

DOLLARS and SENSE! The Principles regarding 'INCREASE'

Have you ever felt that your resources and finances, when placed in your pocket, they seem to disappear through the holes in your pocket? Is it just too hard to get ahead! You are always in some debt — owing for this or that! Never getting that charge-card paid off ... the interest crippling you! This is the story of so many of God's people.

It is time something positive is done about it, for we cannot be fully free while we have any form of restriction or bondage. It is time to sew up those holes in your pocket! Firstly one needs to recognize what those holes are and what caused them to be there. It could well be a habit that should be broken ... a habit cause by a wrong attitude or even some religious expectations — like presuming God will somehow supply! It could be a curse spoken out of someone's mouth towards you or even out of your own mouth!

It is easy to 'receive' a *word* from God tainted by one's own spirit because *the spirit of the prophet is subject to that prophet* ... what is in your heart will come forth — yes, even attracting confirmations *for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*. It is easy to be affected by the words (sermon?) of another especially when you have trusted their word in times past and when what they say is just what you, yourself, has desired and even longed for over a period of time.

HE MUST INCREASE AND I MUST DECREASE

This writing is not in any way a method of getting rich ... it is the emphasis of certain scriptural principles which carry blessings that bring forth change for the better in every area to which they are applied by the Spirit. It is interesting to note that all increase mentioned in scripture, is in relation to the Kingdom of Heaven/God. This does not set out primarily to improve one's humanhood — for God desires a complete 'trade-in' of one's humanhood (good, bad or indifferent which is the Adam-life and thinking), for God's life and thinking. We do not advocate '*name it and claim it*'** for personal advantages among our peers who can only look on outward things, but how we might be set free from the natural arena and thus more readily move forward towards seeing the Kingdom of Heaven come into reality in this new seventh day. [** there is a basic truth in such but it remains a part of the foundation, not the whole building].

The overall destiny that God has set out for us is for us to move in what Adam lost, Christ has restored and come to that place of ruling and reigning with Him. Remembering that *the kingdom of heaven is not neat and drink, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit* ... it will be obvious that one's attitudes are the first to be changed or processed to line up with Christ's ... all of which is the inward working of God's Spirit in every teachable vessel.

GOD DESIRES INCREASE

Let us lay out the foundational principle showing God desires increase. It is seen in seed-time and harvest, family procreation, in business and yes, even in possessions. *God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply and . . .* (Gen.1:22 which simply means increase). Multiplication brings a greater and quicker increase compared to addition. In the Genesis account, God started with two which was very, very little in comparison to the size of the earth. God 'blessed' them — placed His favour on them giving them the desire and the means to increase for that was His plan for the earth.

And God blessed Noah and his sons and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth (Gen.9:1). And be ye fruitful and multiply; bring forth abundantly in the earth and multiply therein (Gen.9:7). Even with this new beginning with Noah, His principle of increase did not change — He just added in 'abundantly'!

Whenever there is increase, joy is expressed. Observe what comes out of the New Covenant. Now he that ministers seed to the sower both minister bread for your food and multiply your seed sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness (2 Cor.9:10). This covers the 'now and later' scenario ... your personal food/needs for today **AND** your supply ahead plus your own spiritual growth ... all in a practical way. Here we see the natural and spiritual areas of your life are developed together. In our New Covenant and remembering that the purposes of God do not change, blessing and multiplying go together. (Heb.6:14) ... *Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee*

and in multiplying I will multiply thee {Oh yes, the context is with patience!}.

When you have completed your apprenticeship and you are fully free, you will have peace and also move in the joy of the Lord — producing a nonreligious righteous walk which will honour the Lord Jesus Christ and not be offensive to the ‘world’. Correcting one’s character flaws or one’s attitudes will release that right balance in your walk which will show forth the peace and joy of the abiding Presence of God . . . and put you in a place of hearing the Lord’s directions for increase.

