



# Breaking the Hold of Poverty

In the life of a Believer



'The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is upon me, for the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to comfort the broken-hearted and to proclaim that captives will be released and prisoners will be freed.' Isaiah 61:1

**What is poverty? Very simply, poverty is the state of being inferior in quality or insufficient in amount.** Poverty doesn't only relate to money although that's the primary area it attacks. It could be poverty of imagination, of health, relationships, anywhere there's insufficiency then poverty is in operation.

Why then do some believers still experience lack and insufficiency? Didn't Jesus pay the price to secure our freedom in every area? Jesus completely fulfilled all the legal requirements for our freedom. However, we may not have the full understanding of the price He paid and what it gives us access to which may in turn limit what we experience. When we receive this revelation of what we have access to, we will start looking at some of the things we entertain in our lives differently.

This series we are looking at the salvation Jesus wrought for us concerning poverty in our lives, the price He paid for us and 8 reasons that believers may not be experiencing the abundance Jesus paid for.

Our prayer is that God will grant us a spirit of revelation and show us what is in His heart concerning poverty and prosperity as it concerns His children.

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## Day 1

### The Payment

And to the man he said, “Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it. It will grow thorns and thistles for you, though you will eat of its grains. By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made...” Genesis 3:17-19 NLT

Genesis 1 tells us that everything God made was good, however in Genesis 3 because of Adam’s actions, God cursed the land that used to yield easily to him before. As a result of the curse the concepts of toil and insufficiency were introduced to the land. However, the death of Jesus on the cross which provided redemption from the curse for believers. This does not mean believers aren’t to put in their best in work – the first assignment God gave to Adam was to tend the garden which means He expects us to work. However, there is a difference between working and toiling – putting in maximum efforts and getting minimal results.

'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”)...’ Galatians 3:13

**'When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put it on His head**, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!” Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.’ Matthew 27:29-30

When Jesus was hung on the cross, He took all the curses meant for us upon Himself and paid for them with His life and blood. He wore a ‘crown’ of thorns on His head which represents the price He paid for poverty. What this means for us as believers is that we are not bound by the curse on the land anymore, Jesus paid the price, fulfilling the legal requirement for the curse not have a hold on believers.

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, open my eyes to see the things you paid for with your blood so I can experience the fullness of all you have done for me.

## Day 2

### The Possibility

'And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.' II Corinthians 9:8

Yesterday we looked at the fact that Jesus paid the price for our sins and redeemed us from the curse on the land. Remember we defined poverty as lack or insufficiency, but the Bible tells us that God is able to make us have all sufficiency in all things. What could be stopping us from experiencing this sufficiency?

'Now faith is the assurance (title deed, confirmation) of things hoped for (divinely guaranteed), and the evidence of things not seen [the conviction of their reality—faith comprehends as fact what cannot be experienced by the physical senses].' Hebrews 11:1 AMP

'So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us.' Hebrews 6:18 NLT

How do we appropriate what Jesus made available on the cross? By Faith! Does the Bible say it? Do we believe it? Then we will have what we believe. When we profess our faith in Jesus and accept Him as our saviour, we have access to all He has made available to us. But having access to something doesn't automatically mean that we have taken hold of it. It simply means the door is open to that possibility. Faith is one of the critical tools required to take hold of all we have been given access to.

It's important for us to note at this point that the devil doesn't fight fair. Even though all the demons know Jesus paid the price, if we don't know or believe our rights and benefits, we will continuously be cheated of what rightfully belongs to us. The thrust of today's message is this: know what the Bible says are your rights as a believer. Tomorrow onwards, we will look at other factors that have an impact on walking fully in all sufficiency.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, open up my understanding to comprehend my rights so it shapes how I live my life daily.

### Day 3 Soul Review

'Blessed and worthy of praise be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ' Ephesians 1:3

We have established that the price Jesus paid gives believers access to so many things, one of which is sufficiency in all areas (2 Cor 9:8). Yet many not be walking in sufficiency, talk less of abundance. One of John's prayers was that we prosper in all things as our soul prospers (3 John 1:2), which tells us that from God's perspective He prioritizes our spiritual over material prosperity. So this calls for a personal review – how is your soul doing?

