

Go to a private place and lift your hands in surrender to God. Begin to praise and then worship Him. Praise thanks Him for what He has done ... worship exalts Him for who and what He is. Become part of a thankful and holy generation.

Families That Give

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I especially want to encourage you in the area of giving, because there are two areas the devil is going to use to really pressure believers. One is in the finances of the families of believers, and the other is in the moral structure of the family unit.

In the months to come, I will be teaching on what allow's the devil an entrance into our families. We will study what permits him to demoralize them to the point where everything seems to be "out of control" leaving them feeling helpless and frustrated. As these teachings unfold, I know there will be help for those of us who have experienced this. Nothing can hurt quite as bad as when a family is out of control.

But, now, I want us to get a head start on the devil because we now know what he is up to. The Holy Spirit is also letting us know what the devil is planning to do regarding the finances of the Body of Christ.

First of all, the attack Satan is about to launch is different from what we would generally classify as his normal mode of operation concerning finances. When a saint begins to prosper anywhere in the world, Satan has a standard offense he uses. His host of unclean spirits already has instructions on just what to do when they see a believer reach a certain level. Satan then has gained enough control to launch an all out attack and to organize his resistance against us. This resistance shows up in two areas.

One appears individually as fear in the mental and emotional realms. Satan then cultivates weaknesses in us that can be fed by worry, torment, and fear. The second area is on a national scale that is directed against the entire Body of Christ. Satan's design is to send waves of circumstances that, in the natural, would be cause for worry. He wants to provide plenty of negative circumstances to worry about in order to overthrow our faith. He desires to cultivate everything in us that is negative in order to develop unbelief ... for torment and fear are unbelief.

Throughout history Satan has been most successful in carrying out his plans when he uses human agents. He can slaughter on a massive scale when he finds someone such as a Hitler who will yield themselves to him all the way with no reservations.

What is so horrid is his ability to deceive and blind believers on one front as he legislates away their moral and legal rights on another. By the time such legislation reaches individual families, the changes are felt as shock waves. These changes are being ordered by Satan on a massive scale and can be felt by all believers. Satan is then able to enforce his will on all believers at one time instead of going through the process of trying to break down one family or one believer at a time.

As the family unit becomes broken down, we, as a nation, will feel unable to give our finances to the spreading of the Gospel.

It's a dangerous thing for people who have no morals to legislate laws that we are bound legally by our Constitution to keep. Persecution begins that way. For instance, all of us who understand that abortion is the shedding of innocent blood viewed with mixed emotions the incident recently where a man opened fire on two abortion clinics, killing several people. The carnal man wants to say, "It serves them right, they went in to terminate a life that could not fight back and got terminated themselves!" Yet, there is another part of us that is troubled and knows that the way it was handled was not God's way.

Because the man who did the shooting was quoting scripture while doing it, Satan will use this incident by taking it to court in an effort to remove the legal rights of Christians to counsel anyone about abortion from the Word of God. By the time the shock waves from this kind of legislation reaches the Christian community, Satan will again have executed his will on a massive scale. Without spiritual intervention, he will have made all believers under the jurisdiction of our government feel the repercussions from this, for he is an expert lobbyist.

Let me expose some of the subtle things that will be cropping up so you will know how to pray for our government. I Timothy 2:1-2 says: "*I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*"

First of all, be on guard against the introduction of any legislation that will discriminate between organizations that are religious in origin and the humanistic kind whose foundations only minister to humanitarian needs. Although these groups are very helpful as they care for people's welfare, crippling diseases, and world hunger, they in no way address the salvation of mankind.

We thank God for the money that is raised, for every child that is fed, for every one of Jerry's kids who receives an operation, for the millions spent on research, Thank God for all of it! But, the whole reason humanity is in the shape it's in is because of the fall of man and the sin nature. The chaos and pain the whole human race is in is nothing more than a by-product of the fall.

