

## EVERY CHURCH A BIBLE COLLEGE

As the days darken in our "Post-Covid-19" world we need to think about the challenge to, "buy up the time, for the days are indeed evil", Ephesians 5:14-21. If the Lord leads us to establish a new mission, it is to be with the power of the Holy Spirit **ALONE** that it must be established, for nothing other than God's power, plan and guidance will succeed in the world we find ourselves in. If God does not build the house those that labour do so in vain. Psalm 127:1-2. The time is past to waste on hobbies believer – lets walk in the Spirit and serve the Lord with focused energy and spiritual and mental clarity. Let us do His work alone.

**Ephesians 5:14-21** *"14. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*

*15. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,*

*16. Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

*17. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

*18. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;*

*19. Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*

*20. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;*

*21. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."*

We must trust God not people, and depend upon prayer power, not marketing or asking others for resources to fulfil our own plans. Our first principle is therefore PRAYER, for the Lord to open the doors of opportunities, and provide what is needed directly to enable HIS work to be done, with personnel and material provisions. Prayer = His Plan – His Provision.

With the control of the internet steadily, even rapidly post-Covid 19, slipping into anti-Christian hands through advancing globalization, we need to remember this and the following principles, and apply them prayerfully. As we have followed the Lord's directions through the years we have been led to undertake work just before it was desperately needed. Read book 150 – "Providence and EBCWA". The Lord knows when and what is required and where, and if we are **led by the Lord alone** we will never be late delivering what the local church needs.

Walk in the filling of the Holy Spirit alone; do not think you have strategies and plans that will work, for God has THE plan for your life, settled from eternity past, and it alone will work for you now and forever, to the glory of God! **Ephesians 5:14-21,**

**Isaiah 55:6-11.** *"6. Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:*

*7. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

*8. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*

*9. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

*10. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater:*

*11. So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."*

It is also an EBCWA principle that we do not ask anyone for money. We are a "Faith Mission", and that means we pray, we work, we announce what God is doing, and leave provision to the sovereign will of the Lord. If resources are not there and we cannot advance with ease, then we slowly advance prayerfully, but wait upon the Lord for clear direction and resource, for it is the Lord's harvest, not ours. If we cannot move forward through lack of funds, in the Lord's Sovereign Plan, it is because another has the job, or we are not ready.

There is no need or occasion for panic, for although the days are limited before the Lord's return, time isn't "running out"! **God is always on time**, and we are to walk with the Lord in His time and place, and all that is done will be timely, powerful, and significant eternally. The days are indeed short to the end, but it is God's Plan, and with obedience we can achieve all He wants us to do before we are called home. The challenge is to "faith-rest-obey" His Plan, not panic and try to "second guess" or "help" God by making our own "helpful suggestions".

We pray and wait for open doors, but we do not ever ask others for funds. God will move upon donors as He has moved on us, and HE will weave us together for His Glory and our joy as we see it unfolding. Paul sets us the example when facing apparently closed doors in **Acts 16:6-12**. He is steered away from Ephesus, and yet he will later visit Ephesus and do major work there, but in God's timing. It's all about God's timing, God's power, in God's way!

If we feel "led" to establish a ministry, but resources are lacking locally, we must get upon our knees and seek the way the Lord wants it established. Our experience is that it will be done without large buildings needing to be purchased, or any equipment initially. God has led us to establish Bible Colleges in ways that do not have any administrative costs, and where the Lord provides the money for the pastors to do what is required on a weekly basis, with each week often beginning without resources to meet current needs. We walk by faith – we trust and we pray and we advance in humility expecting the Lord to provide for His Work, and he always does. It is God's work, not ours, and so all logistical matters are God's concern.

### **EBCWA Operating Principles**

1. If the Lord leads us in a direction the Lord will provide for us there, if it is truly His Plan and His time for the plan to be executed. Pray for the Lord's provisions alone, for it is HIS work, and HIS glory will be seen through it.

