Praise the Lord!!!
Are you happy to be in the house of the Lord today?
If you are happy to be in the presence of the Lord, stand up, and welcome 1-2 brethren to the house of the Lord.

Song while welcoming: You are welcome to the house of the Lord.
Praise the Lord!!! You are welcome to the house of the Lord.

Ignorance, greed and blindfolding are some of the instruments the devil uses to deceive us.

Rom 10:3 For they, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

**PP1** Our Topic today is: Giving – An investment, the Secret and the Key to our Blessings

Investments are transactions in which capital is raised. When you invest you are expecting in multiplications.

You make decisions, you give then you receive

**Giving** is ACTING and taking necessary STEP to receiving your blessings and breakthrough.

There are approx. 500 verses in the bible that deal with PRAYER, approx. 500 verses that deal with FAITH, but there are over 2000 verses that deal with the subject of MONEY AND POSSESSIONS. Jesus talked about money in 16 of His 38 parables.

Clearly, from the bible's standpoint, God wants us to understand His principles concerning money, possessions and giving.

Luke 12:22- Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on

**PP2** Genesis 32:22-29 And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. 32:23 And he took them, and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had.

32:24 And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. 32:25 And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

32:26 And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. 32:27 And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. 32:28 And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. 32:29 And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there.

- He made certain uncomfortable decisions - rose up that night and sent his family over the brook and he was left alone.
- He obeyed the Giving principles, giving all he has at that moment - his time, talent, ability, resources, courage, energy and life. Jacob wrestled with this strange man all the night. And the man was an angel from God. They wrestled so hard, that Jacob's thigh was strained in the struggle.
- He was persistent, never gave up, and has faith by firmly holding the angel of God saying, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me".
- God Himself was impressed by his performances and faith as he wrestled with His Angel - giving all he can.
- And he received blessings and God changed his name to Israel. His descendants were called Israelites.

1. We are all anxiously waiting for the blessings of God, praying day in day out to receive wonders and miracles from Him. We go to prophets and men of God for prayers, prophesies and praying for the manifestation of our wishes, dreams and prosperity. Some do pay pastors around the globe for prayers and miracles while some have become church prostitutes moving from one church to another seeking overnight wonders.

But no one is ready to sacrifice, have faith and be obedient to God ➔ We need a change of our mindset.

2. Everyone wants to go to heaven but none is ready to die. We forget that before we can go to heaven we need to live a righteous life on this earth, obey the principles of God, repent and finally pay the last debt - death - as it was written in the Old Testament. Then face judgment. ➔ These are conditions attached to going to heaven.

3. Except Mary, the mother of Jesus, no woman ever has a baby without an intimacy with a man or at least the sperm of a man must have been planted in the womb of the woman – modern science

It is not enough for a woman looking for the fruit of the womb to pray and make her heart's desire known to God. Then relax, stay in her comfort zone without a man believing that with God all things are possible and not ready to take ACTION and make MOVES.
Some conditions are attached to receiving the fruit of the womb—**DETERMINATION, DECISION, GIVE & FAITH.**

- She must be **determined** and **courageous** to make the choice of the man of her life (if she is single), **give** her love, **give** her resources, **give** her time, prove her faithfulness and have **intimacy** with her partner, **believe** something good will happen. Then God performs the miracles. ➔ **This is fulfilling the attached conditions.**

Imagine that a single woman seeking the **fruit of the womb** with following characteristics:
- Self-caretaking - weak; Dressings – I don't care; hair styling – appalling; Speech and mindset – negative;
- mimic – very poor; cleanliness – poor; approach – disgusting; decision making – poor and on assumption;
- gossiping – excellent; arrogance – good; and finally time availability – zero.

What are you expecting of this lady? She has already programmed herself to loneliness. ➔ She must **ACT**, change her mindset, think positive, make a **MOVE** and give her substance.

Imagine the same lady is been approached by noble men, probably God has ordained one of these men to bring about her blessings and joy, but because of **lack of prompt decision making**, reliance on rumors and assumptions, misunderstanding of the principles of giving, and she let go. But she is waiting on the Lord for that perfect man. ➔ Brethren, this is Failure to Act and Failure to take a Move. ➔ The results are indefinite waiting or wrong choice.