I appreciate any organization that alleviates the suffering of human beings wherever they may be. That's the core of our new nature as a believer. Satan does not care how many billions are poured into humanitarian operations as long as they do not touch the rebirth of man.

An organization, believing in the rebirth, should always use the avenue of the natural as a doorway to the supernatural. The whole relief effort should become a servant to the born-again message. Satan is going to target all organizations who have a solid message on being born again. In fact, we are probably going to be shocked to hear more and more talk about speaking with tongues and the so called "born again" experience as being synonymous with the occult.

Satan is first going to target believers who speak with tongues and believe in healing, because he knows we will give him the most problems. The devil will attempt to take rights away from the

charismatic believer, until a non-profit status will not be issued to us. Satan will endeavor to get the government to evaluate us as a cult. The legislators adopting these standards will actually believe they are doing the public a service.

Some preachers who have operated in the flesh have hurt the Gospel more than they can know. But the devil knows, and, if he can get the born-again experience grouped with cults who believe in sacrifices, the airport kinds of Hari Krishnas, etc., then eventually the legislators in America will have to do something about it.

Satan wants to do more than just pressure us as individual families over our finances. He will introduce this kind of legislation to cause every believer who loves the operation of the Holy Ghost to feel the effects, and he plans to introduce it this year. He wants it to cost us to give and he wants us to be persecuted for giving and associating with organizations classified as harmful to society. He will say we provide no practical function or purpose for humanity.

As we begin to see these things come to pass, we need to pray that revival will break out among those who are being used to try to pass these laws. As Timothy said, we are to be praying for those who are in authority. As we see who is causing the problem; then we know who to pray for specifically and to bind the devil.

So watch for those seemingly innocent statements, the introduction of new laws, and the attack on the charismatic leaders. These people are preparing the mood of the public to accept new guidelines for the reevaluation of freedom of religion.

If the devil gets this legislation through, it is going to horribly hurt the Gospel in the U.S. and missionary efforts abroad. There are many Christians who do not mind giving now, as long as it does not cost them anything. There are many businesses, millionaires, and people in high income brackets who do not mind giving to avoid paying more taxes. After all, if it's going to go to Uncle Sam or the Gospel, they don't mind it being the Gospel as long as they have to pay it anyway.

Have you ever wondered why first world countries never really have revivals as opposed to third world countries? we may get 40,000 people to attend a football game in America, but people will not turn out in those numbers to hear the Gospel. They will not come even when masses are being healed. Yet, in a third world country, it is not uncommon to have up to a million people in attendance in one crusade.

You may as well know Satan is going to use many things to hinder the Gospel, but at the top of the list in a first world country like ours is idolatry. Notice, there is no revival in first world countries such as Japan, Canada, England, Australia, and so on. Have you ever wondered why? Idolatry is a deep and often excessive attachment or love for anything that takes first place ahead of God. There is nothing that will take worship away from God more effectively than the love of money and what it can buy.

In both Ephesians 5:5 and Colossians 3:5 Paul linked covetousness with idolatry. Ephesians 5:5 says: *"For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an*

idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." Colossians 3:5 says: "*Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, AND COVETOUSNESS, WHICH IS IDOLATRY:*" An idol is something that has so taken hold of a person that they willingly surrender to it in worship.

Now to us, our object of worship is the one and only, true and living God. There is a difference between praise and worship, we can give praise to men, but we don't worship them.

We can also praise God, but true worship is when our love and adoration for God flows like a wellspring from the abundance of our heart. Even our actions, what we do on a day by day basis, flows from the same wellspring and our whole life is so pleasing to God that to Him we become a sweet smelling fragrance of worship.

The reason Paul said covetousness was idolatry is because greed can so take hold of a man, that it will demand his worship. He may be a professing Christian praising God, but he still worships money. Because, as a man thinketh in his heart so is he, and every tree is known by its own fruit.

