



Deuteronomy 28:1-9 *And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store. Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out. The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways. The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.*

I know that in these Scriptures God is directing Moses to instruct the children of Israel on how to receive His blessings, but I believe that the principle found here is also applicable to the children of God, Christians, in this age. The principle is taught from:

Genesis 2:17 *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*

to:

Revelation 1:3 *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.* And everywhere in between

This is this theme: *obey God's word and be blessed; disobey and disaster follows.* I'm not trying to teach a works salvation. We are saved by trusting Jesus Christ as our Saviour. All the work needed to save our souls was done by our Lord Jesus. We simply repent and believe. However, that does not preclude us from reading and heeding the word of God. Even born-again Christians need to find out what God says in His word and obey.

So, I wish to challenge you to read your Bible. How will you ever find out what the Lord desires in your life if you don't even read the word of God? Set up a specific time and place where you read and pray. What I'm about to say may sound strange to you, but I believe that reading is even more important than praying. Think about this - what is of a greater priority, God talking to you or you telling God something He already knows? Yes, I know that we are commended by the Lord to pray, and I believe that that is very important in a Christian's life, but reading, studying, memorizing the word of God is a priority I believe. So get into the word of God and read. It will draw you closer to Him, and the closer that you get to the Lord the more that you will pray and do right.

Look at **Psalm 119** - Throughout this entire Psalm we are directed to get into and obey God's word. Yes, we are admonished to pray in certain portions of the Bible, but the overwhelming challenge of God's word is to **read** what He has to say to us. Over and over again we are given this principle by word and by example.

What about the New Testament? Are there Scriptures that challenge us to obey? Absolutely!

Acts 5:29 *Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.*

Galatians 3:1 *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?*

Galatians 5:7 *Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?*

So what are Christians to do? Obey God. What is a preacher to do? Obey God. Not to get saved, but because we are saved. How can we obey if we do not know what the Lord has to say. Therefore, we must read and heed the word.

Luke 4:16-19 *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.*

2 Timothy 4:1-5 *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all*

longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

In order to be **overtaken by the blessings of God** we are to **obey His word**. That means that we have to know what His word tells us. In order for us to know we have to hear it, read it or get it into our hearts and lives somehow. Look at the following Scriptures:

Joshua 8:34-35 *And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them.*

2 Kings 23:2 *And the king went up into the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD.*

Nehemiah 8:1-8 *And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded to Israel. And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month. And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law. And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah, on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people; (for he was above all the people;) and when he opened it, all the people stood up: And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands: and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.*

Nehemiah 9:3 *And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God one fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God.*

Mark 12:26 *And as touching the dead, that they rise: have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?*

Luke 4:16 *And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read.*

Acts 13:15 *And after the reading of the law and the prophets the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.*

Colossians 4:16 *And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.*

1 Thessalonians 5:27 *I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.*

So as we see reading of the revealed word of God is very important.

Now we shall take a look at the specific blessings, in verses 1-9, that the LORD promises to His people if we adhere to His word. We must remember that even though these verses are directly applicable to the nation of Israel, they are also universal and applicable to His people of all eras. Therefore we can take heart that these specific blessings can be ours in the 21st Century. Remember as you examine these scriptures, that the blessings are all predicated upon obedience to the revealed word of God. That means that we must have a copy of God's word in our language. Do we have the unadulterated, pure word of God in our language? We absolutely do have God's word in our language, and it is the Authorized Version of the Bible. All other books only contain God's word, they are not THE word of God. They can only have a limited impact on those around us. The most powerful, influential, life-changing Book in the universe is the King James Version of the Bible. Any departure from its words is a step towards apostasy. However, that is for another study.

Let's take a look at some of the blessings promised to God's children if they will follow, obey His word.

- Verse 3 ***Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.*** In this statement it is obvious that the blessings of God will not be limited to geographic location.
- Verse 4 ***Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.*** We are

promised fruitfulness.