That partner God has prepared will definitely not come to her in her sitting room. ➔ **She must Act ➔ Decision & Give**

4. Likewise, if we seek the **blessings of the Lord**, the favor of the Almighty and want Abraham's blessings to be ours then we must be **determined** and **courageous to decide**, **ACT**, move and respect God’s laid down principles which includes:
- Obedience
- Faithfulness and
- Yielding to the GIVING principles

**PP3 To every Blessing there are Conditions attached.** ➔ (Jacob) Determination, Courage, Decision to give, Putting your decision into Action, Faith - holding firm to God and finally Ability to receive. Search the scriptures from Gen. to Revelation.

**Expectations, Examples and hidden treasures of GIVING?**
We are expecting multiplications from God - everything double double. Are we ready to give and invest our time, resources, talents, energy, finances etc. (double double) in His kingdom? Remember, when you give to God, you are depositing in your saving account with Him — you are sowing seeds.

God sent his prophet to **King Hezekiah** and ask him to prepare his house to die. He challenged God asking Him to x-check His records. God now conducted an account analysis and blessed the king with 15 additional years and also blessed him with a son Manasseh (double)

When God blesses, it is at double double – see **Jacob, Hezekiah, Job** etc. Why? They give what they have.

*And God has many reasons for asking us to give.*

He told us in Ps 50:10 "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hill" -

**Giving involves more than money**, it involves ourselves, our time, the gifts God deposited in us, our resources, our talents and abilities, our advices to others, how we encourage and motivate our brethren and finally our love and sincerity.

Some of the world’s biggest donors have found KEY, that by making gifts and offerings you receive knowledge, favour, abundance and prosperity.

1. When **Bill Gates** began his philanthropic life decades ago, he was driven by his conviction that providing incentives for pharmaceutical companies to develop drugs for the diseases of the poor, a few million will be rescued from death. He invested by giving also to school for deprived urban areas in America.

2. **Jeff Skoll**, who made his fortune as the first chief executive of **eBay**, has dedicated his giving to changing of public opinion on climate change through movies and messages; he was the pillar behind Al Gore’s Oscar-winning climate change documentary. He impacted the world with the gift, his time, his resources and the talent God deposited in him.

3. **Micheal Schumacher** who was successful in all his undertakings as formula 1 driver, knew the key. ➔ **GIVING.** He always gives and flamboyantly. Remembrance he gave 10 million dollars for the tsunami disaster? He gave to people in need and continues giving.

4. **Pastor Ashimolowo** is a generous giver. Every year at Christmas, he will buy clothing (10 yards of native cloths) for every window in his home town in Nigeria. He preaches prosperity.
5. **Oprah Winfrey** is another generous woman. Though she has no child, she takes care of orphans. She invested and still investing her resources in South Africa for the poor and homeless. Guess what she is growing from grace to grace.

6. The giving of **Cain and Abel** to the Lord - Genesis 4:3-7. Esther submitted her life

All these men and women understand the blessings attached to giving principles. They know the rewards attached to giving e.g. abundances, success, knowledge, wisdom, wealth, prosperity, multiplication etc.

- Exodus 25:2 of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.
- Prov 28:27 He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack: but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse.

One thing is sure “We can never outgive God”!!

**PP4 THE GIVING OF CHRIST BY GOD**

God first gave to us:

- The light we use, the water we drink, the air we breathe and His grace upon our life.
- The knowledge, wisdom and our mindset
- His only son Jesus for deliverance of our sins Galatians 1:4; 2:20

**PP5 THE GIVING OF OURSELVES**

Over and over again in the New Testament we are told how Jesus Christ gave His very life for our sakes - Matt 20:28; Galatians 2:20; 1 Timothy 2:6; Titus 2:14. Jesus Christ "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world."

He is expecting us to give ourselves. *Are we really ready to sacrifice?*

Giving is not limited to money, but also involves ourselves, our time, our talents and abilities, our love and sincerity.

Rom 12:1 "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service"

**PP6 GIVING TO THE POOR**

Why is America so blessed today despite the slave trade and other atrocities? They understand the power of giving.