TITHING IS A FOUNDATION FOR INCREASE

‘Tithing’ is a good place to begin. **Malachi 3:8-12** is a well-known scripture relating to tithing. **Always look at the context as well as the content!** The context here is tithing and in doing it, one does not rob God, Move in this principle and God will open up the windows of the spiritual realm and pour you out a blessing. The word translated ‘*blessing*’ becomes much clearer when one looks at the Septuagint Version (Greek) for the Greek word used is **EULOGIA** which means GOOD WORD ... just like when a eulogy is given concerning a loved-one at a remembrance service. With a ‘good word’, one’s wisdom as to what steps are to be taken regarding increase including finances, is focused so that one can be sure to have the mind of Christ. Through His word to us, faith is birthed (Rom.10:17). Tithing is a good starting point and even having a separate bank account for it is a good idea ... privately label it as ‘*God’s First-fruits*’. Increase pleases God but remember, without faith it is impossible to please Him.

Giving from your tithe account will begin to release in you the hearing of His Voice and it will be ‘a good word’. To bring about your release, God is going to deal with each one of us and He will certainly touch on areas of our character that need correcting. A common area needing some revision, where we often become embarrassed, is the subject of money. Maybe embarrassment is present because we do not have any and, looking around us, we will probably compare our situation with others in our circle. Then we reinforce our plight by constantly talking negatively especially when we say, ‘I can’t afford it!’. The principle which is most clearly seen in this money realm, will apply to whatever He has blessed you with however small.

Verse 8 of Malachi 3 reads ... *Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings.* One can aim at minimums but only as starters! Give the Lord your first-fruits and then be ‘open’ for some extra pouring out. His detailed instruction will become clear when we can really hear the voice of the Spirit within. *My sheep hear My voice*, said Jesus. Lack of acknowledging God’s desires and principles very often results in poverty or lack being present in a life.

Verse 9 says *Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation.* God does not want His people to be in poverty or have a spirit of poverty or even expect to remain in such a state. Again this standard varies with each nation or culture. It relates to whatever ‘cost of living’ that prevails where you are. For example, one does not have a heating bill in a hot land; likewise food costs are higher where the food is not produced ... and so on.

Verse 10 declares, *Bring all the tithes into the storehouse that there may be meat in mine house and prove Me now herewith, says the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.* Be ready for God to pour ‘YOU’ out as the blessing and that will include all that you have as well as your first-fruits account.

V.11 ... *And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, says the Lord of Hosts.* Note that it is God that takes care of the opposition when you choose to put Him first.

SUMMARIZING THEN ... honour God with the first-fruits of your increase. This is a far better way of referring to what God desires. The tithing of 10% is ‘Old Covenant’ and can be carried out very religiously to the point where it can become a bondage or law rather than the expression of thanksgiving. The ‘New Covenant’ is much more demanding, it covers 100% and we are then called to be stewards of all that He gives. To be a worthy steward, it will be imperative that you are able to hear the Master’s voice as to what He desires you to do with the increase He has blessed you with ... that removes any condemnation that tries to creep in. We also want to avoid the religious bondage derived from the ‘letter-word’ in having to give one’s first-fruits to the local Church. We give unto God in His vessels whether they be acknowledged (by man) ministries or even

to an 'unsaved' person. *Whatsoever He says unto you, do it.* Jesus poured out increase upon whoever His Father pinpointed.

INCREASE THE FRUITS OF YOUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

At the same time as with increase, there must come change! Change in one's character for he better; to be blameless as one moves towards being in His image and likeness. God will continue to expose certain unrighteous flaws in your life when you are ready to change. Your position will be seen by your attitude — that is very important. For only with the right attitude regarding increase, especially finances, will the true word from the Lord become real to you. *For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre* (I Tim.1:7). A 'bishop' is one who can handle responsibility in the way that God wants. To do or be responsible, you must desire only Father's will, not your own self-gratifying will. Your attitude must first be teachable wherein you are expected to acknowledge one's errors in judgment and any other area which looks right to self! Others can readily see when you gullible ... for example, falling for the latest 'good idea' which probably has accompanying testimonies! This usually requires MORE SPENDING in order to gain the hoped for increase. This most times results in more debt!

No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly (Psalm 64:11). The 'good thing' is chosen by Father and not us! He knows what is good for us to bring our walk to line up with His. God is simply training up His child to become a mature son!

