

# First Fruits - Destroying Lack

## I. God's Delight in Our Freedom

### A. He Delights in Your Success — Dances When You are Set Free

Zeph 3:17 The LORD your God is **in your midst**, [slide 1]  
a **mighty** one who will **save**;  
he will **rejoice**<sup>1</sup> over you with gladness; (happy song)  
he will **quiet\* you by his love**; \***renew**  
he will **exult**<sup>2</sup> over you with loud singing.

### B. The Potential of a Renewed Mind

Rom 12.2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be **transformed**  
by the **renewal**<sup>3</sup> of your mind<sup>4</sup>, that **by testing** you may discern  
what is the will of God, what is good & acceptable & perfect.

He will **renew** our MINDS by his AFFECTION!

### C. Results in a Prosperous Soul

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

Prosper — Go in a good way. It's a stewardship.

It's a **wholesome way of thinking, feeling, deciding** about life,  
health, money, ... It bears the IMAGE of our Father!

### D. Co-Creating — Invited to collaborate with our Father

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<sup>1</sup> Heb. SUS - שׂוֹשׁ to rejoice, to be glad (prop. to leap, to spring.)

<sup>2</sup> Heb. GIYL - prop. a circle dance, *to leap* for joy

<sup>3</sup> anakainosis— return to the new, superior, unheard of

<sup>4</sup> nous - the organ of perception, sometimes translated "heart"

## Righteousness is RELATIONSHIP - Father makes us SONS

The **Essence of Sin is Separation** from our Father's goodness!

**If the lens is dirty, we can mistake an opportunity** for a demand.

**The Beggar & the King** - "Give me something." Resentfully, the beggar gave the king 2 grains of rice. Then the king reached into a pouch within his robes and with a smile, dropped 2 small diamonds into the beggars bowl.

*If we could instruct the future how to treat us, how we would want to live, what we would hope for our children, **would we do it?***

## II. 7 First Fruits Principles – (**Tithe** after the Harvest)

1. (Given at the Beginning) – Firstfruits **sanctify** our whole life and all we love. [slide 3]

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

**Holy** - outside the natural, separate from the ordinary, pure

2. It's a **Pattern not Law** - Honor the Lord with the First and the Best — and He honors us [slide 4]

Heb 11:4 Abel **faith** → a voice

Acts 10:4 Cornelius

3. Generosity Indicates **Grace and Love** at Work [slide 5]

2 Cor 8:7 NIV But just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us — see **that you also excel in this grace of giving**.

**Grace flows from Joy**

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

God isn't after our money, he's after our hearts. Giving will change your heart.

Matt. 6:21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

4. We Give According to What We Have. We give part of ourselves— our offerings take us beyond our present circumstances. FEAR NOT! [slide 6]

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.

★ Elijah & the Widow 1 Kgs 17:12 ... I do not have bread

1Kings 17:8 Then the word of the LORD came to him, 9 "Arise, go to Zarephath, which belongs to Sidon, and dwell there. Behold, *I have commanded a widow there to feed you.*"

10 So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, a widow was there gathering sticks. And he called to her and said, "*Bring me a little water* in a vessel, that I may drink." 11 And as she was going to bring it, he called to her and said, "**Bring me a morsel of bread** in your hand."

12 And she said, "As the LORD your God lives, **I have nothing baked**, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. And now I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die."

We may think we have nothing, but we actually do. Our last can be a new FIRST

13 And Elijah said to her, "**Do not fear**; go and do as you have said. But first make me a **little\* cake of it** and bring it to me, and **afterward#** make something for yourself and your son. [slide 7]

\*micro. #after incarnating the WORD

14 For **thus says the LORD**, the God of Israel, ‘The jar of flour shall not be **spent**,\* and the jug of **oil** shall not be **empty**,# **until** the day that the LORD sends rain upon the earth.’”

\* *reach its full end*      # *lack (Ps 23.1).*      [slide 8]

15 And she went and did as Elijah said. And **she** and **he** and **her household** ate for many days. 16 The jar of flour was not **spent**,\* neither did the jug of oil become **empty**, # **according to the word of the LORD** that he spoke by Elijah.      [slide 9]

Sometimes we aren't aware of the potential to INCREASE

### Jesus & the Widow

Mark 12:41 And he sat down opposite the treasury and **watched** .... Many rich people put in large sums. 42 And a **poor widow** ...

5. By Giving We **Plant Seeds**.      [slide 10]

2 Cor 9:6 The point is this: **whoever sows** sparingly will also **reap** sparingly, and **whoever sows** bountifully **will also reap** bountifully.      [slide 11]

**The seed we sow roots our heart in the soil of God's love—**

**SEED** - carrying all the **instructions needed for increase**. A seed **alive** is packed with limitless potential.

Seeds are God's **blueprint for the future**. Apple seed

a. **Our children**. The **Creator Himself became a seed** and **broke** the slavery of death and **released** the power of an endless life! Gen. 3:15

b. **Our Words**, containing a potential future. **Every word contains in a future reality in an immature form**: CO CREATING

Mark 4:11 And he said to them, “**To you** has been given **the secret of the kingdom of God**...      14 The sower **sows the word**. ...

c. **Our Offerings** Each contains a future reality in an immature form.

2 Cor 9:7 Each one must **give** as he has **decided in his heart**, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. **For the Joy!**

## 6. The Harvest is **PROPORTIONAL**. [slide 12]

Luke 6:38 NKJ Give, and it will be given to you:... good...pressed, shaken, running over... put into your lap. For with the **same measure** that you use, it will be **measured back** to you.”

If you give, you will **always get back more**. We give just to GIVE.

This is the **BENEFIT** of giving, not the **MOTIVE**.

## 7. Our Giving **Releases God's Creative Ability** [slide 13]

2 Cor 9:8 NKJ 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**.

**TESTIMONY** — 1977 starving ... increased our giving...change began to overtake us. 1984 house w/o debt...

**Mustard Seed** has all the instructions.

SOWING gives **God an opportunity** to work through us!

Partner with God - He's rejoicing over you and will renew you with His affection — for a **PURPOSE**

**STUCK? FRUSTRATED? Release God to Work!**

## IV. 4 Keys to First Fruits:

1. **Cyclical** —Annual basis or at the beginning of a new endeavor.
2. **In Faith** –
  - a) **Comfort** – you just do it, in the budget, etc.
  - b) **Faith** – a stretch to that which is beyond our ability.
  - c) **Presumption**— trying to manipulate God
  - d)

3. **Sacrificial** – if it doesn't move you, won't move God.

2 Sam 24:24 ...I will not offer burnt offerings to the LORD my God that cost me nothing."

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, consecrating the dreams for our lives; the promises of God we treasure in our hearts.

## V. Instructions for First Fruits Offering

1. Pray for God's Direction (desire discipline delight) Pray for hearing hearts.
2. Have a Target, or ask what Gates are held by the enemy?
3. Set an amount, or ask for one.
4. Write a check, use Push Pay, Credit Card or make a pledge (next two months). **No Fear — Refunds for 2 weeks!**
5. Bring it on First Fruits Sunday

Phil 4:19 NKJ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

There are **NO LIMITS** on the effects of a **SMALL CHANGE** in our thinking and behavior.

**What we contribute to life today can fill eternity.**

**Jar not spent (continuous provision); Jug not empty (no lack)**

Gen 22:16 NKJ and said: “By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, **because you have done this thing**, and have not withheld ..., your only son—

17 **blessing... bless** you, and **multiplying... multiply** your descendants ...stars... sand; 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**.” GOD SPEAKS —> CREATES