'Do not be deceived, God is not mocked [He will not allow Himself to be ridiculed, nor treated with contempt nor allow His precepts to be scornfully set aside]; for whatever a man sows, this and this only is what he will reap. For the one who sows to his flesh [his sinful capacity, his worldliness, his disgraceful impulses] will reap from the flesh ruin and destruction, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.' Galatians 6:7-8

'What shall we say [to all this]? Should we continue in sin and practice sin as a habit so that [God's gift of] grace may increase and overflow? Certainly not!..' Romans 6:1-2

As believers we cannot habitually continue in things displeasing to God and expect Him to bless the works of our hands. Sin creates a divide between us and God so when mistakes are made, we should go to the Lord quickly and repent of the error. Repentance means we don't just feel bad about it, but we consciously determine not to do it again and ask the Holy Spirit to help us.

'For I envied the proud when I saw them prosper despite their wickedness. Did I keep my heart pure for nothing? Did I keep myself innocent for no reason? Then I went into your sanctuary, O God, and I finally understood the destiny of the wicked.' Psalms 73:3,13,17  
NLT

Someone may say, "But I see people doing well and they don't appear to revere God or bother with repentance so why should I?" Remember, God is more interested in the state of our soul and our eternal location than in material things. So we should be careful not to ascribe God's blessing based only on material possessions. It goes much deeper than that.

**Prayer:** Lord help me understand that the prosperity of my soul is more important than material things.



## Day 4 Scarcity Mentality

'And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.' Philippians 4:19

One of the things that can hold believers back when it comes to sufficiency is a scarcity mentality – the belief that we need to hold tightly to what we have because there isn't enough to go around for everyone. When we have this mentality then we may begin to project our expectations on whatever is providing for us at the time – a business, career or benefactor. Naturally people will do whatever they deem necessary to protect what they see as their source of sufficiency. That's why it's common to see backbiting, politicking, etc. all in a bid to get ahead and take more of the 'pie' because of the mindset that there isn't enough to go around.

'Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are?' Matthew 6:26

'The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.'  
Psalms 24:1

'And I will give you treasures hidden in the darkness— secret riches. I will do this so you may know that I am the Lord, the God of Israel, the one who calls you by name.' Isaiah 45:3

'Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you by the way you should go.' Isaiah 48:17

When we look to something/someone other than God as the source of our sustenance, we have unknowingly turned that thing/person into our idol. Because what we're signaling in the spirit is that's what we're depending on for survival. But God would have us look at things differently. His power, grace and wealth are unlimited and there is more than enough for everyone in the world plus more to spare. He alone is the true source and He can use whatever channels He chooses as a conduit for the provision. He knows how to teach us to profit in His way, without sacrificing our relationship with Him or the values we are meant to imbibe and demonstrate. Anything man provides is limited, but in God there is more than enough.

**Prayer:** Lord, help me to keep my heart and mind fixed on You alone as my source.



## Day 5 Lack of Commitment

'Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.' Galatians 4:7

God loves to bless us as every good father does, but as children of God we must recognize that we also have responsibilities. As sons we have assignments allocated to us by our Father and all have weight as far as He is concerned. Assignments don't necessarily involve being called to a pulpit ministry, in fact majority of us will function in the marketplace and we are expected to represent Him effectively there also.

'You hoped for rich harvests, but they were poor. And when you brought your harvest home, I blew it away. Why? Because my house lies in ruins, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies, while all of you are busy building your own fine houses.' Haggai 1:9

'For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.' Romans 8:19

'For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.'" Matthew 25:35-36

How committed are we to God's work? Commitment means doing what we need to do whether we feel like it or not. Is there something that needs to be done that the Lord has laid on your heart? Have you seen gaps in society that you can take responsibility for? Do we make God's work as important as our career/business? Or are we lax and only do what is convenient, after much follow up and perhaps grudgingly? These things count before the Lord. As we represent Him, His provision flows through us to enable us successfully complete the assignments given to us.

**Reflection:** What area has the Lord called you to take responsibility for? If you're not sure, Matthew 25:35-36 gives us a guide as to where we can start. The Lord will order our steps to our specific assignment as we begin to engage in any of these areas.

**Prayer:** Lord, please help me to look beyond my immediate needs and look to meet the needs of others. Give me the grace to see the area you have called me to and please equip me to represent you effectively.