- Verse 5 ***Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.*** God promises provision for the present and for the future.
- Verse 6 ***Blessed shalt thou be when thou comest in, and blessed shalt thou be when thou goest out.***
God promises protection for the everyday travels that we all get involved in on a daily basis.
- Verse 7 ***The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.*** We will be given victory in the battles of life. In our Christian life we have three enemies: **Ephesians 2:1-3.**
 - the world - the worldly system which is controlled and orchestrated by Satan to defeat us and destroy us. **Galatians 1:4**
 - the flesh - **Galatians 5:17**
 - the devil - **2 Corinthians 11:12-15**
- Verse 8 ***The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*** God promises success in the work that He gives us to do in this life. This is not the "prosperity gospel" that is preached by the TV deceivers. God's measure of success is much different than those charlatan's. God's measure of success is based upon faithfulness to His word.
- Verse 9 ***The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.*** Holiness is a special blessing that enables us as His children to escape many of the problems that the lost, sinful man must endure. There are certain curses that are direct consequences of sinful behavior. One old time preacher said it this way, "You can choose your sin, but you can't choose your consequences." Saul, David, Solomon, and many others whose stories can be found in the word of God attest to this truth. We are admonished by God's word to live holy lives,

Titus 2:11-14 *For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

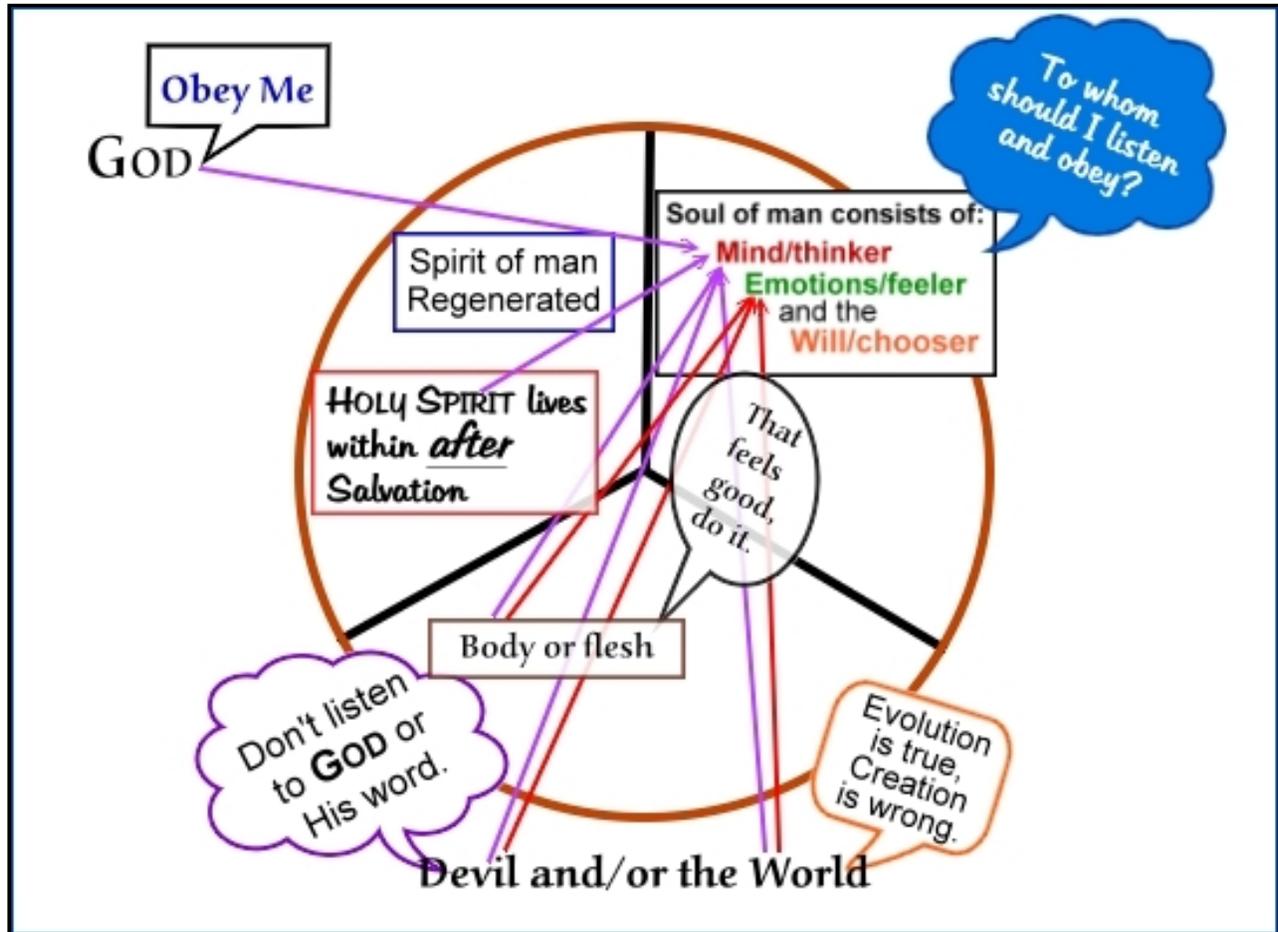
In this lesson I wish to concentrate on:

