of Melchizedek! He gave willingly, without any prompting. The man who Isaiah 51:1,2 says we should emulate was establishing a powerful principle here. In the first place, we too must look beyond the human vessels who preside in the House of God and see in them the God who called them! In Revelation chapters 1, 2, 3, Jesus referred to the Pastors of churches in Asia Minor as “angels”. In Revelation 1: 12 – 20, we see another mystery: Jesus walks in the midst of His church (es) but holds His servant, the Pastors in His hand! Just like Abraham, we need to look beyond the individuals and focus on He who sent them. Romans 14: 1-13 makes it clear that only God has ultimate authority to judge His own servants. As long as He has placed you in a ministry, respect and give honour to His servant in the House. Pay your tithes as unto the Lord, not to man. If at any time you honestly do not feel covered by the call of God on an individual, graciously exit from there and have no part in those who take it upon themselves to scandalize, abuse or withhold tithes because you do not like the minister!

Tithing therefore preceded the Law. In the Law, various provisions governed the issue and practice of tithing. These include Numbers 18:26- 28; Deuteronomy 14:22 – 28; Deuteronomy 26:12; Leviticus 27:31 One of the best known declarations on tithing is found in the book of Malachi 3: 8 – 12. Here, the Word says those who withhold their tithes and offerings are robbing God and therefore attract a curse. The Lord then calls on His own to bring all the tithes into His storehouse so that there will be enough with which His business can be transacted. There is a strong promise of blessings for those who obey. God also promised to rebuke the devourer for their sake.

In the teachings of Christ, He enjoined the people not to leave aside weightier matters of the Law much as they are faithful to tithing. Matthew 23:23. The Lord was establishing a basic principle here that it is wrong to do some good and leave others which are inconvenient.

In the New Testament Church, saints went beyond tithing. They gave God their whole heart and proved it by laying all that He gave them at His feet. That was why none lacked. The extra of those who had much were released to meet the lack of the poor. 2 Corinthians 9: 1-15. Any one struggling with tithing is probably struggling with giving to God. That is evidence of an unconsecrated part of life.

Principles of tithing

1. It is wrong to tithe to yourself. Using your tithe to meet your personal needs is a dangerous habit and lifestyle.
2. The best tithe, from a God point of view, needs to be the very first fruit. Tithe before you spend. Don't spend and tithe as a last resort. Proverbs 3:9, 10.
3. You tithe to God through an authority He sets over you or into a minister or ministry through which God consistently feeds your spirit man. Hebrews 7: 4, 7. The tithe is not something to be done casually. There is need to receive divine directions from the Holy Spirit and follow such instructions whether convenient or not. While you should tithe into your local congregation, if your main source of spiritual nourishment is elsewhere, due to no fault of yours, there may be need to take it to God in prayer for express instructions. God is a God of equity. If you are not fed by the Pastor where you are and God uses another minister to regular meet that need, you ought to factor that minister into your tithing habit otherwise you are engaged in an unequal measure.(This principle was not clear to us until recently!).
4. Avoid the habit of using tithes to curry favour with prominent ministers or to control them to do your bidding. That kind of attitude corrupts a holy thing and renders it null and void.
5. Every kingdom has a pattern of taxation for sustaining the realm. In this present life, the realm of the King of Kings requires that those who labour in the word and in doctrine, prayers and providing strategic leadership of His saints full time need to be cared for. 1 Corinthians 9: 7 – 14; Galatians 6:6-10; 1 Thessalonians 5: 12,13; 1 Timothy 5: 17,18. The poor also need to be cared for. Materials have to be procured, rent or mortgage payments need to be paid and other host of things. Tithing is one of the way the Lord ensures that there are more than enough in His store house. To claim Kingdom citizenship and deny this very basic obligation to the King is a contradiction in terms!
Offerings – these are free will gifts which the saints bring with joy as an act of worship to

the Lord. Offerings can be monetary or in tangible assets. The law of offering is that it should be given willingly and with joy. 2 Corinthians 9:7. Offerings can also be given sacrificially when occasion demands so. 2 Corinthians 8: 1 – 24.

