

## Firstfruits: Planting the Future

### I. God's Kingdom is Unshakeable (Not affected by winds, storms or earthquakes)

Heb 12.28 HCSB Therefore, since **we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken**, let us **hold on to grace**. By it, we may **serve** God acceptably, with reverence and awe, 29 for our God is a consuming fire.

NIV ... let us **be thankful**, and so **worship** God acceptably with reverence and awe

### A. Our Father's Pleasure is to Give Us the Kingdom: Do not worry!

Matt 6:25 NKJ "Therefore I say to you, **do not worry** about your life,. ... 26 Look at the birds of the air, 28 Consider the lilies... 31 Therefore **do not worry**, ... 34 ... **do not worry** about tomorrow

33 But **seek first** the **kingdom** of God and His **righteousness**, and all these things shall be added to you.

Luke 12.32 NKJ "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's **good pleasure** to give you the kingdom.

HCSB Don't be afraid,...**your Father delights to give you ...**

### B. Our Father Has Good Plans for Our Future

**We are not just saved FROM, but we are saved FOR!**

Jer 29:11 NIV For I know **the plans I have for you**," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

### C. When It Doesn't Look or FEEL Like It???? RENEW your mind (and ACT on Promises (Love does something!))

Isa 54:1 NKJ "**Sing**, O barren,

- You who have not borne!  
**Break forth** into singing, and **cry aloud**,  
You who have not labored with child!  
For more are the children of the desolate  
Than the children of the married woman," says the LORD.
- 2 "Enlarge the place of your tent, ...;  
**Do not spare**; **Lengthen** your cords,  
And **strengthen** your stakes.
- 3 For **you shall expand** to the right and to the left,  
And your descendants **will inherit** the nations,  
And make the desolate cities inhabited.
- 4 "**Do not fear**, for you will not be ashamed;  
Neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame;  
For **you will forget** the shame of your youth,  
And will **not remember** the reproach of your widowhood  
anymore.
- 5 For **your Maker is your husband**,  
The **LORD of hosts** is His name;  
And your **Redeemer** is the **Holy One of Israel**;  
He is called the **God of the whole earth**.

## II. Principles of First Fruits

### A. Function (This is Review)

1. Through Firstfruits we sanctify our whole life and all we love.

Rom 11:16 NIV If the part of the dough offered as **firstfruits** is holy, then the whole batch is holy; ...

#### \*\*2. **Firstfruits Makes Our Voice Heard**

Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well (**testifying**) of his offerings. And **by faith he still speaks**, even though he is dead.

3. Giving Reveals the Quality of **My Love** (how full)

2 Cor 8:8 NIV I am not commanding you, but ***I want to test the sincerity of your love*** by comparing it with the earnestness of others.

## B. Giving Connects Us to the “Beyond Circumstances”

1. We Give According to What We Have. An offering is part of me — our offerings **take us beyond** our present circumstances into **unlimited creative potential!**

2 Cor 8:12 NIV For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable according to **what one has**, not according to **what he does not have**.

Mark 12:41 NKJ **this poor widow has put in more** than all those who have given to the treasury; 44 ... **she** out of her poverty **put in all that she had**, her whole livelihood.”

Isa 51:2 NKJ **Look** to Abraham your father,  
And to Sarah *who* bore you;  
For I called him **alone**,  
And **blessed** him and **increased** him.”