Verse 7 - ***The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.*** In our Christian life we have three enemies: Ephesians 2:1-3;

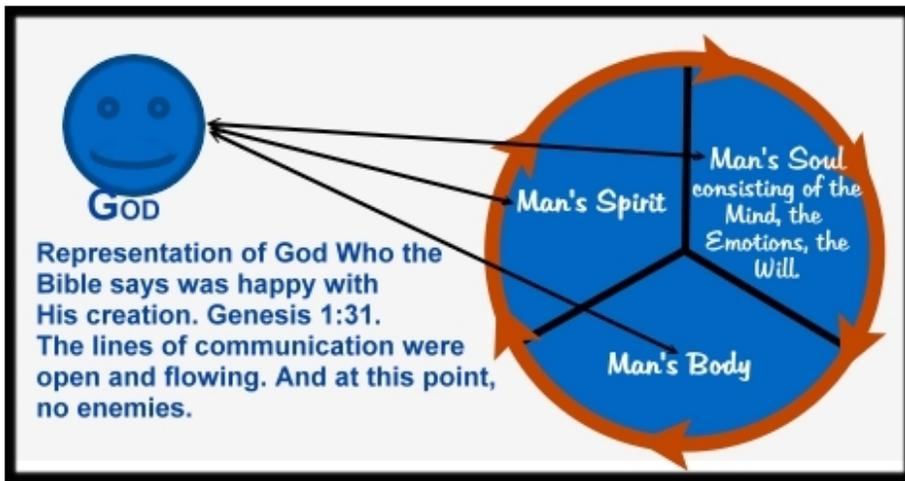
- a the world - the worldly system which is controlled and orchestrated by Satan to defeat us and destroy us. **Galatians 1:4**
- the flesh - **Galatians 5:17**

■ the devil - 2 Corinthians 11:12-15

We will go back to the teaching that we had previously, in another lesson, concerning the natural man or the spiritual man. Let's review that very quickly. Man was created in the image of God. One aspect of that creation is that man was created with a body, and spirit. However, in the garden man sinned and died spiritually leaving only a soul unable to communicate with God on a spiritual level. Not only did man die spiritually, he began to die physically and every person born of human parents is born dead in trespasses and sins. Every person, man and woman, requires a new spiritual birth to return back to the image of God. That is why Jesus said in **John 3**, "*Ye must be born again.*"



Note that after salvation our enemies haven't changed. **Romans 12:1-3**. That is why you must find out what God's word says so that you and I may have the victory in our everyday live.



