

Today is another milestone for Geri and me . . . it's our 46th anniversary!

Blessings to all and MYESE!

Part 17: Elevate Your Life

Text:

Ephesians 2:6 (NIV) - *"and God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."*

Luke 9:1 (NIV) - "When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases.

Matthew 17:24-27 (KJV) - "And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? Of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

From our series on the "Twelve Dimensions of Spiritual Authority," today we shall speak about Level Six:

"Taking Authority Over Resources"

A. (See YouTube video: Bro Franklin Dancing in Church--Kingdom Swag 1:11).

1. No doubt, this video of a man dancing in church as people bring their tithe and offering will have a variety of responses, such as:
 - a. Did he just win the lottery?
 - b. Perhaps he likes to have fun in church.
 - c. Is this a carnal, fleshly demonstration to gain attention?
 - d. Could this be part of the culture he's known all his life?
2. My thinking is quite different. Let's suppose Bro. Franklin didn't win the lottery, he isn't being carnal, and it is not part of his culture. Could he be dancing because he just realized how blessed he is to have the privilege of giving his tithe and offering? Or, maybe he truly **believes** what the Bible teaches about giving!

B. To experience lasting elevation requires that we take authority over financial resources. Undoubtedly, this is God's plan for His people.

1. The truth is, the church needs some serious MON-NEY to complete the assignment God has given us. Not "money," but MON-NEY—in the same category as men like Bill Gates, Warren Buffet, the late Steve Jobs with Apple Computers, or a Saudi Prince! I'm talking about **supernatural resources!**
2. The definition of "abundance" is actually relative. What may seem like a huge sum to one person could be very little to another.
3. Years ago, we loved to tease Charles Mahaney, a minister friend of mine who was as big around the middle as he was tall, about his monstrous appetite. Before God saved him, Charles was a member of a rough biker gang and had been in prison 17 different times. His conversion was so tremendous, it included a distinct call from God for ministry. Once as Charles was preaching, a guy approached him and tried to shove him around. Charles calmly said, "You had better pray I don't backslide while you're doing that."

The guy laughed and asked, "Why?" Charles said, "Because I used to walk over bigger guys than you while getting to the fight!"

After God saved him, Charles became quite a cut-up and always enjoyed being teased and teasing others. I heard that one time he pulled up to the window of Popeye's Chicken and placed his order for a bucket of chicken, all the side dishes, and a two-liter Diet coke. Then he turned to his wife and asked, "Nina, what do you and the boys want?"

4. **Joke:** Golf Clubs from the Sheik.

A businesswoman cut a deal that made millions for an Arabian oil sheik. As she was leaving his office, the sheik offered to buy her diamonds and rubies or a silver-plated Rolls Royce, but she declined. As he continued to insist, she replied that she had just begun to play golf and that a set of golf clubs would be nice.

A few weeks later, she received a telegram from the sheik that read, "So far I have bought you three golf clubs. I hope you aren't disappointed that only two of them have swimming pools."

5. From an earlier text in this series in Matthew 21, Jesus demonstrated some incredible spiritual authority. The chief priests and religious leaders were so amazed, they asked where He had received this authority?

a. **Matthew 21:23 (NET)** - "Now after Jesus entered the temple courts, the chief priests and elders of the people came up to him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?"

6. The three demonstrations that amazed them were:

a. Authority over resources – two disciples were told to bring Jesus a stranger's colt that had never been ridden.

b. Authority over religious systems – money changers had been forcefully driven away from the temple.

c. Authority over seasons – a fig tree was cursed for not having any fruit, even though it was not yet the season for figs.

7. In another of His unusual instructions, Jesus sent Peter to catch a fish that would have a coin in its mouth that would be used to pay both of their taxes.
 - a. Have you ever considered the odds of this happening? Think of the vast numbers of fish in that lake. It was totally supernatural!
 - b. Possibly the only fish that had **ever** held a gold coin in its mouth was instructed to swim straight to the place where Peter was fishing and swallow the bait.
 8. One of Jesus' most incredible demonstrations occurred when He broke five loaves and two fish, gave the pieces to the disciples, and several thousand people enjoyed a full meal!
 9. These are only a few examples of Jesus' miraculous authority over resources. As the body of Christ on earth today, we have also been assigned this same power!
 10. Paul referred to Moses and the children of Israel as "the church in the wilderness." Even in the Old Testament, Moses was given authority to provide food and water for thousands of families and their livestock in one of the most inhospitable regions on earth. Some localities in that area only had 1/10 inch of rainfall—every ten years! Yet they were blessed with:
 - a. manna in the morning that lasted for the entire day.
 - b. a rock which followed them throughout their desert travels that poured forth a continual river of water.
- C. Without fail, God has always given His people authority to call forth necessary resources to fulfill their assignment and mission.
1. This authority supernaturally increased in proportion to the level of elevation they were experiencing.
 2. Abraham, Joseph, and many others were given this same incredible authority.

3. When the children of Israel left Egypt, God arranged for their captors to freely give them an abundance of silver and gold.
4. In the New Testament, the church had such authority over resources, they literally adopted their own welfare system for widows, orphans, and other believers who were in need.

D. For God's people to experience this authority is often a sign of divine approval.

1. **Deuteronomy 28:1-2 (NKJV)** - "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God:"
2. Seldom, if ever, do we read in scripture where God's people failed to experience authority over resources when they pleased Him.
3. This chapter continues to enumerate the many ways God promised to bless those who faithfully serve Him. Most of those promises concern resources. For example:
 - a. **Deuteronomy 28:8 (NKJV)** - "The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you."
 - b. **Deuteronomy 28:11 (NKJV)** - "And the Lord will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the Lord swore to your fathers to give you."
4. A strong economy is a sure sign of God's favor upon a nation or government. Notice what happened to Israel during King Solomon's reign. Abundant resources were enjoyed by all--not just the ruling elite.

- a. **1 Kings 10:27 (KJV)** - "And the king made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the vale, for abundance."
5. God so enjoys blessing people, He often sends abundant provision to those who *aren't* practicing righteousness—just so He can lead them to repentance!
 - a. **Romans 2:4 (NKJV)** - "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?"
6. On the other hand, a lack of resources among God's people often indicates that something is not right.
 - a. **Haggai 1:6-7 (NKJV)** - "You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; And he who earns wages, Earns wages to put into a bag with holes. Thus says the Lord of hosts: "Consider your ways!"
7. Our "ways" are often the problem—not God! The good news is that our *ways* can be corrected!
8. Today, let's cancel the enemy's assignments against us. It's time to release and claim authority over resources!