## Day 6

### Broken Promises

'When you make a vow to God, do not delay to pay it; For He has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you have vowed— Better not to vow than to vow and not pay.' Ecclesiastes 5:4-5

Most of us have made vows/promises to God at some point in time. "Lord if you do this for me I will..." Let's reflect and answer ourselves honestly, when God does His part, how diligent are we to follow through on our part? Sometimes we may think that God should understand, after all the circumstances may have changed or it may not be convenient to do what we vowed.

'Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? Those who ... keep their promises even when it hurts.' Psalms 15:1,4 NLT

'But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.'...' Matthew 5:37

Thank God for His mercy, but we shouldn't make a practice of making promises we don't intend to keep, either to God or to people. If we know deep down we are unable or unwilling to do something, then it's important we don't make a commitment concerning that area. Remember God is more interested in who we are on the inside than what we profess on the outside. He honours those who keep their promises even when it's not convenient to do so.

'Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.' Luke 16:10

The promise need not be a financial one. It could be something as simple as committing to being somewhere at a particular point in time. Yes, it's possible that things could get in the way of your keeping your commitments, but what God is interested in seeing is the heart you're functioning with. He's not a legalistic task master, He will see that you're actually making efforts and you desire to fulfil that commitment but may be unable to at that point in time. This is different from those who have no real intent in the heart to keep the commitment. It's His good pleasure to provide us with everything we need, but we also need to demonstrate to Him that we can indeed be trusted with more than we currently have.

**Prayer:** Lord, please help me to be careful about the promises I make and also to be trustworthy to do what I say I will do.



## Day 7 Laziness

'Laziness casts one into a deep sleep, and an idle person will suffer hunger.' Proverbs 19:15

Laziness is defined as, 'not willing to work or put in any effort'. Note that it doesn't speak to ability but willingness. The Bible sets out clear principles for us as it relates to diligence, faithfulness and hard work. The fact that God is willing to bless the work of our hands does not mean we shouldn't put in the requisite effort. If we study God's character in the Bible, we will see that He is a God of precision and excellence who pays great attention to detail. As His children who reflect His character, we have a responsibility to give our best in both physical and spiritual pursuits.

'...for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.' Hebrews 11:6

'Do you see someone skilled in their work? They will serve before kings; they will not serve before officials of low rank.' Proverbs 22:29

We cannot have a fruitful relationship with God without diligence on our part. Likewise, there are very few who will enjoy lasting and sustained success God's way without putting in the work. We see an interesting term in Joshua 1:8 called 'good success', which tells us that it's not everything we call success that is good from God's perspective. In yielding to the Holy Spirit, He forms our character and matures us as He adds to us materially, so that we can be good and faithful stewards of what He gives us.

'Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.' Colossians 3:23

We cannot choose to be lazy in our walk with God and expect to grow in spiritual maturity. Likewise, we can't choose laziness in our field of endeavor and expect the Lord to multiply our limited efforts. As we labour in spiritual and physical areas let's not lose sight of the fact that our ultimate goal should be to draw near to and please God and Him alone. So we need to ask sincerely for guidance and help where we've been lethargic. He's able to give us the grace to overcome in the areas we've identified that we've been lazy, but we have to be ready to do our part also.

**Prayer:** Lord help me yield to your teachings as you make me diligent and hardworking in character.

## Day 8 Impatience

'While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest... shall not cease.' Genesis 8:22

There's a sequence to reaping a harvest that the Bible shows us: seed – time – harvest. This principle applies not only in agriculture but in all aspects of our lives. One of the things we need to be mindful of in our instant gratification environment is our tendency to want to eliminate the 'time' part of the sequence. And where we can't eliminate it completely, we may try and reduce it to meet our own expectations, rather than ask the Lord what He has in mind and what we're to do while we wait for the harvest.

'Wealth from get-rich-quick schemes quickly disappears; wealth from hard work grows over time.' Proverbs 13:11 NLT

'Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.' Psalms 119:105

'Remember the Lord your God. He is the one who gives you power to be successful, in order to fulfill the covenant he confirmed to your ancestors with an oath.' Deuteronomy 8:18

Remember God always takes the time to prepare us for whatever He wants to give us. When we try and short-circuit the preparation process, we're unknowingly creating a potentially dangerous situation for ourselves where we may not be able to handle what we're pushing for without damaging our walk with God. In the journey of preparation, the Holy Spirit is continuously transforming us and enlarging our capacity to be more like Jesus. So that when material things come our way we understand where the true value lies and who our source really is.