THERE IS AN ENTERING-IN INVOLVED WITH INCREASE

The Kingdom of Heaven is definite step forward from simply being 'in Church', for one must 'enter in' to this walk that will lead to the fullness of Christ coming forth in and from you continuously. The parable of the talents in **Matthew 25:14-30** shows that the reward for increase is that one will become a ruler over many things (v.21,23). Responsibility in finances will lead to responsibility in bringing change ... ruling! The unprofitable servant who made no increase or profit is left out of the special blessing of '*ruling and reigning*' with Christ.

Kingdom principles have for the most part, been lost or ignored by God's people over recent times. To be included among those trusted servants, one must grasp the fact that they were *DOULOS-servants* or 'bond-slaves' (see Exodus for the depth of commitment shown there) who only wanted to be with their Master and to please Him.

Mat 25:14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. This parable concerns the household of the Master for these ones were His servants. These bond-servants had faithfully walked with their Master who had come to see their sincerity, trustworthiness and their desire to be like their Master, so He delivered unto them His goods (i.e. property, possessions, substance etc.). *(15) And unto one he gave five talents* (= weight of coin/money ... usually silver talents), *to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.* (*ability* in the Greek is DUNAMIS ... personal faith and trust). He invested '8' talents which was huge investment but he had confidence that His chosen ones would experience 'a new beginning' of manifesting resurrection life ... the number '8' means new beginning or resurrection life.

(16) Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. He was rewarded with a **DOUBLE PORTION** (see *re-think* No.16). *(17) And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.* This dedicated servant also received the double-portion of the First-born.

FEAR OF FAILURE

Mat 25:18 But he that had received one went and dug in the earth, and hid his lord's money. The Master gave the same opportunity to this servant as with the others even though his experience was less than the others. Fear of failure caused him to walk by sight and not by faith in His master who had given/blessed him what he needed for increase. *(19) After a long time the lord of those servants comes, and reckons with them. (20) And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.* All three servants called him 'Lord' showing they each had a right relationship with their Master. Are you getting the picture?

(21) His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I

will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

HAVING BEEN TESTED IN SMALL THINGS PRODUCED A REWARD IN GREAT THINGS.

- (22) *He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. (23) His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.* His Lord was full of expectation and what a delight for this master when he saw the fruit of his labours in the training and development and maturing of these servants! (24) *Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed:* This fearful and thus lazy servant called his master 'Lord' **but didn't really come to know Him**. He used the right words without the reality of relationship ... he didn't know his amiable master who was not hard or austere or uncompassionate to his servants, cruel or one who teases!
- (25) *And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.* He knew that the talent was His Master's, but that knowledge did not produce any outward expression of trust in His Master's desires and plan. (26) *His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful (= inactive) servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewn:* This neglectful servant saw his master like Pharaoh of old who expected to 'reap' bricks when there was no straw provided! This servant had the ability to sow and the Master trusted him to do so. He didn't really know his true master who freely gave all the necessary provision to bring forth increase. (27) *Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers (= bankers), and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury (= interest).* . . . anyone could do that! (28) *Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which has ten talents.* (29) *For unto everyone that has shall be given, and he shall have abundance* (that sounds like big increase, don't you think?): *but from him that has not shall be taken away even that which he has.* In the subject of 'increase' this servant was no longer trusted to follow the given pattern. He failed in his apprenticeship into maturity; he remained, as it were, a 'child' who would have to be told what to do and say at every occasion.
- (30) *And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness* (the Greek says 'the darkness outside' ... bear in mind that darkness represents ignorance that quite often stems from natural reasoning): *there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.* That is heart-wrenching regret towards what could have been. The 'outer darkness' where this servant who experienced no change in his life was sent, has nothing to do with losing one's salvation! This can easily be seen from the first verse of this chapter 25 of Matthew where it states that the Kingdom of Heaven is like TEN virgins and that has to include the five foolish ones who were also relegated to the 'darkness outside'. These ones remain in ignorance and do not experience increase in their lives.
- The two full-of-faith servants who moved in their master's word to them, received a double portion and, in the spirit, were promoted to being 'sons' for they experienced and emanated Father's nature and ways.