What a man really is, is what he ends up doing. Many times we say things to cover up what we really are, but we always end up doing what we want to do. Because we do what we really want to do, what we end up doing is what we really are. "I was too busy to call, I didn't have time to make it to prayer, I haven't been to church lately, it's my job. Or, the house is a mess, I have been too busy lately to clean, etc." But, you know, we end up doing what we really are.

True idolatry is attained when a man brings his worship, his ability, his talent, his motives, and lays them at the feet of the idol of covetousness. That man faithfully serves his God from his heart and his actions are the fragrance of his worship.

As a nation reaches the status of a first world country, we can understand why Satan looks at their prosperity and says, "what am I going to use to make sure that they never have any more born-again, deliverance, and healing revivals that change people's lives? what is it that challenges their loyalty? What is the common denominator in both sinner and saint that I can appeal to in getting the saint to worship another god and to get the sinner to have no need for God? I know ... the common ground will be the carnal appetites of the flesh! what can best serve as a medium of exchange to bring them anything their flesh desires? I know, "MONEY". we will call the love of money "prosperity" which is a nicer name than "covetousness" ... which, in turn, is a much nicer name than "idolatry".

Satan reasons, "So, whenever I want to stop a first world revival, I have this invaluable tool resident in so many Christians, the love of money. I will just simply lay hold on the carnal appetite, stimulate it, and get ready for worship. Or I will bring persecution and circumstances to cause them to panic and get into fear. I will see how tightly those greedy little fingers are willing to hold onto their seed money."

Either way Satan wants to get this legislation through, he wants the born again experience to be the victim, he wants to kill the Gospel, and neutralize us with his schemes if we allow him to. It's sad to say, but many believers are going to follow after the tax breaks. If giving to the Gospel is

not going to reduce their taxable income and keep them from being in a higher tax bracket, they will not give. Greed and pressure are designed by the devil as tools of manipulation ... **THEY ARE THE LEADERSHIP OF HIS EVIL SPIRIT.** He can manipulate a person like this who is motivated by greed to eventually cast their vote in favor of their bank account.

In the same teaching where Timothy said we need to pray for kings and those who are in authority with supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men, he also said that godliness with contentment is great gain. I Timothy 6:6-8 says: *"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out, And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."*

True prosperity from God lies in the ability of a person not to be tormented by lack, neither to be led into idolatry by covetousness or greed. If we really want to prosper and stay free in both of those areas, free enough to keep our minds and emotions clear so as not to be tricked by the devil, then there are two decisions we can make that will help us.

One, we cannot let greed take root. We must continue to give abundantly and cheerfully. This means what we give and how much we give should be meaningful to us when we give it to Jesus. In comparison, it should be as important as it is to the fiance who has just given his girl friend an engagement ring. we are not to give because of a tax break, but because we love Him ... we are to be thankful.

Two, we must stay free from worry and fear over our needs being met. Fear is an indictment against the love and the promises of God. In fact, so much so, that Jesus warned five times in a single chapter dedicated to meeting our needs to stay away from worry. Matthew 6:25,27,28,31 and 34 says: *"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" "which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin;" "Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."*

The way out of difficult, financial times really begins with the transformation of our soul from worry. That begins with becoming content with Jesus independent of circumstances ... learn how to take about an hour a couple of times a week to praise, then worship God.

Go to a private place and lift your hands in surrender to God. Begin to praise and then worship Him. Praise thanks Him for what He has done ... worship exalts Him for who and what He is. Become part of a thankful and holy generation.

Sometimes I will say with all my heart over and over, "Jesus, I love You, Jesus, I love You." The Holy Ghost always stirs within me. Then I praise Him and give Him all the glory for the seed I had the privilege of sowing the last time I gave. After all, He is the One who provides the seed for the sower. I have learned not to let complaints escape my lips, only praise. We can replace complaints

with praise, become thankful and holy, and begin to praise Him for what we have: our home, car, food, clothing, etc.

As we become thankful, expressing that gratefulness in praise and worship, we give God what He needs to begin a transformation process in us ... and then we will really be blessed.