

FAITH & FINANCES & PROVISIONS

(ALL PART OF GOD'S PLAN OF TRUST)

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The inspired instruction, admonishment, and solemn warning for all righteous Christian servants was given by the Holy Spirit of God, Himself, so we should quickly realize that living by faith on God is a very important issue, in the true Christian life of faith and trust on the Promises of God's Word. "It is by faith that My righteous servant shall live; and if he shrinks back, My soul takes no pleasure in him." (Heb. 10:38).

God's plan for our life is for Him to be our Teacher, and He will direct us (through His Holy Spirit) how to exercise faith in Him, when we will surrender our 'self-will' in order to do His will in our life. That 'principle of truth' ('faith in God and trust on His Son') can be found all through the Bible in many examples (which were written for us to learn lessons of 'obedient faith' from them). When God's Word was heeded and carried out (by faith), because one chose to believe in His Word, the blessings that resulted were rich and bountiful, (and the 'spiritual growth' from one learning about what kind of a God we have -was the most valuable blessing of all).

Faith lessons are to come from God, because He is the only One who can give spiritual knowledge (from His Word), and the only One who can empower us to walk by faith in His Word. We are instructed (Heb. 12:14), "Persistently strive for peace with all men, and for that growth in holiness apart from which no one will see the Lord." (Again, we quickly realize that living by faith on God is a very important issue in the true Christian life).

God is waiting, however, for our response to His 'Salvation Message' (whether or not we choose to listen to and follow His Word in our life). So, if our surrender of the self-life is sincere and final, (meaning, that we are ready and willing to listen), then God is happy to teach us His lessons of faith and trust in Him. Each one of us must choose to believe His Word (Gal.2:20).that "I have been crucified with Christ" (meaning, the self-life is surrendered or crucified), "and it is no longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me; and the life which I now live in the body I live 'through faith' in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up to death on my behalf."

It is our responsibility (as 'believers' in Jesus Christ), to believe in our heart that we are as God's Word says, which is, that we are 'in Christ', that is, our human nature crucified with Him, (so, we have indeed died to the self-life and are cleansed of that by His redeeming Blood). Jesus told us (John 15:3) "You are already clean because of the Word which I have spoken to you."

The devil will try to talk everyone out of believing that the shed blood of Christ can cleanse us, but instead, that we have not been set free from a desire to sin,... however, God's Word says that is what Jesus Christ's atonement sacrifice accomplished for us (if we will believe His Word). Jesus stressed the supreme importance of everyone 'believing' on what His Father sent Him to do for us (on the Cross), to redeem us through His Blood, and to guide us by a trusting

faith on the power of His Blood. (John 6:29) "This" replied Jesus, "is above all the thing that God requires, that you should be believers in Him whom He has sent." It is an eternal life issue, and we must believe God's Word for our 'Salvation' just the same as we must trust on God for guidance of His Spirit (in all other things).

Walking in the light of God's Truth, means we are learning how to live by faith on His Word and depending in Him alone for answers to prayer and guidance that we need. (instead of turning to human-efforts and plans of 'self'). God empowers us to 'walk by faith' in His Word, He is waiting for our response, and is prepared to give 'spiritual light' concerning every aspect of our daily life.

His Spirit is available to guide us in every decision we need to make. God is ready to direct us (and teach daily faith lessons) until our faith in Him is perfected. (Rom.8:29) "For whom God fore-knew, He also predestined" to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Being conformed to the image of God's Son, is to be like Him in our faith, in the way that we trust God, His Father (just as He did), for; our health and healing, for our protection from dangers and mishaps, and for our guidance to know how to trust Him for the supply of temporal and financial needs. And, for a divine forgiving nature instilled in our heart, to be able to meet wrongs done to us, as God's Word says we should meet them. (1 Pet.2:21-23) "And it is to this you were called; because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you an 'example' so that you should follow in His steps. He never sinned, and no deceitful language was ever heard from His mouth. When He was reviled, He did not answer with reviling; when He suffered He uttered no threats but left His wrongs in the hands of the righteous Judge."

We are to always respond to circumstances and people from 'divine love' as Christ did, with faith that God will vindicate injustices (without bringing harm to the faithful), and that He will reward us for anything we give up to obey His Word, and to follow the 'humble example' of Jesus Christ. ("He did not answer with reviling; when He suffered He uttered no threats,").