2. Do not ask any person for money, simply announce the ministry and advance into it in prayer, seeking the Lord's provision as you go. God rarely gives lots of money to establish things, but seeks our walk of faith to ensure things are provided when needed in a way that honours Him and brings glory to His holy name. Jesus gets the glory when it is HIS work – not our human efforts. A basic rule for us – we stay away from people looking for glory and fame on earth.... We are not here to build earthly CVs, or gain earthly honours; we seek heavenly rewards/crowns only.

3. Gather prayer warriors around you immediately, and have them pray daily for the needs, but open your eyes and seek the humble brother/sister with the loaves and fishes, not the "Rich Young Rulers" who hold onto their wealth. God works through the poor and rich people, but only those who commit themselves to him with all they have. We do not "target" wealthy people to ask them to give, we target prayer and remain open to what the Lord wants done, not any plans of arrogant men and women, who may think they know more than they actually do. **Jeremiah 10:23-25**.

4. Do not seek a trouble free path, for it will probably not be the Lord's path. **Matthew 7:13-23** tells us that the Lord's path is always the "narrow/constricted" way. As HE warned us, we have to squeeze through tight places on His path, in prayer and with perspiration at times. Pray, trust, wait, and move as the door opens and you will have the resources to advance through it. God's good name and glory is at stake in HIS work. It is not our work, nor our ministry, it's the Lord's, and He leads, guides and empowers. Its about His people, not ours!

5. Do not wait for a full bank account, for what is "full"? Step out and minister as the door opens and you have the opportunity, and the funds to arrive at the place of ministry, and speak there. If you cannot reach the place, you are not meant to be there. Be ready to personally work in manual labour, your trade, or in any task that you can, to fund your own ministry. All ministries must be LOCAL and supported locally. Do not fall into the "American Prosperity Gospel" trap, for it is a lie – overseas support can be easily severed and it is now clear that it will be in coming years, as money laundering rules take effect, and are used against Christian organizations, not the cyber criminals. We stand with the Apostle Paul, and

he worked by day and preached by night, or through the heat of the day when others rested.  
**Acts 18:1-3, 19:8-12, 1 Corinthians 4:9-16, 15:9-11**

6. EBCWA was established with this Pauline (and biblical) mental attitude. Paul didn't pray over handkerchiefs, he sweated as he worked, and it was those sweat cloths that healed the sick. Many women and men today seek "sweat-less" ministry, but God's Holy Word indicates that such are fake and crooked. God works with those who sweat in the work! If you are not ready to do that you must find another group to work with. We are not magicians like Harry Potter with his wand, but workers in the Lord's vineyard, and so we are ready for the heat of the mid-day sun, and we will work into the night if the harvest requires it. We don't work with lazy people not ready to sweat, for the Lord never uses such people.

7. EBCWA began with myself (Dr McEwan) very ill, and very poor, through inability to work. Read Book 150 – be amazed at what God has done!!! We were given premises to use (we never owned them, and moved on from them four years later) and started without any funds above those needed to get the building useful. I provided my own transport (or was driven by students) and each person their own bibles and study books, and we started. God blessed greatly as we advanced, but not with money in abundance, just enough to advance to the end with joy in our hearts. Holy Spirit power and direction only – proved by spiritual fruit.

8. In the prisons of Southern and Western Africa we see the same things happening today (2011-2022). The prisoners have a Bible from the Bible Society, and note paper and pencils provided from the guards, and the lecturer has an EBCWA study booklet and their Bible, and they begin with nothing else. We now provide the notes on CD/flash drive to be down loaded onto any Prison computers, and the Power Points are included to use when teaching the Diploma Course if the facility has a projector and computer, but these are not needed. In your local situation, my beloved brother and sister, just start with a set of teaching notes and your Bible open, but start with prayer and work with prayer, and end with prayer. We found that the prison authorities themselves provided printing for prisoners as the courses advanced when they saw the "fruit" in the lives of the prisoners. **Matthew 7:13-23**. Prisons were transformed by the course and the prison officers provided help for the men and women they once despised and feared, who they now saw were their brothers or sisters in Christ.

9. **STARTING OUT** - Prepare yourself by studying the Course from the CD/USB or website. Be ready to teach it, as God only uses prepared people. Pray for the People, and the Premises as I did all those years ago. Step out to meet the needs with your Bible open and the notes under your arm, and see the Lord provide for what the poor need in your local area. If it is Bibles, pray for that need to be met. If it is for pencils and paper, pray for that to be met, or transport, pray for that.

