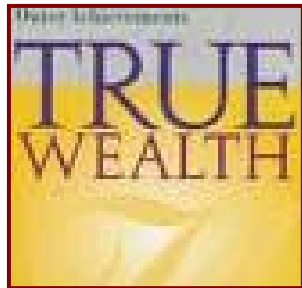


# Melva's Corner



## Living to Give! (Financial Freedom) Part III

October 1, 2007

**Central Truth: Rather than trusting in a worldly system that cannot assure our welfare of relying on our own capabilities to provide for our own needs, He calls us to depend entirely on Him.**

Changing economic conditions exemplify the instability of finances throughout the world. Instead of placing their trust in the Lord who promised to meet all of their needs, most Christians trust in their investments, savings and retirement plans to ensure security and happiness - only to find their hopes dashed when reverses deplete their assets.

Our heavenly Father, on the other hand, wants us to enjoy a full, abundant life free from the cares and stresses that confidence in money and other material possessions brings. Rather than trusting in a worldly system that cannot assure our welfare of relying on our own capabilities to provide for our own needs, He calls us to depend entirely on Him.

Permit me to suggest a plan that will help you release your faith in God and develop your trust in Him for your finances.

**1. Recognize That God Is Worthy of Your Trust.** The psalmist wrote, "The words of the Lord are flawless, life silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times." You can count on God to do as He says because the One who created the heavens and earth and who established the laws that govern the universe actually owns everything and is far more capable of providing for your needs than you could ever imagine. The writer of Proverbs says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart . . . In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." I encourage you to make our Lord and His promises the foundation of your financial security.

**2. Realize That God Wants You to Live a Full and Abundant Life.**

Our Lord promises to give every obedient Christian an overflowing, joyous life regardless of his financial position. Jesus told His followers, "I came that they might have life, and might have it abundantly." This generous assurance includes financial freedom.

**3. Substitute Faith for Fear.** One emotion that can undermine your faith and throw you back into financial bondage is fear. When anxiety over the future grips you, you lose the ability to trust God for your needs.

By obeying God's will for your life, however, you establish your faith firmly and open your life to His abundant blessings.

The apostle Paul records, "God has not given us a spirit of fear . . ." I encourage you to surrender your fear and place your future into His capable hands. Then put into action the principles of God's Word for financial freedom.

**4. Ask God to Supply Your Needs.** The apostle James observes, "You do not have because you do not ask." Our Lord says, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you." Faith requires action. Ask God, as an act of your will, to supply your needs. Then expect Him, as an expression of your faith, to provide for your needs. God's Word says that whatever we ask according to faith and in harmony with His will, He promises to answer.

**5. Keep Your Heart and Motives Pure.** To truly trust in God for your finances, you must also keep your heart and motives pure. Even if you ask by faith, you will fail to receive if you ask out of wrong motives. James also says, "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you spend it on your pleasures." Confess these wrongful attitudes, then claim the power of the Holy Spirit to help you rely on Him to supply your needs.

**6. Take a Step of Faith.** Sometimes God requires of us a further step of faith. Dr. Oswald J. Smith, the famous Canadian evangelist and missionary statesman, had a burning, driving passion "to bring back the King through world evangelization." The entire ministry of the People's Church, which he pastored in Toronto, centered on this vision. The high point of each year was the four-week annual missionary convention. To Dr. Smith, raising support for missions was the prime duty of every

individual - children and adults, filing clerks and millionaires, homemakers and retired seniors.

Each year, he would challenge them to decide on a "faith promise," which they felt God would put into their hands to give to missions above their regular giving - even if they could not see a way in their budget. No one received a reminder, and miraculously each year more than the amount promised came in. As a result, tens of millions of dollars have been given to missions through his example and teaching.

A "faith promise" is not a pledge that must be "paid." Rather, it is a voluntary "promise" based on your faith in God's ability to supply out of His resources what you cannot give out of your own. You give as God supplies.

**Permit me to give another word of caution here: God does not want you to "promise" what you do not yet have as a substitute for giving what He has presently entrusted to you.** Your present possessions are a kind of test as to whether or not you are worthy of being entrusted with more and greater resources. While the concept of "faith promise" giving is not explicitly developed in Scripture, it is based on scriptural principles and serves as a practical strategy for designating future resources to God's kingdom.

As your faith in God and His love and trustworthiness grows, let me encourage you to prayerfully make a faith promise - one that is greater than you are capable of fulfilling according to your present income. Take God at His word to supply from His unlimited resources. Make a generous faith promise to help fulfill the Great Commission through your church or an organization which is committed to this cause.

In taking such a step of faith, you link your finite life with the infinite God - the God of love, power, wisdom and sufficiency. You begin to draw upon His inexhaustible supply. You become His instrument for helping to change the world.

### **Scriptural References:**

**"Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."  
(Matthew 6:21)**