When it comes to our home and family we must realize that the work of Jesus Christ on the Cross (and His resurrection to life), destroyed the devil's power, so the devil has no right to control our loved ones. We are to place each family member into God's hands to control them for us. The Bible says "the chastisement for our peace was upon Him (Jesus Christ), And by His stripes we are healed." (Which means we were already delivered from every disturbance of our peace). If our peace is being disturbed, then the devil is cheating us out of our 'atonement right' to have peace in our home (or other circumstances). When things are not going right for us, we need to look at our own heart (not at the other person) and asking God that we be shown (by Him) where we are outside of His will, and why we are not enjoying His peace in our home. It is God alone who is able to cause our loved ones to treat us (and each other) in a Christ-like way, and to have God "conform them to a likeness of His Son".

So it is a test of 'our' faith on God (who is very capable of controlling other people for us), and to place our trust on Him to control loved one's attitudes toward us, rather than to take matters in our own hands by trying to meet them (and handle circumstances) in

our own way. God's control of other people for us, would include people at our workplace or any other situation.

No one, by human ability (or by making remarks) can 'straighten out' another person (as we might say), if that person does not wish to change. However, the Holy Spirit can convict them, which will result in a real change in their attitude (also our own attitude if need be). Victory in our home (with the members of that home) will be received (as we allow God to work in our own life first). It is by our faith on God's Word (believing that "the chastisement for our peace was upon Him"), that we learn lessons which will perfect our 'faith righteousness'. We come to better understand (and know) what kind of a God we really have, when we place matters that disturb our peace in His hands to solve for us. (Heb. 10:38) "But it is by faith that My righteous servant shall live; and if he shrinks back, My soul takes no pleasure in him."

A 'trusting faith' on God in every situation is a very important issue in a true Christian life, ..because that is what pleases God. (Heb.11:6) "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a reward-er of those who diligently seek Him."

God is waiting to help if we are willing to ask Him for it and lay aside our own efforts of self. If all resentment, manipulations, and worldly plans to control people are given up, all 'power in Heaven' is waiting to work for us. When difficult situations are met in a Scriptural, Christlike way, the Holy Spirit will quickly eliminate 'self' from our heart. No matter what injustice is done to us, unfair treatment or loss sustained, if we will place matters before God in prayer (and refuse the devil's temptation to use self-efforts to change things), God will teach us a faith lesson, and change will be brought about by His will and power. God's will is always good, and perfect for us. (Prov. 10:22 says), "The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, And He adds no sorrow with it."

Jesus told us that He would leave His divine peace with us, so it is Bible promise and we should claim it because it is rightfully ours. (John 14:27), "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

The Bible teaches that we cannot hold resentment in our heart toward anyone, and that we forfeit our forgiveness when we refuse to forgive others when they sin against us. (Matt.6:15), "But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." When Jesus Christ was wronged by someone, or He suffered, "He uttered no threats, but left His wrongs in the hands of (God) the righteous Judge". That is the position we are to take in meeting people (and wrong things done to us) in a Scriptural way.

It is the Holy Spirit's work to vindicate wrongs, bring about change, and to restore His peace for us. We will meet failure (and lose out spiritually) if we keep trying to do God's work. Rather than trying to restore our own peace, we need to repent of trying to do God's work, which will allow Him to remove self and Satan from our heart and replace it with His Holy Spirit.

God's 'financial plan' will teach us faith lessons as quickly as any other life issue. To follow God's Word in trusting for money

needed (and using that money Scripturally without compromise), will always bring spiritual growth, and an increase of 'faith in God' (almost at once). The importance of faith lessons learned from God on finances is clearly taught in the Bible, which instructs us to sell possessions, share and give, and to exercise daily trust on God to supply our needs in abundance (which carries a most important spiritual growth and blessing). Jesus emphasized God's financial plan, and He taught that our 'hope of heaven' is directly connected to having faith in His Father for daily needs.

When a person has a fixed income, they would naturally want to depend on that human source of supply, so the best way to learn faith 'lessons of trust' for finances, is for that human source to be shut off. When that happens, one's trust in the human source must be transferred to a 'divine source,' and we must not let any 'situation of need' be known to any other person (or any Government plan for 'financial assistance'.) Instead, when such situations are met through faith on God (as the Bible teaches us to meet them), the believer will then be in a position to enjoy their divine 'financial inheritance'. God wants to teach all of us 'faith lessons' for our finances and provisions each day.