This is how man was originally created. A unified individual created to worship God in spirit and truth. You may see the triune creation of man in different light, but this helps me to understand it much better than other pictures. So here we have the dilemma - After we are saved, to whom do we yield ourselves to obey? **Romans 6, 7, and 8**. If we allow the Holy Spirit to control us we will obey God. If we allow our spiritual enemies to control us, we will not obey the word of God.

Romans 6:12-13 *Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.*

Romans 6:16 *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

Romans 7:18 *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.*

Romans 7:23-25 *But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

I would like to take a little more time to discuss these very important enemies and then take a look at the very important keys to overcoming these enemies.

The Three Enemies Of The Christian

I. The "world."-1 **John 2:16** *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

- A. Often used to denote that system of worldly works which is in opposition to God and His influence in your life. **Ephesians 2:2-3**
- B. It is empowered by the devil himself.
- C. Strong defines it in part as follows:
 - 6. *the ungodly multitude; the whole mass of men alienated from God, and therefore hostile to the cause of Christ*
 - 7. *world affairs, the aggregate of things earthly*
 - a. *the whole circle of earthly goods, endowments riches, advantages, pleasures, etc., which although hollow and frail and fleeting, stir desire, seduce from God and are obstacles to the cause of Christ.*
- D. This appeals to our desire to look good in the eyes of men.
- II. The "**flesh.**"-Strong defines this as: "*the flesh, denotes mere human nature, the earthly nature of man apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God.*"
 - A. This is our desire to feel good. This is our emotional nature wanting to take control.
 - B. Sometimes spoken of as our "**carnal mind.**"
 - Romans 8:7** *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*
- III. The "**devil.**" **1 Thessalonians 2:18** *Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us.* Again, Mr. Strong gives us this definition:
 - 1. *adversary (one who opposes another in purpose or act), the name given to*
 - a. *the prince of evil spirits, the inveterate adversary of God and Christ*
 - i. *he incites apostasy from God and to sin*
 - ii. *circumventing men by his wiles*
 - iii. *the worshippers of idols are said to be under his control*
 - iv. *by his demons he is able to take possession of men and inflict them with diseases.*
 - v. *by God's assistance he is overcome*
 - vi. *on Christ's return from heaven he will be bound with chains for a thousand years, but when the thousand years are finished he will walk the earth in yet greater power, but shortly after will be given over to eternal punishment."*
- IV. We must be aware of our enemies and trust God to overcome them for us.
 - Romans 12:21** *Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Hebrews 11:1-7

3 Priorities In The Christian's Life

During my over 34 years in the full time ministry God has shown me many things. He has used His word, His men, and my experiences to guide me and teach me. Some of the lessons stand out to me as absolute truths that have served to keep me in the ministry. God has shown me the Lordship of Jesus, His First Claim Principle, and the Exchanged Life Principle (**2 Corinthians 4**). Some of the other truths are that the ministry is God's

ministry (**Psalm 127:1-2**), the church is God's church and faithfulness to the Lord Jesus and His word is of utmost importance (**1 Corinthians 4**). **This lesson that follows covers one of those principles.** This one may be the most important. That is the principle of:

THE 3 PRIORITIES IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

Perhaps you have heard of this couple. I have given them pseudonyms as names; George and Sue. They got saved, and served God for a few years, and then gradually they began to back out of the Christian life. It started slowly with backing out of their work at church, then they stopped giving, and then began missing church, and now they are part of the great crowd of "*use-to-bes*." Some call it "burn-out" and others call them "drop-outs."

However, in churches all over America there are those who are like these folks but they haven't left church, they have just faded away to where they are no longer doing anything for God. They are just hiding in the pews. Why do people lose their fire and fervor for God? Why isn't serving God exciting and enjoyable like it used to be?

NOTE Verses 1-2. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report.* Faith is a product of a close, and intimate, relationship with God. These three men here, Abel, Enoch and Noah, in Hebrews 11:1-7, exemplify the priorities of a Christian's life.