Waiting can be inconvenient and uncomfortable, but it's a critical part of the process. Waiting doesn't mean inertia, we're still going to be about our daily activities – spiritual and physical – but with the knowledge that we're in 'preparation mode'. We need to ask for the spirit of wisdom and understanding so we are sure of two critical things. One is that the delay is actually from God and not the enemy. Second is that we don't resist what God is doing and further lengthen the wait.

**Prayer:** Lord please give me wisdom concerning any areas I'm experiencing delays. Please show me what is really going on and give me understanding of what to do so I can align with your plan for my life. I trust you have only the best in mind for me.

## Day 9 Intentional Giving

'There is one who scatters, yet increases more; And there is one who withholds more than is right, But it leads to poverty.' Proverbs 11:24

Yesterday we looked at the principle of a harvest and the 3 steps (seed, time, harvest). Going further you will see that a harvest comprises of 3 elements – rain, seed and the ground. The seed comes from man, the rain that bring multiplication comes from God but there won't be a harvest if there's no ground – what the seed is planted in. What type of ground are you planting in?

“Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.' Matthew 6:19-21

It's NOT about the value of the currency. What God is looking for is where your heart lies. Do you have a heart for His work? Do you support kingdom projects? And do you do it at your convenience or with a heart of sacrifice?

'Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop... And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.' 2 Corinthians 9:6,8

Giving will not always be convenient and should not be done under pressure – but as children of God we have a responsibility to anchor and drive the growth of the Kingdom. How do we identify a kingdom project? If it was inspired by the Holy Spirit, it will always point people to Jesus and the principles of the kingdom. We must seek direction from the Holy Spirit in what we should do as not everything that looks good is necessarily God's agenda.

'But the Lord told him, 'You wanted to build the Temple to honor my name. Your intention is good, but you are not the one to do it. One of your own sons will build the Temple to honor me.'" 1 Kings 8:18-19

David wanted to build the temple, but the Lord made it clear to Him that his role wasn't to build but to provide the materials that his son would use to build. We all have a role to play so we shouldn't think that if we didn't originate the idea we can't get involved. There's always something to be done and it takes a heart of love and sacrifice to do so.

**Prayer:** Lord give me a heart that is devoted to doing your will, even when it's not convenient. Show me where you want me to give the talents, skills and substance you have blessed me with.



## Day 10 Wise Counsel

'Walk with the wise and become wise; associate with fools and get in trouble.' Proverbs 13:20

As we seek the Lord in sincerity and trust Him to direct us, He will begin to guide us and direct our paths. Sometimes we may receive divinely inspired ideas, other times the Holy Spirit may work through people who share wise counsel. Who we choose to listen to (either through direct contact, or via messages/books, etc.) has a lot to do with how we turn out. This means that as we journey with the Lord, we must be very sensitive to His leading as not every message or messenger may be appropriate for us at a particular point in time.

Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.' Proverbs 11:14

'Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty.' Proverbs 21:5

Being discerning about who we receive advice from about any area of our life, particularly our finances is critical. Ideally those we choose to take advice from are those that have demonstrated some level of proficiency in the area we want to see an increase in sufficiency – otherwise it will be a case of the blind leading the blind. More importantly, the principles they espouse should resonate with those in the Bible. Remember, God is interested in us having 'good success' which will last and not be here today, gone tomorrow.

'A wise man will hear and increase learning, and a man of understanding will attain wise counsel' Proverbs 1:5

It's impossible for us to know everything we need to know by ourselves in one lifetime so it is in our interest to learn from those the Lord brings our way with open hearts and a willingness to learn. That way we have the benefit of learning from not just the successes but also the challenges and pitfalls of others, so we don't run into the same error. The Lord loves us dearly and it is His good pleasure that our joy be full in every area (John 15:11) and as we trust in Him, following His principles and leadings then we have the assurance that He will lead us to the right counsel at the right time.

**Prayer:** Father I thank you for the helpers and wise counsellors you have already assigned to me. Give me a discerning spirit to recognize them, and a teachable heart to learn from them what you would have me know, so that my joy will indeed be full.

Thank you for completing the study. We'll love to hear from you, so please connect with us on:

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