Covenant Seed – 2 Corinthians 9:6 – 10.

Every saint is at liberty to respond to the prompting of the Lord to go the extra mile in giving sacrificially far and above the norm. A saint can also give a seed to the Lord as a covenant commitment for the purpose of activating His faith for a particular blessing. The Law of Sowing and reaping can be activated by such covenant seed. Genesis 8:22; 2 Corinthians 9: 10; Galatians 6, 7, 8. It is significant to note that not all money God gives to the saint is for consumption (Bread). Some monies are SEED, to be invested or re-invested into the Kingdom which will produce a harvest. It is however wrong for saints to have a mercantile attitude towards God and His work. The mercantile attitude manifests in inability to give to God as an act of worship and rather a bargaining chip to negotiate more blessings! Call that slot machine or casino giving! Vows must be by freewill.

Deuteronomy 23: 21 – 23. They should not be made hastily or to impress any one!

• Can some offerings and fund raisings honour and dishonour God?

The plain truth is that not all monies are for the treasury of the Lord! Some kinds of money are only fit for the Potter's Field. Funds derived from fraud, money laundering and other activities which dishonour God cannot be sanctified because a felon has sown part of it into the House of God! God is not mocked by such blatant jobbery! In the same way, it is wrong for ministers of the gospel to go out of their way to undertake fund raising activities which have these elements:

- Target unbelievers to come and give for the Lord's work.
- Make excessive promises of what God will do and use such as the carrot to attract people to "come and prove God" by how much they bring. Ministers have no business spreading the "slot machine" culture of negative fund raising.
- Proceeds of known illegal business or profits from schemes which ripped off honest investors should not be deliberately sought by ministers of the gospel.

•Who should handle finances in the household of faith?

The New Covenant prescribes that two types of leaders should function in the Household of Faith. These are:

-The Presbytery. The presbytery comprises ministers who are called into the Five Fold. These Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers should concentrate on prayer, ministering the word and providing saints with godly strategic leadership that is Christ centred. Acts 6: 1- 7; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1: 5 – 9. It is not the plan of God for spiritual leaders to manage the finances of the ministries where they serve.

-The Deaconate. These are saints who are not necessarily less spiritual but are simply equipped by God to deal with the ordinary business affairs of the local congregations. They are to take charge of administrative duties, receive, record, dispense finances and take care of welfare of the leaders and saints. Acts 6: 1-7; 1 Timothy 3: 8 – 13. This

provision is for safety. This does not confer on deacons unlimited power to do what they like with finances of the congregation. There will be proper spiritual oversight and administrative checks to ensure that policies are adhered to.

•**When mammon seats on the High Altar: signs that something has gone wrong.**

Saints dis-honour God when they give room for Mammon, the abomination of this world system to take over the high altar! This occurs when ministers and or ministries engage in any or all of these:

-When the spiritual gifts which a minister freely receives from God is merchandized and saints are required to “pay to tap into the anointing”.

-When saints are excluded from proper spiritual oversight or care because they are unable to afford the price tag placed on such service.

-Where saints use their gifts and callings to make money including recording gospel songs specifically for profit motive or to achieve fame or popularity. It must be mentioned here that saints will be blessed by God when they freely release concepts, songs or ideas He puts in them with the sole motive of bringing the counsel of God to His people or leading the people of God to truly experience Him in worship. God knows how best to bless those who honour Him. 1 Samuel 2:30. God hates the Babylonian economic system which is profit driven.

. Should you continue to "sow" into a ministry whose practices and lifestyle dishonour the name and integrity of our Lord Jesus Christ?

The religious answer is “yes”. From a Kingdom perspective however, a true saint should not partner with or support a ministry whose practices and lifestyle clearly dishonour God. When the chips are down, a saint will take a stand – to honour God primarily or to honour man.

Finally, let us take note of the fact that as far as this world system is structured, you are worth what you earn. This means that the way you use money shows where your heart is. This was the point made by Jesus Himself in Matthew 6: 19 -21 when He called on true disciples to lay treasures in heaven! As Jesus Himself said, you cannot serve God and Mammon at the same time! Matthew 6: 24