I. Worship God Properly

A. Life of Abel - Genesis 4:1-4 Abel brought the right sacrifice. He learned to worship God on God's terms. No one will serve God long who does not learn to worship God properly.

Worship means "*paying God homage, divine honors, reverence in adoration prayers, confession, thanksgiving and sacrifice.*"

B. Moses - Exodus 33:11

1. Face to face with God - **Exodus 33:11**
2. Intimacy with God - **Exodus 33:13-18**
3. Adoration of God - **Exodus 34:5-8, 14**
4. Confession of sin - **Exodus 34:9**
5. Sacrifice for Him - **Exodus 34:12-17**

C. Paul - Colossians 3:10.

Our worship life will energize our spiritual life, and we will WALK with God.

II. Walk with God. Hebrews 11:4 - Enoch.

A. Enoch Walked with God.

To walk with God is to pursue a course of life in which God directs your footsteps daily. It is to simply allow God to be in control of your life. Enoch and God walked hand in hand, and God directed Enoch all along the way.

B. Paul exhorted us to walk with God. Colossians 2:6; Romans 13:13; Galatians 5:16

C. **John exhorted us** to walk in the light. **1 John 1:7; 2:6**

This walk with God will give our bodies strength to work for God without burning out.

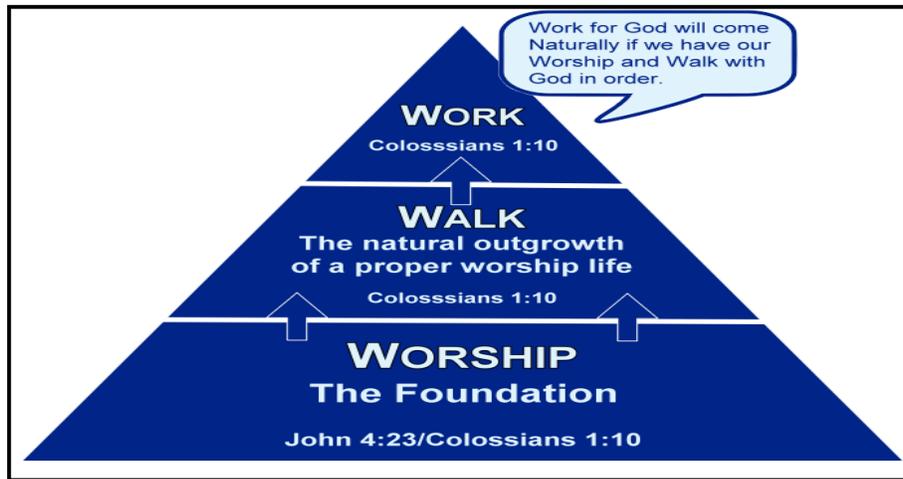
III. **Work for God.** It is important.

A. **Noah worked for God. (Hebrews 11:7)**

It was **important** to do so. It saved his life and his family's life physically.

B. If we have our priorities in order work comes naturally. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

How? Spend time with God Daily! Develop a close relationship with Him. Then let God direct your walk with Him. Work will come naturally!



We have taken quite a bit of time to discuss verse 7 of our chapter in Deuteronomy. Now it is time to move on to verse 8.

Deuteronomy 28:8 *The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*

I believe that the Lord is giving the people of God some very vital instruction concerning their material needs. The word storehouses is only used 6 times in the Old Testament. The first time is in, **Genesis 41:56** *And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.* It is a word that indicates their places for storing their material goods to be used in time of need.

God uses the singular of this word one time in the Old Testament and one time in the New Testament.