10. Do not wait for computers, power point projectors, or cars to drive you to the place of ministry! If they are there use them, but do not depend on expensive technology, use the simplest things, for Satan finds the simplest things the hardest to oppose and destroy. Be like Paul, work and provide for your own team yourself and advance into the God anointed ministry.

Trust God, and build a local ministry, and serve the local churches by training the next generation of godly leaders.

Do not depend upon foreigners, for contact with them can be easily cut off by the enemy, as we are seeing happening in the Post-Covid 19 world, by selective use of the money laundering laws against Christian missions. Borders can close, but God's work will always get through any locks foolish men put on doors. Nothing stops the Lord's Plan – pray and advance when, how and as you have been ordered to, and do so in confident assurance that God will empower as you go forward – always forward like the apostles. Jude 3.

Trust the Lord alone and keep as low profile and low cost as you can, for Satan finds it hard to eliminate poor people who have no support structures to destroy. High profile and high budget enterprises can be easily destroyed by scandal and fraud. Do not seek fame; seek

service. Do not desire earthly power and wealth; walk in the Filling of the Holy Spirit and discover real wealth and power in Christ Jesus.

**Jeremiah 45:1-5.** *“1. The word that Jeremiah the prophet spake unto Baruch the son of Neriah, when he had written these words in a book at the mouth of Jeremiah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, saying,  
2. Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch:  
3. Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest.  
4. Thus shalt thou say unto him, The LORD saith thus; Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land.  
5. And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.”*

We always have prayer, no matter the weather or the state of our health and finances, and we can work and perspire in the Lord's work. With God's provision of power, people and His Plan we are unstoppable by Satan and his dysfunctional team. “Greater is HE that is within us, than he that is in the world”. **1 John 4:4.**

Let us do what the Lord calls us to do, and trust God alone. If God builds, no man, or woman, or demon can tear down God's work unless they have God's personal permission!

Jesus our Saviour, Lord, and King can be trusted. Let us walk with Him, and worship Him as we walk forward into today.

Your brother in the Lord,

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Auckland New Zealand 25 April 2022

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## **Appendix 1.**

### **THE BLASPHEMOUS NATURE OF THE SO CALLED “PROSPERITY GOSPEL”**

Satan hasn't needed to invent new evils for thousands of years, for our Old Sin Nature is well known to him since the beginning. In the Garden of Eden he began his path of deceit for mankind by leading our ancestors astray after their own lusts rather than obedience to the Lord's clear commands. This remains the issue – Trust and Obey the Lord, or deception?

As all marketing executives understand, greed and the desire for wealth and ease is the universal desire of all members of Old Sin Nature dominated mankind. Greed, as one crooked businessman pointed out to me one day, is the only dependable human emotion and drive. Like all lust, greed is **not good**. It is a great evil that despises and abuses all others for the sake of the greedy person's lust being met.

The Bible has warned against this satanic evil from the beginning, but we see it written large in our modern church, where prosperity in time is seen as more important than heavenly rewards. The catch cry of these new preachers of unrighteousness is, “have it now and have it later”, or “have it now and don't think about later!” God's Word from the beginning has warned against these servants of the enemy and their viewpoint, but it has satanically deceptive force, and it always has to those who want an easy life and a comfortable journey through this life.

Many prefer the "Broadway" of life's pleasures to the narrow/constricted and thorn surrounded mountainous path that the Lord tends to call his disciples to follow. **Matthew 7:13-23**. Some live in the palaces of this world like Daniel, but most of us are called to walk with Ezekiel and Jeremiah the "narrow/constricted path" that all too often involves suffering, sickness, and pressure filled situations. Even Daniel suffered these things, although living in a palace. The majority will sadly follow after deception, but this booklet is a trumpet call in these last days before events unfold, to all believers who wish to walk in spirit and in truth, and honour the Lord, rather than satisfy their lust for ease, power or pleasure.