TO SET SOMEONE FREE, ONE MUST FIRST BE FREE ONESELF

The climax of *'the glorious liberty of the sons of God'* is to be enabled to rule and reign with Christ, having become in reality completely one with Him. In this way we will see people set fully free in any and every area of their lives. Do not forget to set someone fully free, it is necessary that you first are free yourself. Each one of us needs to really desire to be without any limitation ... free to pour out of Him.

ITS IN YOUR HAND TO CHANGE

There is a principle when assessing *'the talent'* that has been given to one, the substance of it will be in one's possession. It will consist of the following ... time, talents and/or treasure. The principle of using what is to hand ... *Moses, what is that in your hand?* (Exod.4:3-). Moses acknowledged what was to hand and God used it and accomplished His purpose.

CHANGE NEEDED

There is a need for each one of us to completely change our thinking on this subject of increase. Most have been facing the wrong way as seen by our thinking and subsequent results ... we are still majoring on asking the Lord for deliverance. We still confess our poverty ... however, there is the place where one must speak to the mountain whether it be debt or just a lack of being free enough to be 100% available for the Lord to use.

ILLUSTRATION: Here is a simple picture which we heard recently.

Picture yourself standing in a stream, looking downstream ... all the water of your finances is flowing away from you. This pictures many who just cannot get above their scraping by each month never having any increase. However, if you would turn around and face upstream, then the financial and blessing water flows towards you giving you an expectation of change! By turning one begins to look towards the Source of the water — the Master who has given what you need into your hand.

There are many needs among God's people and He will deal with each one in a way that will result in their being set free. We do not apply just any scripture and by repeating it often with great emphasis and enthusiasm, expect the change to miraculously take place. God is more interested in your life being changed to become like His than just to take some pressure off your situation. Expect correction and expect some pressure being brought to bear on your circumstances . . . all this proves how much our Father loves you and desires for you to be changed and to be fully set free. Calvary's full provision includes what you need for such a victory of liberation. *He must increase* in us — His way of thinking in you must be acknowledged and this will allow His thoughts to push out all your wrong thoughts and 'words' from others that were not really anointed. God will *overcome the evil* of our thinking *with the good* of His (Rom.12:21). God's method of increase is to add to subtract . . . He will subtract every plan of yours that has never produced the kind of increase that He has in mind for you.

OUR DESTINY — GOD'S WILL FOR US — WILL SURFACE

There is a process that is common to us all and God will gradually be drawing us towards our destiny and the specific steps along the way. *We are being changed from glory to glory into His image by the Spirit* (2 Cor.3:17-18), for only as He is, can we be effective in this world which God truly loves and for whom Christ died.

In the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:12-27, a pound in the Greek is the word *MINA* and equals **100 days wages**. Instruction was given to His reliable servants to occupy by copying what they had observed worked for their master. They received a 'well done' and were rewarded by being made A RULER over certain cities. Ruling and reigning with Christ is the highest calling in this hour . . . for what the first 'Adam' lost, the second Adam (Christ) restored to us and the original word to Adam was to have dominion over all things which equates with ruling and reigning. This too requires a full hearing of Father's voice wherein are His plans and purposes.

FROM A SERVANT TO A SON

Born a servant, a *DOULOS* bond-slave bound by love to his Master ... gets promoted to 'a son', a first-born son who receives a **DOUBLE portion** that is not to be squandered upon himself, but be fully applied to those who will be blessed through him. Again here in Luke 19 ... similar to Matthew 25 ... these servants, trained through many years of walking with their master, could now operate in the same way as their master. The Lord, our Master said, *The things that I do, you shall do also and greater too ...* In this example, the diligent, faithful servant-now-son was to rule over, care and be responsible for a number of cities. Now this is a greater expression of the Master's purpose.

The promotion mentioned above is real for God had said earlier that the earth cannot tolerate a servant when he reigns (Prov.30:21-22). To rule and reign with Christ, all faithful servants must become 'mature sons' able to be 'people-persons' moving in the Master's nature as well as being able to handle the Master's resources at all times declaring direction with the same authority that the Master demonstrated. Such a calling lines up with the King-Priest calling to be a part of the Melchisedec Order to set creation free, city by city, nation by nation until all acknowledge the Lordship of Christ.