**Gen 14 Abraham connected to Melchizedek** with his offering  
(King of Righteousness; King of Peace— Heb. 7)

**The Giving “Set Him Up” for Revelation** (beyond present circ.)

Gen 15:5 NIV He took him outside and said, “Look up at the heavens and **count the stars — if indeed you can count them.**” Then he said to him, “**So shall your offspring be.**”

6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

## 2. Extravagance & Moving the Heart of God

The size of the harvest is proportionate to the seed planted.  
(Responding to the Voice of God)

Gen 22:15 NKJ Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, 16 and said: “**By Myself I have sworn**, says the LORD, **because** you have done this thing, and

have not withheld your son, your only son— **17 blessing I will bless** you, and **multiplying I will multiply** your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants **shall possess the gate** of their enemies. **18** In your seed **all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.**”

### III. Why Cheerful Giving?

#### A. It's a Creative Act

#### B. Giving is Planting Seeds for the Future

**2 Cor 9:6 NIV** Remember this: Whoever **sows** sparingly will also **reap** sparingly, and whoever **sows** generously will also **reap** generously. **7** Each man should **give** what he has decided in his heart to **give**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

**The seed we sow connects our lives to the soil of God's love.** You can't eat dirt, yet all our food comes from dirt. The life in the seed can grow and **capture the energy of the Sun**, transforming dirt and water into food, into clothing, into housing, into fuel!

God dwells in creation.

We are involved in a relationship with the Creator that shines with a moment-by-moment immediacy . Creation is a **constant present tense** partnership with our Loving Father.

#### C. Variable Measures

**Luke 6:38 NKJV** Give, and it will be given to you: ...with the **same measure** that you use, it will be **measured back** to you.”

#### Four Levels: a progression of increase!

1. **Good Measure** acceptable, providing superior benefit...  
SUFFICIENCY.
2. **Pressed Down** compacted by **intensity**, more fits
3. **Shaken Together movement** creates capacity
4. **Running Over** the overflowing outpouring blessing

This is very personal. The same **measure** I use, is how it is measured back to me!

### D. Giving Releases **God's Creative Ability** into Us

2 Cor 9:8 NKJ And **God is able (powerful)** to make **all grace** abound (overflow) **toward you** (eis – into you), that **you**, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work. 2 Cor 9.7 NKJV God works with what we have!

What do you do if you **don't feel like it?**

**SING, O BARREN!**

**Don't let what you don't have overrule what you do have!**

2 Cor 8:12 NIV For if the willingness is there, the gift is acceptable **according to what one has**, not according to what he does not have.

Be thankful and begin to use what you do have!

### D. **God's Eyes look for Friends?** 2 Chron 16:9

**God's goal** that our souls prosper — that our personalities are suited to receive the blessings of God.

3 John 2 NAS Beloved, I pray that **in all respects** you may **prosper** and be in **good health**, just as your soul prospers.

It's a **wholesome way of thinking** and a way of feeling about life, health, money, ... It is Kingdom Thinking! It reflects **Who** He Is and **How** He Is.

## IV. 4 Keys to First Fruits:

1. **Cyclical** — Annual basis or the beginning of a new endeavor.
2. **In Faith** —
  - a) **Comfort**— you just do it, in the budget, etc.

- b) **Faith**— responding to that which is beyond our ability. We increase our “measure”
- c) **Presumption**— trying to manipulate God
- 3. **Sacrificial** — if it doesn’t move you, it probably won’t move God. Gen 22, 2 Sam 24, 1 Chr 22; 2 Chr 3
- 4. **Focused** — create a list of the areas you are sowing in for **breakthrough**.
  - a) Reflects the godly passions of your heart
  - b) Based on God’s Word.
  - c) **Pray, Believe, Decree, Stand.** You will reap if you don’t faint. You have seed in the ground!
  - d) This is a time to sow, to **consecrate the dreams** for our lives **and the promises** of God we hold in our hearts.

**If you are not planting for your vision, it’s a fantasy.**

## V. Conclusion

- a. **Pray for God’s Direction (desire discipline delight)**  
**Pray for hearing hearts.**
- 5. **Have a Target “Harvest,” or Ask God for One (Gates held by the enemy)**
- 6. **Set an amount, or ask for one.**
- 7. **Write a check or a pledge (next two months)**  
**No Fear — Refunds for 2 weeks!**
- 8. **Give With Joy!**

**Pray for Congregation:**

**Kingdom of God released. All the “added to” things.**