This is not me being dramatic, it is sad and biblical truth, so please believer hear the Lord's call to your heart. Read also the short paper – "Suffering and the So Called Prosperity Gospel" on the CD/USB – and set up your ministry Jesus way, not according to American pagan marketing principles!

**Matthew 7:13-23.** *"13. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:  
14. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.  
15. Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.  
16. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?  
17. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.  
18. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.  
19. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.  
20. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.  
21. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.  
22. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?  
23. And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."*

**Proverbs 6:16-23.** *"16. These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:  
17. A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,  
18. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,  
19. A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.  
20. My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother:  
21. Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.  
22. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.  
23. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:"*

We are told very clearly that persecution and pressures may await us on our road with the Lord through life, and that these things are not the sign of us being in sin, but are the sign that the "prince of this present world" may "hate" us for Jesus sake. The Lord reminds us that the Holy Spirit is given as the "Comforter" in all such pressures, not as the "money counter" to count our wealth and success, nor to calculate costs and losses! We are not to be guided by monetary considerations, only the Holy Spirit's leading, into the path God has called us to walk! We have one brief "strut upon the stage of life", and it must be God's Plan, not our own pathetic "frets and lusts" that are followed, or all life and opportunity is wasted indeed.

**John 15:18-27.** *"18. If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.  
19. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.  
20. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."*

21. *But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.*
22. *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.*
23. *He that hateth me hateth my Father also.*
24. *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.*
25. *But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.*
26. *But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*
27. *And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."*

In this world he told us we will have "trouble", not prosperity as the norm, but that through the power of the Lord through the Holy Spirit within (1 John 4:4), we can be overcomers against all pressures that will come in God's power and provision. God's provision to achieve all he calls us to do will always be "abundant" (100% sufficient) as Paul and the others found, and we are called to faith-rest our lives in that divine provision to achieve the divine purpose.

- Hebrews 11:1-3.** *"1. Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*  
*2. For by it the elders obtained a good report.*  
*3. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."*

**John 16:33.** *"33. These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."*

The Lord will supply all we need in order to fulfil the divine commission for our lives, but never to fulfil self centred prayer lists that are based on our lust for ease, wealth and fame, but the Lord will always "fill up" all we need for worship, service and the needs of others and ourselves to do the on-going work. We are here to worship, work, and witness, not waste.

- Philippians 4:10-19.** *"10. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.*  
*11. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*  
*12. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*  
*13. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*  
*14. Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction.*  
*15. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.*  
*16. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.*  
*17. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account.*  
*18. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God.*  
*19. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*  
*20. Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

If we have great prosperity we give thanks and pour it out to the Lord's work, for all he gives is for service, not self centred enjoyment. Nothing in the Church Age is for ourselves, it is all for the body and to bring glory to Him not ourselves. Who gets the glory? Notice Paul's words in the letter to Philippi above. He is under pressure as many times as he is "abounding", but in all circumstances, and in all situations he is seeking the glory of the Lord and expecting the Lord to "come through" with all he will need to do the work. The Lord always does! Its never however about our lust based desires, but about his Plan and our desire to fulfil it 100% in our short lives. **Habakkuk 2:4, Mark 11:24, Galatians 5:1.**

In case we have any doubts about the apostolic message being the same as the Lord's words we have Luke's account of Paul's ministry below, where he notes his message to the earliest churches after the Lord had raised him from the dead, when he was stoned to death at Lystra. Note the text here, for Paul has apparently been killed by the mob and then raised from the dead – and he just relaxes and keeps ministering. He always focuses forward, never backwards. He doesn't spend the rest of his life giving "testimony meetings", he serves the Lord's people by training and evangelizing. Its not about him, its always about Jesus!

**Acts 14:19-28** *"19. And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium, who persuaded the people, and having stoned Paul, drew him out of the city, supposing he had been dead.*

*20. Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up, and came into the city: and the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe.*

*21. And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,*

*22. Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*

*23. And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.*

*24. And after they had passed throughout Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.*

*25. And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:*

*26. And thence sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.*

*27. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.*

*28. And there they abode long time with the disciples."*

Dealing with pressure situations and growing spiritually through faith applied in the Holy Spirit's power was the "norm" for the apostles and their expectation for all the new believers. We believe that this remains the Lord's expectation for us all. We are to grow in the "grace and the knowledge of the Lord", **2 Peter 3:18**, and be ready to follow our Lord into any situation he calls us to walk through with his hand holding ours.

