

THE ONLY WAY TO BE BLESSED

Opening: This truth has to be activated in our lives prior to us enjoying God's promises. It is essential to unlocking the riches of God's Kingdom.

Scripture References: Luke 6: 37-38 & Luke 16: 9-13

I. Lessons of Luke 6

- A. God's ability to reward you is regulated by your willingness to give to others.
 - 1. Giving not only opens up the faucets of God's blessings but it also increases the flow of blessings in your own life.
 - 2. Blessings will be stopped, slightly released, or poured forth by your giving.
- B. Verse 38 – "Give and it will be given to you, good measure; pressed down, shaken together and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."
 - 1. Giving precedes receiving. Giving is required for receiving.
 - 2. There is no receiving without giving.
- C. This is not a "give to get" message.
 - 1. The "give to get" message is a real problem, it stirs up greed & selfishness. When we give we will also receive, but we "give to give".
 - 2. We must remember it ALL belongs to God.
- D. The root word for "mammon" comes from an Aramaic word meaning "riches". It originated out of the belief in the Syrian god of riches which came from Babylon.
 - 1. Babylon "sown in confusion".
 - 2. Consider the economic confusion on every continent.

II. Money

- A. There is no such thing as "spirit-less" money. All money has God's spirit or the spirit of the anti-Christ attached to it. There is no middle ground.
- B. The anti-Christ spirit will control the world primarily by the "fear of economics".
 - 1. The spirit of mammon will try to control you by the fear of lack, fear of loss, the desire to obtain a higher status in life, etc.
 - 2. Pro. 10:22 - It is the blessings of the Lord that brings riches without adding sorrow.
- C. How can I obtain God's spirit on my money? Give the first fruits to God and the rest will be blessed by the Holy Spirit.
- D. Jesus said "You can't serve God and mammon."
 - 1. Mammon is looking for servants. Mammon tries to take God's place in your life.
 - 2. Mammon promises what only God can give & can't produce anything it promises.

III. Three levels of giving in the Bible: Tithing, Giving & Extravagant Giving

- A. Tithing – tithing is established for four purposes
 - 1. To resource the church for ministry
 - 2. To resist the power of greed in our lives
 - 3. To remind us who is Lord of our lives
 - 4. To redeem the resources of our lives on earth

- B. Scriptures on tithing
1. Exodus 23:19 - "The first of the first fruits of your land you shall bring into the house of the Lord your god..."
 2. Pro. 3:9-10- Honor the Lord with your possessions, & with the first fruits of all your increase; so your barns will be filled with plenty, & your vats will overflow with new wine.
 3. Ex. 13:1-2 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Consecrate to Me all the firstborn, whatever opens the womb among the children of Israel, both of man & beast; it is Mine."
 4. Ex. 13: 11-13: "And it shall be, when the Lord brings you into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore to you & your fathers, & gives it to you, that you shall set apart to the Lord all that open the womb, that is, every firstborn that comes from an animal which you have; the males shall be the Lord's. But every firstborn of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb. And if you will not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. And all the firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem."
- C. First fruit and First born principle:
1. A clean animal's first born has to be sacrificed to the Lord. An unclean animal's first born has to be redeemed by the sacrifice of a clean animal.
 2. Exodus 13 is an OT picture of why God sacrificed Jesus. Jesus was God's tithe.
 3. EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD SYSTEM IS UNCLEAN AND MUST BE REDEEMED. To redeem it, the first thing I do it to bring the tithe to the Lord's house.
 4. Why did God reject Cain's offering and accept Abel's? Gen. 4:3 "And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought **an offering** but Abel brought **the first born of his flock** and its fat and the Lord respected Abel's and not Cain's."
 5. Joshua 6:7 - The tithe is referred to as two things: Consecrated or accursed, Consecrated if it is given & cursed if it is not given. Deuteronomy 26:1-2 "And it shall be, when you come in to the land which the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, and you possess it and dwell in it, that you shall take some of the first of all the produce of the ground, which you shall bring from your land that the Lord your God is giving you, and put it in a basket and go to the place where the Lord your God chooses to make His name abide."
 6. Tithing is not giving. Tithing is returning. God does not use the word 'give' in regard to the tithe. He uses the word 'bring' you cannot give what is not yours. You can only bring what is not yours.

Conclusion: Exodus 13:14 – this scripture reminds us that our tithing and giving are to be done out of relationship and not ritual.