Read Luke 19:12-27 ... verse 14's comment ... the time for the Kingdom of God to be fully manifested was not yet ... one 'man', a picture of Christ in one pair of sandals had not yet ascended to His Father's throne, but when He returned from that place of authority, it was different story for this 'man' was now corporate!.

Read on down and verse 20 gets this comment ... The remainder of this parable is similar to the parable recorded in Matthew. The major difference here is that the Lord increased the responsibility of these promoted servants. They were to rule over cities! A staggering announcement but the Master knew His servants-now-sons that they would simply *'do the things He did'*. Such a calling would obviously be with the Master's

full nature, authority and resources ... referred to as **‘the adoption’** which is the placing of mature sons (See **re-think** No. 25).

HEARING THE VOICE OF GOD WITHIN

The whole book of Job concerns Job’s dealing from God concerning his hearing from God. God dealt with his character flaws and then God blessed him with discernment which led to his hearing God speak. This all resulted in Job receiving ‘double’ what he started with. During this process of change within Job, he had to learn to discern between ‘good’ religious counsel and what the Spirit was saying within.

USING WHAT YOU HAVE

Penniless Peter in **Matthew 17:27** still had a fishing pole — probably stored on a shelf in his mother-in-law’s place. Jesus spoke to Peter without being specific . . . basically to use what he had which included his skill at fishing, to meet the current need of paying their taxes. When Peter went forth in obedience, it was then that God moved miraculously and the need was met. Note how Peter’s action brought the increase that met both the Master’s need as well as his own!

GOD IS IN YOUR SITUATION

The report found in **2 Kings 4:1-7** shows clearly how that God is right in the centre of every situation. The ‘third and final’ notice from the moneylenders had arrived! They were legally going to foreclose on this single Mom and her family. Failure to pay would result in going into receivership or bankruptcy and her sons would have to be sold into slavery to meet the debt. Panic surfaced — What was she to do? God knew her heart and He also knew the timing of the events surrounding her. Thus He was ahead of her in the situation. Elijah, representing God Almighty was present with her. He simply implemented the principle that He had laid out, that of offering unto Him the first-fruits with which she had been blessed. Elijah just requested that he receive a small loaf from her very meagre resources. She complied immediately without any reasoning and gave the Lord (in Elijah) the first-fruits which then opened her up to receive the ‘good word’ of what to do. This word was the solution to her need. *Go borrow some jars . . . we might add .. without any conditions!* She obeyed and poured out from what she had (even though it was extremely small). God then gave the increase so that this family could be fully free because their needs were met.

Her desperate situation had opened up her heart to the Lord. She was now open to hear anything that would help. She had exhausted her own ideas and now she could hear from God. So thus hearing His instruction, believed it and acted upon it which brought the required increase. Take a moment to read 2 Kings 4:1-7.

OTHER PRINCIPLES AND INSTRUCTIONS are seen in the testimony of the virtuous woman described in Proverbs 31:10-31 who moved in the principles of increase using what she had to hand. Motivated by love for her household, she disciplined herself to serve that target and increase came forth enabling her to achieve her goal.

Many years ago my mother had a desire to go to South Africa to help a crippled missionary for six months. Having no savings, her and Dad used what they had ... their skills and their time. She and Dad were good at picking wild blackberries and they did just that continuously in season. Mother made jam and the blackberries were supplemented by overripe fruit that Dad was able to bring home from the Supermarket where he worked. ... more jam and marmalade! They sold the product to friends and neighbours and her ticket and expenses materialized after a few months. She achieved her vision because they were not idle and their talents did not stay hidden in their earth!

SUMMARIZING

No two situations that we have looked at in scripture are the same and no two situations in our lives are the same. The Spirit of God in you will quicken to you the steps you need to take regarding increase that will change your circumstances. God truly wants you to be free from any limitations so that you can be 100% available for Him to move you out to accomplish your part in His great plan for the ages.

Prayerfully consider your options and move with the Lord expecting increase to be seen both in your own development in Christ and in seeing increase come forth to meet your needs and your hopes. God bless you. Don’t forget that your motive for increase must never be self-centered.§