

## BACK TO THE BASICS OF FAITH

### *Come out of the Struggle*

We cannot be the same people we were 5 years ago, 5 months ago, or 5 weeks ago. 1 Thessalonians 4:1 says that we should "*abound more and more*". Our spiritual walk with Christ should be filled continually with promotions, elevations, and graduations from one level of achievement to the next, but for most of us this is not the case. We stay in one phase of life for years and years, and never feel the urge to move away from that place. For the most part, our circumstances stay the same, and sadly this is our witness to all those who know us.

Knocked about by the throes of life, many of us feel as though we are too busy putting out fires to cast our thoughts upon advancement. We just want to get through the pain we're facing so that we can glean some degree of relief. When this attitude persists, our eyes are upon the strife of struggle not the joy of victory. I talk a lot about the harmful aspects of a prevailing attitude of struggle. The reason I talk so much about it is because I know that this attitude can obscure your vision to the point of blinding you from seeing opportunities.

You were created to experience feelings of delirious happiness. The thing that will spark those emotions is as near to you as any of the other blessings you have experienced up to this point. A resolution to our pain, struggles, and desires is already in the earth. It is most definitely within your reach, but you cannot see it.

2Corinthians 9:8 (NIV) says "*And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.*" In other words, God is able to make the spirit of abundance stop dead in its tracks, turn around, and flow in your direction so that you have all that you need when you need it, and you will succeed continuously in every good thing that you endeavor to do. WHAT?!!! Did you get that? Good googly moo! Isn't that yummy? Isn't it just the best?

The Father is so extraordinarily good to us because He has made it possible for us to have blessings on every turn, on every hand, but we can't get this verse twisted. It says that God is able to do it. It doesn't say that He has already done it. "*God is able...*" He has the ability to make all grace abound to you, therefore you must conclude that He has the willingness as well. He is both able and willing, but there is something else that is critical to putting this verse into context.

This particular chapter in 2Corinthians 9:8 is expounding upon the subject of giving, with a keen eye to giving bountifully, deliberately, and freely. The Apostle Paul delivered this message to the Corinthians without excuse and with hearty encouragement. The Corinthian church had already made charity a habit pattern, and Paul was urged by the spirit of God to inspire them to keep up the good work. They were to continue that which they had started until the full promise of their charity was delivered unto those who were in need.

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So often we set our minds and hearts to do good works, but our own personal drama gets in the way. Paul did not want this to happen at the Corinthian church. He understood that if they ceased to give liberally, they would cease to be blessed liberally. The momentum of spiritual growth and blessings would slow down and folks would concentrate more on their own personal difficulty rather than the movement of God's Word. This is what happens to us today. We allow ourselves to be hidden deep in despair. When that happens we cannot see the forest for the trees. We forget how monumental the act of giving is to our stand upon God's Word.

Have you ever thought about why unselfishly giving of our time and resources is so instrumental to sustaining our relationship with God? Do you know why it is that when you cease to give you experience a drought not only in your finances, but other aspects of your life as well? The answer to these questions is simple: our responsibility as Christians is to emulate the nature of God, and the nature of God is to give. He has commanded that we do so.

The answer to all of our dilemmas regarding lack can be traced back to our own failure to give liberally to the Kingdom of God. The Father setup everything in the universe to respond to our giving. Struggle is a direct result of not giving enough.

For many of us this is very difficult to believe. We refuse to believe that our struggles are tied to our lack of giving because, quite frankly, we are afraid to give. The ugliness of lack tricks us into believing that if we tithe, God will not take care of that electric bill in time. We believe that He will leave us hanging because we do not trust and believe in His Word. Thoughts of never having enough permeate our existence, so much so that these beliefs become our paradigm; they become the springboard for our actions. We begin to act out of lack, rather than abundance. The only thing that can come out of this is more lack.

A closed hand means a closed heart. Everything, everything, everything in this universe operates from the Law of Giving equals Receiving. It's an immutable law. You cannot get around it no matter what you do. Even your inability to attract your soul mate can be traced back to your attitude about giving.

God's grace is allowing you to have breath this very moment. It allows you to work, to earn a living, to care for your loved ones. To verbally utter the words "*thank you*" for His grace isn't enough. You are required to sow a seed into His Kingdom because it is the supernatural "*thank you*" that affirms your trust in Him. If you can't be faithful in this area of your life, there is no way that your eyes are opened enough to see the opportunities and blessings you desire.

There must be a paradigm shift. You must believe with everything in your being that God is your sufficiency as it says in 2Corinthians 9:8, not your wallet. You cannot please God without faith. He is demanding that you recognize His authority and put Him first, that is the only way to come out of the struggle.

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