Everywhere we walk in his plan for our life we have the filling of the Holy Spirit to comfort us and the Lord beside us for living fellowship, but it may be through fire and great darkness at times. It is His Light and His Word and Spirit that comforts us in such places. Hear Peter's and Paul's encouragement, and see and understand clearly the true nature of the "normal" Christian walk through this present world.

**1 Peter 2:18-22.** *"18. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*

*19. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.*

*20. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*

*21. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

*22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:"*

**1 Peter 4:12-19.** *"12. Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:*

*13. But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

*14. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.*

*15. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters.*

*16. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.*

17. For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?  
18. And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?  
19. Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.”

**Romans 5:1-11.** “1. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:  
2. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.  
3. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;  
4. And patience, experience; and experience, hope:  
5. And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.  
6. For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.  
7. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.  
8. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.  
9. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.  
10. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.  
11. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.”

Paul’s expectation was that pressure situations would be normal for the believer under satanic attack in the intensified stage of the Angelic Conflict that follows the Cross, the Empty Tomb, and Pentecost. The victory of the Cross and Empty Tomb has defeated Satan strategically, but we are urged to keep our armour on, for the defeated enemy is rage filled at his defeat, and seeks to destroy any careless believer who does not go about fully spiritually armed and filled in the Holy Spirit!

We now walk a victorious battlefield in this world, and the ultimate eternal Victory is assured for the Holy Spirit filled believer, but alertness is called for each and every moment of every day, for the enemy’s troops still walk about and they remain malice filled. Do a word study of the military command words, “alert”, “stand” and see how many times believers are given “orders” that would be appropriate to troops on a battlefield, not any parade ground.

We are living still on a battlefield where the Lord Jesus Christ defeated the enemy of mankind, but where the enemy is still fighting any rear guard actions he can to maim and kill believers. This present world is not a palace where we relax but remains a battlefield, where deceptive enemies lie about pretending they are no threat but will kill the unwary and unarmed. The “Marriage Supper of the Lamb” is relaxing time and that is to come, but only after the Church is with the Lord in heaven. Revelation 19. Until then we are alert and work!

Until that eternal relaxation and celebration time we are soldiers and ambassadors of the court of heaven in enemy occupied territory, even though it is the blood soaked ground of the Lord’s victory over sin and death. Evil is yet to be removed, but we are 100% sure that it will be finally defeated and removed – but that is at the Lord’s Second Advent, and until then we are his soldiers and ambassadors, and we have the mental attitude of farmers and athletes.

So let us stand to attention – as the soldiers of the Lord, and let us hear his “Daily Orders” for the Church Age and be obedient to his commands to us. We prove our love by following his orders, not ignoring them, for then we will be deceived by the agents of the enemy who have infiltrated the churches. Satan has always put his best, that is, his most dangerous people into the churches where they can do the most damage.

**John 15:14, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.** Paul certainly experienced all that the Lord warned us all of – false brethren were actually trying to kill Paul at times.



## CHURCH AGE “DAILY ORDERS” FOR ALL BELIEVERS

**Ephesians 6:10-18.** “10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

15. And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

16. Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

18. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;”

**James 4:7-10.** “7. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

8. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

9. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

10. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”

**1 Peter 5:6-10.** “6. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

8. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

11. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

**James 1:12-19, 26-27.** “12. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted by God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16. Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

19. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

26. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

27. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

James is very blunt about the reality of pressure, the “normal” nature of trouble and temptation, and the need to stand against it without blaming anyone else, and then he warns

us to be wary of the great dangers coming from rich and powerful people who will abuse the saints, and the danger of the saints being deceived by riches, as Demas was finally, preferring the temporary ease of this world to eternal rewards in the next. 2 Timothy 4:10.