- **Bode’s giving in Lagos.** He did not only gave to the poor but also invest in the work of Christ

- **In München** alone, people donated almost 2 million Euros, within 24 hours to support the dying people in Somalia. How much did you and I donate? -

Bible references: James 2:15-16, Proverbs 19:17, Deuteronomy 15:7-8

**PP7 GIVING TO THE WORK OF CHRIST**

Honor the LORD with your possessions, And with the firstfruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine. Prov 3:9-10

In Luke 6:38, Jesus says, "Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

**PP8 GIVING OF OFFERINGS AND COLLECTIONS**

Offerings are what we choose to give out of our own volition, and the collection is our response to a specific appeal. Our offerings are an opportunity for God to reveal His character; as we demonstrate generosity; He faithfully provides for our needs and blesses us abundantly – "But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” Philippians 4:19.

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work 2 Corinthians 9:8.
GIVING OF OUR TITHE - An area most Christians like to turn deaf ears to

In Hebrews 7 we read of Abraham paying tithes to Melchizedek and the Levi also paying tithe to Abraham.

In Genesis 28: 20-22 we read of Jacob's Tithe - "And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God: And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Malachi 3:10-12 Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. 3:11 And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. 3:12 And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts.

When it comes to tithing many Christians have different lame excuses. We thought of our bills and various expenses. Now, many people are saying "tithe is the Old Testament. That's the law. We are no longer under the law, but grace."

True, we are no longer under the law, but that does not give us liberty to disobey God. Even though we are in the "age of grace", we still know that murder, adultery, stealing, gossiping and lying are sin. None of these "laws" went away when Jesus died on the cross. So also was tithing not cancelled?

Heb 8:10 "I will put my LAWS into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God" Matt 5:17 Jesus said “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”

Yes, Christians have the freedom to tithe if they like, because tithing is not a part of the New Covenant, and Christians are under NO obligation to tithe.

However, we do pray for Abraham's blessings and seek the blessings as stipulated in the psalms and the scriptures. Are these not Old Testament Covenants?

If we reject tithe and believe that tithing is not a part of the New Covenant, then why should we be seeking those promises and blessings of God in the Old Testament?

God therefore, has NO obligation to answer those prayers because they are not a part of the New Covenant.

If we withhold from God what is rightfully His, we are effectively signing our own "Declaration of Defeat."

If we withdraw the tithe, we are cursed with a curse
If we give the tithe, we are the recipients of a blessing!

Don't deceive yourself and let your mind be transformed. You have the freedom to obey or to disobey. King Saul, David, and Moses, to mention a few, disobeyed God and received the consequences. GOD NEVER CHANGES!!

Thus sayeth the Lord in Malachi 3:6 “For I am the LORD. I do not change; God is covenant keeping, never lies, never change and honours His words. Let us take God by His words. Be obedient in our tithe and let Him proof Himself in our life, our families, our situations, our finances etc. And if He comes short of His promises and He is not able to keep His own Word and Covenant then we can decide otherwise. All I know is that He never fails, neither comes too late nor too early.

Amazingly, the only place in the Bible that God asks us to test Him is in the Old Testament - regarding our obedient to tithing. Malachi 3:10 "prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, If I will not open for you the windows of heaven

Let us scrutinize our mind, think, and faithfully answer the followings:
- What would I prefer, the blessings of God on my efforts, or a curse on my efforts?
- Do I believe what God says?
- Am I willing to put my belief into practice?

Act if you belief and be obedient in your tithe and be a generous giver.

Do not allow problems and uncertainty to push you away from the place of blessings.
God is telling us to:

- Give Secretly - Matthew 6:1-4
- Give Proportionally - 1 Corinthians 16:1-2
- Give Bountifully - 2 Corinthians 9:6
- Give Willingly - 2 Corinthians 8:11-12
- Give Cheerfully - 2 Corinthians 9:7-8
- Give Generously - Prov 11:25

Moreover, if we obey we shall be blessed and there shall be:

- Blessing instead of a curse
- Glory instead of shame there
- Honour instead of humiliation
- Abundance instead of lack
- Open doors instead of closed doors
- Success and appointments instead of failure and disappointments
- Progress instead of lack of achievements and under-achievements
- Visibility instead of obscurity

The more you give away, the more God pours resources and surprise blessings into your hands.

FINALLY / PRAYER

Let us stand up and pray:

- Ask God to let you know the joy of giving of your time, your resources, your talents and abilities.
- Ask God to reveal any selfishness or other hindrance to giving from your life.
- Pray to God to help you become more skilled at giving so you can enjoy the blessings attached to giving.

God Bless You

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