

Wednesday Night
November 30, 2022

Stewardship:

*Malachi 3:10-11 NKJV Bring all the tithes into the storehouse,
That there may be food in My house,
And try Me now in this,”
Says the Lord of hosts,
“If I will not open for you the windows of heaven
And pour out for you such blessing
That there will not be room enough to receive it.*

We often use these verses for our stewardship scripture, however, tonight I want to look at verse 11....

*¹¹ “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes,
So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground,
Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,”
Says the Lord of hosts;*

Not only will God open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing so great your bank accounts cannot contain... but look at this verse...

God will rebuke the devourer for your sakes. For these farmers it was locust and other things that destroyed their crops and animals. However, the word

“Devourer” is defined as “one who destroys” “one who eats up”.

When I look at that definition I think of *John 10:10 “¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

So when we obey the scripture in bringing our tithe (10%) and offerings into the storehouse... God does two things:

1. He opens the windows of heaven and pours out blessings into our life
2. He rebukes the devourer for our sakes

Two very good reasons to always obey in tithe and offerings.

MAIN LESSON...We Are The Church

Matthew 16:¹³ When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”

14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Peter didn't figure this out with his brilliant mind, but rather the Holy Spirit revealed the true identity of Jesus to him.

For us, revelation of God's Word comes when the wisdom of God, resident in our spirit, explodes across our conscious mind. It seems like an "Ahha" moment.

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not ^[a]prevail against it.

Because the name "Peter" means rock, some think Jesus was saying he was going to build his church on Peter. However, it was the "Rock of the Revelation of who Jesus is...upon which the church is built:

Matthew 16: 18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not ^[a]prevail against it.

What is the church? = The church is not a building or an organization. The word translated "church" in the English Bible is ekklesia. This word is a combination of the Greek words kaleo (to call), with the prefix ek (out). Thus, the word means "the called out ones." However, our English word "church" does not come from ekklesia but from the word kuriakon, which means "dedicated to the Lord." This word was commonly used to refer to a holy place or temple...

FOR SCREEN: Ekklesia = Kaleo (to call), with prefix Ek (out)

Kuriakon – Dedicated to the Lord (a building)

1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

To really understand the meaning of "Church" let's look at Ephesians 1...

Ephesians 1:17-23¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your ^[a] understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, ²¹ far above all principality^[b] and ^[c] power and ^[d] might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

²² And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Vs. 20. Right Hand – Place of power and authority

AND WE ARE SEATED WITH CHRIST:

Ephesians 2:5-7 *But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) and raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*

Naturally our feet are on earth
Spiritually we are seated with Christ in Heavenly Places

Now listen to *Ephesians 1:21: far above all principality^[b] and ^[c] power and ^[d] might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.*

Who are these principalities and Powers and might and dominion?

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12 NKJV).

These are our spiritual enemies...not people.... But we don't have to fear because we are seated with Christ and have a vital connection to Him: Ephesians 6:10 *Finally my brothers, be strong in the Lord and the power of His might.*

Now go back to *Ephesians 1:23 And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*

Jesus – the head

Believers – His body - **Romans 12:4** ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: ⁵ So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

Authority = “Under His Feet” Where are your feet.

Our problem: We don’t know who we are

We don’t know our authority

We are waiting for Jesus to make the enemy leave us alone

Jesus is waiting for us to understand who we are and rise up

FINALLY... let’s return to our main scripture in Matthew 16:18 ***And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not ^[a]prevail against it.¹⁹ And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth ^[b]will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.***

Keys unlock things... or explain things.

Whatever you bind (declare unlawful) on earth I will enforce in heaven

When Jesus says something once it is important.... When He says something twice we better listen closely....Jesus said it again in Matthew 18:18

Matthew 18:18 Assuredly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

And then he added the power of unity and agreement among the members of His Body the Church in Matthew 18:19 Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.

YOU ARE THE CHURCH...but you need other believers to be really effective. You are “part” of the body, not the whole body...

We aren’t all preachers or teachers, or evangelist... but we are all the “functioning part of Jesus on earth”... Romans 12 can give you insight to your place of ministry in the body of Christ.

My daily prayer of Romans 12:1.....make it your prayer also!