**James 5:1-6, 10-11.** *"1. Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.*

*2. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth eaten.*

*3. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.*

*4. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.*

*5. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.*

*6. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.*

*10. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.*

*11. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy."*

Paul speaks also of "deceitful lusts", **Ephesians 4:22**, whereby believers are conned into following after things that do not matter and ignoring the eternal things that will actually bring glory to the Lord Jesus. The majority are sadly fools deceived by the devious! He speaks confidently of our victory in Christ Jesus, and he assures the Roman Church that they can never be separated from the Love and Power of the Lord Jesus Christ even though they will most certainly go through great pressure situations and many may give their lives for the Lord.

**Romans 8:35-39.** *"35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*36. As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

*37. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

*38. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*39. Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

**Romans 12:10-15.** *"10. Be kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;*

*11. Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;*

*12. Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;*

*13. Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.*

*14. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.*

*15. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep."*

Many in this church at Rome suffered and died in the persecution of 65-67 AD, including Peter and his wife, and Paul. The author of Hebrews reminds us that we are all being cheered on from the stands of eternity by all the great saints of the past, who watch with interest our struggles and triumphs as we battle our way through the angelic conflict. In a battlefield who isn't fighting? The answer is of course = the coward, and the one who stays out of the fighting for other reasons than cowardice, like laziness or lusts.

What are we to make of people who speak of and seek after wealth and power now as their right before the sight of the saints who gave their lives for the Lord? What must the saints of the past who suffered and died for their testimony say in heaven as they watch and hear the prosperity focused believers and "make believers" of today? What are we to say in light of the multitude of believers who even today are giving their lives for the Lord in many lands and suffering great want?

Do we accuse the holy martyrs and suffering saints in persecuted lands of being sinners? Are they in error because of their present poverty and suffering? Are believers who suffer today in sin, do they lack faith, or are they just being asked to walk a harder path than us at this point, and may they possibly even win more eternal rewards than us?

**Hebrews 11:32 – 12:3.** *“32. And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets:*

*33. Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.*

*34. Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.*

*35. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:*

*36. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:*

*37. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;*

*38. (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*

*39. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:*

*40. God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

*12:1. Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,*

*2. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

*3. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”*

We are on dangerous ground here if we accuse any persecuted, poor or sick believer of being in error, for Job's counsellors were all prosperity gospel preachers and accused Job of sin, and our Almighty God condemns them all to death, and Job's prayer for them alone saved their lives! **Job 42:7-9.** Read these verses and be warned.... The whole book of Job opposes the “prosperity gospel” message, for the preachers of all such nonsense are roundly condemned by the Lord, as being in satanic (though well meaning in their own eyes, and sincere) error! Job's prayer for these false brethren/theologians alone saved their lives from God's execution of them!

God forbid that we insult the martyrs of yesterday or today – and yet this is exactly what the prosperity gospel preachers do every time they praise their own big cars, palatial homes and lavish life styles, and then seek more money from God's people to pay for their expenses.

In light of this discussion what are we to expect as we face the “last days” of this present age? Sadly it is to see more and more of these falsehoods proclaimed by deceived and deceiving men and women. The satanic nature of the prosperity gospel message is clear when you realise that every dollar given to these so called “ministries” is a dollar that isn't going into a genuine ministry that is bringing glory to the Lord.

Every person deceived by this evil message is sadly a person who later walks away from the Lord feeling “let down” by the false promises of the slick preachers of what I call “cash-Christendom”, and yet they have never met the real Jesus who is with us in trouble and distress. John 16:33. Do you believe the words of the Real Jesus, or are you being swayed by the paper back fiction of false theology?

Let us tell ourselves the truth brethren, and stand against this old evil in its new guise. Let us silence the false brethren like the “counsellors/persecutors of Job” who abound in our own

day. We are well warned that we will have many of them about! False brethren and false prophets have always outnumbered the true in history!

**2 Timothy 3:1-5, 4:1-5.** *“3:1. This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.  
2. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,  
3. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,  
4. Traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;  
5. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.  
4:1. I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;  
2. Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.  
3. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;  
4. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.  
5. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.  
6. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.  
7. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:  
8. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”*

Let us choose our company believers! Let us select the company of the genuine saints like Job and the apostles of the Lord, not these make believer “aints”, in their white suits and patent leather shoes, who preach whatever they think will “sell” for their own benefit, and the robbery of the genuine Church. The fake preachers take money away from genuine mission, every time any saint is deceived by them, and gives to their fake program, and so robs the genuine work of legitimate support.