Malachi 3:10 *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.*

Luke 12:24 *Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?*

In the Old Testament the people of God tithed of their material blessings, not just their money. So there was a need for a place to store those goods. Consider a couple of verses:

Deuteronomy 12:17 *Thou mayest not eat within thy gates **the tithe** of thy corn, or of thy wine, or of thy oil, or the firstlings of thy herds or of thy flock, nor any of thy vows which thou vowest, nor thy freewill offerings, or heave offering of thine hand:*

2 Chronicles 31:6 *And concerning the children of Israel and Judah, that dwelt in the cities of Judah, they also brought in the tithe of oxen and sheep, and the tithe of holy things which were consecrated unto the LORD their God, and laid them by heaps.*

In the New Testament God gives us some interesting verses to consider concerning the root word of "storehouse" - **store**.

1 Corinthians 16:1-3 *Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.*

And so, by tradition, over the years we have gathered on Sundays in churches and gathered collections so that when people of God have needs, those needs can be met. And as usual, over the years churches have come to be called "storehouses" by God's people. We have heard the practice called "storehouse tithing." I don't know when or where this word originated, and I have never taught this practice in any of the churches that I pastored. However, I do believe that having material blessings available when men of God come in to minister to the church is something that all churches should practice.

However, there is a problem when that happens. The stored up material blessings sometimes are looked upon as assets that the church must guard and never be disbursed.

In the Southern Baptist Convention millions of dollars are invested, or deposited, and never allowed to be used because they might have an emergency and God would be caught by surprise and couldn't supply the need. That is not how God operates. It is a sin and shame the way some organizations hoard their supplies. God intended for us to be a channel of blessings not a stash. You see, in the storehouse, stores came in and out. Jacob used the materials when needed. He didn't just hoard them. Yes, he put them away in the storehouses, but when the need arose he used them wisely to ultimately bless the people of God.

Genesis 41:36 *And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.*

Genesis 41:56 *And the famine was over all the face of the earth: And Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.*

In the last verse of our current text, **Deuteronomy 28:9**, God gives the People of Israel a great promise.

Deuteronomy 28:9 *The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.*

We are not the nation of Israel, but, as we have mentioned several times, we who have been born again, are the people of God in this day and era. I believe that these are promises universal principles that are applicable throughout the ages to God's people. We do not keep the law to be saved: we are saved by grace through faith without any works involved.

Ephesians 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any many should boast.*

By trusting in Jesus Christ as our Saviour we enter the family of God and are saved eternally. However, as a part of the family of God, we have a responsibility to obey the Lord in our everyday lives.

Romans 6:1-2 *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*

The principle that we see listed in this verse from Deuteronomy 28 is the principle of holiness:

Verse 9 *The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.*

You will note that God promises that His people would be able to walk in holiness if they determine to obey His word and let His word guide our steps, our way of life, our "**conversation**", as it is worded in the New Testament

Philippians 1:27 *Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;*

1 Peter 1:15 *But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;*

1 Peter 2:12 *Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

I think one of the problems that we have today in Christendom is a lack of holiness. When lost people look at us and our behavior, they find that there isn't much difference between us and them. We dress like the world, talk like the world, act very worldly in our everyday lives, and in general don't have much of a testimony of holiness towards those who are not saved. Let's look at a New Testament example of someone who desperately wanted to convince some people that he wasn't a follower of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 26:69-75 *Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.*

This is just one example of how we may convince lost people that we aren't part of the family of God. Peter chose the medium of cursing to demonstrate to those lost people that he wasn't a follower of the Lord. I have found over the years that our words (the Biblical word "**conversation**" which means manner of life includes our words) are very powerful demonstrations, to those around us, of our relationship to Jesus Christ. Our talk, our words need to be uplifting and Godly. We must be obedient to the Word when He gives us instruction in the way that we talk.

James 3:1-18 *My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.*

Matthew Henry in his Bible commentary on James 3 had this to say,
"We are taught to think of the use we make of our tongues in religion and in the service of God, and by such a consideration to keep it from cursing, censuring, and every thing that is evil on other occasions: **Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be, James 3:9-10.** How absurd is it that those who use their tongues in prayer and praise should ever use them in cursing, slandering, and the like!" Just as in Moses' time, we are in this time, to watch our language.