When a person first surrenders their life to God, they would usually have one (or more) sources of human income between themselves and God. That is not a good situation 'spiritually speaking', because it eliminates faith in God, but God will bear with it for the time being, and He will begin to work with us (to bring about changes needed to bring us into His will regarding our 'place of trust') (if we want and allow Him to do that for us). It is our choice. Our former situation has to be reversed, to bring us to the place where we have God between us and our human sources of income. The 'world's way' is always reversed from the 'divine way' of trusting on God (like a child depends on its parents).

All 'false places of trust' to be depended on (instead of depending on God), would eventually be used by Satan to lead a person away from God's Word and His Promises", (if false places of trust were not repented of and forsaken). Jesus was specific about severe consequences for anyone who does not keep their dependance and 'trust' centered on Him. (Mark 10:15), "In solemn truth I tell you that no one who does not receive the 'Kingdom of God' like a little child, will by any possibility enter it."

When a person has a serious financial need and they make a final decision to trust God alone to supply that need, then God is able to work in giving them the victory. Every plank on the bridge to go back to a human 'place of trust' (or supply) must be destroyed (and eliminated forever). Jesus said that our hope of Heaven is directly connected to whether we were Scriptural in our finances or not. It is all part of our trusting Him for our salvation, just like we are to trust Him for other things in our life.

Jesus told the rich young man in Luke 18, that his hope of eternal life (in Heaven),... hinged on whether (or not) he would get rid of the human thing he was depending on (and to place his trust on God). When He told the young man "there is still one thing wanting in you" (or "one thing you lack"), Jesus meant, there is one area in your life where you are not walking by faith on God's Word, also, that he

must transfer his trust, ... from human sources of income, to the divine source that God promises. (He was not dependent on God's Word like a child, so, he could not possibly enter the Kingdom of God.) Jesus explained how he should do that (to be on Scriptural grounds in his finances). The man had everything to lose and nothing to gain by rejecting God's financial plan. (That should be a stark warning for us). If he did not repent of that disloyalty to God (which would be an idol in his life, that stood between him and trusting faith on God), he would not be able to enter the 'Kingdom of God'. That is too high a price to pay for holding on to earthly treasures, and not being willing to forsake possessions on earth in order to follow Jesus Christ in real faith.

Jesus Christ's claim over our life is a supreme claim. (Luke 14:26-27) "If anyone is coming to me who does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes and his own life also, he cannot be a disciple of mine. No one who does not carry his own cross and come after me can be a disciple of mine."

So, Jesus told the young man (Luke 18:23-25) "There is still one thing wanting in you (you need to do). Sell everything you possess and give the money to the poor, and you shall have 'wealth in Heaven'; and then... come, follow me." But on hearing these words he was deeply sorrowful, for he was exceedingly rich. Jesus saw his sorrow and said, "With how hard a struggle do the possessors of riches ever enter the Kingdom of God! Why, it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." (That is a solemn warning from our Savior, for anyone deceived to trust in earthly sources of laid-up money.)

If a person had money in an earthly bank savings' account, but never withdrew any cash out of it, the money would do them little good. Satan constantly tries to cover up the great 'divine inheritance' that every true Christian has (in Heaven), and to convince them that they cannot go to God to get anything. Satan has multitudes believing that it is no use to pray to God, because you will not get any results and no money (in response to that prayer).

The true facts are, however, that a true believer who is willing to give up their possessions on earth to follow Christ (when God inspires them to do that), ... is automatically heir to God's financial wealth. God controls everything on earth, and since (if we are true 'heirs', or 'believers'), we are then 'one with Christ', so we have the same right to have financial needs supplied, as does Jesus Christ. Every true believer has a bank account in Heaven, and Jesus told the man that if he would give to the poor and transfer his trust (from human things to divine), then he would also have "wealth in Heaven".

(Phil.4:6-7) is excellent reference of 'faith in God for finances' "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;" (not to someone else) and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

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The First Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia

#S333R Some Main Points:

1... God is to be our Teacher, and when we are ready and willing to listen,... God is waiting and happy to teach us His lessons of faith and trust on Him.

2. God's financial plan will teach us faith lessons more quickly as any other life issue. If we are willing to get rid of our false places of trust (and surrender all self-efforts), God will empower us to walk by faith financially, so that He can teach us lessons of faith. "It is by faith that My righteous servant shall live;" (says, Heb.10:38). (Heb.11:6 says) "But without faith it is impossible to please Him."