Let us select our company and be comfortable with the words of the apostles, and stand in the apostolic faith. Jude 3. We stand with our brethren who have suffered and died for their faith down the years and lest we stand ashamed before them and our Lord we do not seek a rose covered path through this life, but we seek the Lord’s only path for us, and whatever that brings to us.

We welcome any wealth that comes for it will be provision for ministry, not funds for self centred pleasure. We seek the blessing and abundance of the Lord’s provision for His Worship and Work, not our rest and relaxation. One great modern saint who gives millions of dollars a year to ministry said, “I have learned that the more I shovel out to the Lord, the more the Lord shovels back into my businesses, and the Lord always has a bigger shovel than me”. If we are prospered, as this man is in the Lord, it is to pour blessing to the glory of Jesus, not buy another new half million dollar car to add to our garage full of classic cars!

We stand as the Lord’s soldiers, fully armed and filled with the Holy Spirit ready to worship, serve and minister to the saints, and we look to heaven for our provisions and our ever-lasting rewards. We stand with Paul, not the fakes of the money making satanic circus. Hear Jesus words from Matthew 7, “few there be that find it (the true path)”.

## **REAPING AND SOWING**

The preachers of the “Prosperity Gospel” will often quote from selected passages and draw “principles” from them, but beware that the texts they quote are not taken out of their context, and so do not actually teach something significantly different to the things these men and women are arguing.

Their favourite texts are Malachi 3:8-10, and 2 Corinthians 9:6. They are representative of the others they will use, and so I will address them briefly here to underline the message that

we have already seen above. The key background message of all the Scriptures, Old Testament and New Testament, is that **God blesses us that we might be a blessing to others**, and that the “blessing” may be material for some, but it may not, but whatever the Lord blesses us with, it is never for self centred enjoyment, but to pour out blessing to others to the glory of the Lord Jesus name and the uplifting of his Church.

Let us examine the principles of Malachi chapter 3. The first thing to notice about this chapter is it speaks of the Coming of the Lord to Israel as their Messiah. It speaks of the first messenger who announces the Lord (John the Baptist – Elijah figure) and the prophetic word given here in 450-399 BC was fulfilled 100% in the Lord's first Advent 29-32 AD.

It is a strong condemnation of the hypocrisy in the days of Malachi, and right through to the days when the Lord himself will come. Pharisaic hypocrisy was a major target for the Lord's attention in his First Advent. The Lord told many parables relating to money and giving, and challenged religious and legalistic hypocrisy in every way. These challenges remain relevant to us and the two Biblical Doctrines relating to GIVING are below set out by points to follow this up, for we are all challenged to “give as unto the Lord”, and do so until he returns, or we join him through the door of death.

The “tithe” was not just a ten percentage gift, it was actually the “income tax” for the temple upkeep in ancient Israel. In the Doctrinal summaries listed below it is spelled out more fully, but the annual tithe, depending on the specific year in the agricultural cycle, could be a ten percentage payment, or up to 23.3% in some years, including a gift for the “poor of the land” also. “Free will offerings” were always **on top of** the basic 10 - 23.3 % “tithe”.

The problem in Malachi's day is that the people were lying about their annual returns from agricultural/business profits and so were “robbing” the temple and the Levites of the needed funds to keep the temple sacrifices operating. The temple and the sacrifices spoke of the coming Messiah, and so it was vital that they operated properly as they prepared for his arrival and spoke of His person and His work!

To fail to fulfil their obligation to support the Levites, the Temple, and the poor of the land, was to “rob God” of the witness to the coming Messiah and to show contempt for the Mosaic Law and the Lord's plan for Israel as the “light bearer nation” before the gentiles. It was a serious insult to God, just as believers today failing to support the local church, and its work, and their pastor, and yet expect the church to “be there for them”.

The key issue is what is to be our mental attitude as we give? Do we give in grace and gratitude, in joy at what the Lord has poured out upon us, or do we calculate our giving to the percentage point and give “what is required”? Paul speaks about this, following up the many parables of the Lord, in 2 Corinthians chapters 8-9, and these chapters are referred to below in the two doctrinal studies.

It is our ministry's position that we give in grace and gratitude, not in legalistic calculation of what is the “correct amount”. We believe that church age believers, following the parables the Lord told, and the teaching of the apostles, give abundantly, as the Lord has prospered us and we are able to give, and that giving may be in time, talents, spiritual gifting, goods or money. Malachi's people had a strict calculation to stick to, to support temple, Levites and the poor, and they were robbing God by not meeting that requirement, but they are being challenged to give far more as a free will offering also on top of any obligatory tithes.

The issue for Malachi, and as the Lord's prophet, the issue for the Lord, is that their slack giving of the tithe is a reflection of their slackness in love towards the Lord their God. They need to return to the right level of love towards the Lord first, well before they re-open their wallets. (Verse 7 – Revelation 3:19-22.) Malachi will go on to describe the sort of life-style of the “lover of the Lord” who will be speaking often of the Lord, not just calculating their offering! Malachi 3:16-18.

The issue is not that the Lord will “double their investment” with him in giving. The issue is that if they get their love for the Lord right, then they will meet their obligations towards his

holy temple and the Levites who run it, and they will support the poor! As James identifies, building on the Lord's words, recorded in Matthew chapters 6 and 25, if we get our heart right towards the Lord we will have all else right. That means we will give to the Lord's work and we will support our poorer brethren! James 1:22 – 2:26.

That means, as Paul notes in 2 Corinthians 8-9, that we will pour with joy all we are able to give towards the Lord's work. As the Lord has prospered we will give. That means we will not try to give when we actually need to receive, as we have no money, but even if we have no money at this point we will still give, but it will be our time, energy, work, or some other thing. Whatever we give it will be given with joy not with any expectation of getting back, and we will give without a calculator in our hands.

The Lord will meet our needs so that we can meet the needs of the churches, but note here, it is the meeting of needs not the meeting of lusts or "wants". We give freely and with joy, and we must be ready to receive if we have need to at times, without embarrassment, if we face the famines that this world brings at times.

The prosperity gospel preachers miss the obvious here, that we are to support each other, for good and spiritual brethren are at times "poor" and will need our help and we may need theirs at some point. The Jerusalem Church helped the others early on but later needed help to deal with a famine there. They were not spiritual in wealth and carnal when they needed help – they were spiritual both times, and so were the others who received help from them, and then later helped them. The believer needs to be ready to "abound" and "be abased", and that means we are to be ready to receive gifts from others and then give gifts as we are able later.

**Philippians 4:9-13.** *"9. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

*10. But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.*

*11. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*

*12. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.*

*13. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."*

Any prosperity we have here is to "pour out" to the glory of the Lord, and any need we have is to be poured out before the Lord, 1 Peter 5:5-10, knowing that He will meet our needs in accordance with the riches that are in our relationship with Christ Jesus. Romans 9:23, Ephesians 2:2-8, Philippians 4:19.

We are to be relaxed about wealth and goods, seeing them as mere "details of this present life", and be ready to give them away to assist the Lord's work and people, and ready to receive them from others when we have need. "Things" we temporarily "own" here on earth are no indication of spirituality, they are just "details of this life", each to be used or received, to do the work we are called to do on our walk through this very short life. Spirituality is walking in the Holy Spirit, not a matter of material or financial wealth, or the lack of it!

Let us stand with the apostles ready to pour ourselves out to the glory of God and the blessing of our brethren, and let us stand against those who wish to make the churches into money making rackets to feed their own and other's lusts. Even if the majority of churches teach this evil nonsense we will stand with the Lord and the Apostles in the biblical faith; and we urge you to join us in holding to truth on the "narrow way" with Jesus, not the "broad way" of this fake movement that leads only to destruction for all deceived by its satanic message.

We are here for the glory of the Lord Jesus – and so let us use all we have for His Glory and seek any way we can find to assist his saints, our brethren that all that blesses us might be a blessing to others. We are called to "Servant Leadership" not earthly prosperity and power or fame. Let us walk the narrow path with our Lord, and rejoice in His joy and love.

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