Deuteronomy 28:10-14 *And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee. And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee. The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to*

observe and to do them: And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.

In verse 10 we see that God promises to give us a good testimony throughout the world.

God tells His people that if they will obey Him and His word they will have a good impact upon "*all the people of the earth.*"

"And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee."

Maybe one reason that the world is not really interested in God, or His word, is that God's people aren't obeying the word of God. Over the years that I have been saved I have seen over and over that the testimony of some Christians isn't very good. People who called themselves saved are really not living a whole lot different than the people of the world. One of the most disturbing statistics that I have encountered over the past few years was uncovered by George Barna. I have referenced this in one of my tracts and will give you an excerpt from that.

An organization called 'The Barna Group', which is the brain child of a man called George Barna, regularly polls people to try to determine what they are thinking about various subjects. Over the past few years Mr. Barna and his people have been talking to folks about what they believe about God and His book, the Bible. Some of their questionnaires have included what they have defined as a "Biblical Worldview." According to The Barna Group a "Biblical Worldview" is a set of specific beliefs about God and His Book. From the Barna Group's website, in a 2003 article entitled, "**Most Adults Feel Accepted by God, but Lack a Biblical Worldview.**", They state: "*The definition (of a Biblical Worldview) requires someone to believe that absolute moral truth exists; that the source of moral truth is the Bible; that the Bible is accurate in all of the principles it teaches; that eternal spiritual salvation cannot be earned; that Jesus lived a sinless life on earth; that every person has a responsibility to share their religious beliefs with others; that Satan is a living force, not just a symbol of evil; and that God is the all-knowing, all-powerful maker of the universe who still rules that creation today.*"

The folks at The Barna Group go on to say that **only about 9% of those who call themselves "born-again" Christians actually have this "Biblical Worldview."** What a tragic state of affairs. If we were to apply Scriptural definitions to these descriptions of what a person should have for a "Biblical worldview", we would discover that having this is nothing more than believing what God says in His Book, the Bible. Jesus certainly had this kind of a perspective on life:

Matthew 24:35 *Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.* It seems to me that a person who has been "born-again" would want to find out what God what to say in His word and then try to follow it. In fact, God tells us that very thing in several places in His word. **John 5:24** *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* This is just one of many portions of Scripture, in the Old Testament and the New Testament, that tell us how important it is

for a person to hear, believe and obey the word of God. Well, if God thinks that this is so very important, why don't most people have a "Biblical Worldview?" Mr. Barna in his book, *"Think Like Jesus"* says, *"Few people in churches have a biblical worldview because most preachers seem intent on teaching broadly rather than deeply. That's emotionally and intellectually appealing, but until people have a mental framework through which they can process the numerous principles, ideas and stories provided in the Bible, preaching is typically an exercise in information overload. We have to prepare people to know what to do with the information. A biblical worldview gives them the filter they need to know how to categorize and implement the facts and ideals they receive."* Mr. Barna seems to feel, based upon what he has said as noted above, that the preaching to which most Christians are listening is generally shallow and based upon appealing to the emotional aspect of man. I have a tendency to believe this is one reason. However, I think that it goes deeper than his explanation. We, generally speaking, have no expository preaching and teaching of the word of God. It is only the word of God that really changes a person's heart, his innermost soul.

To go along with these thoughts is the sad fact that so many of God's people no longer have an authoritative, reliable Bible to go to in time of distress or need. The word of God in the English language has been supplanted by weak, watered down versions of the Bible which have no power to really change lives.

Romans 10:17 *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Deuteronomy 28:10 *And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.*

Here we see that the nation of Israel will be a blessing to all the nations of the world, and they have through many different areas. Jews have been great scientists, warriors, and leaders in many fields of endeavors and have blessed the world with their exploits and discoveries. Dozens have been selected for Nobel Peace Prizes over the years just to mention one thing.

28:11 *And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD swore unto thy fathers to give thee.*

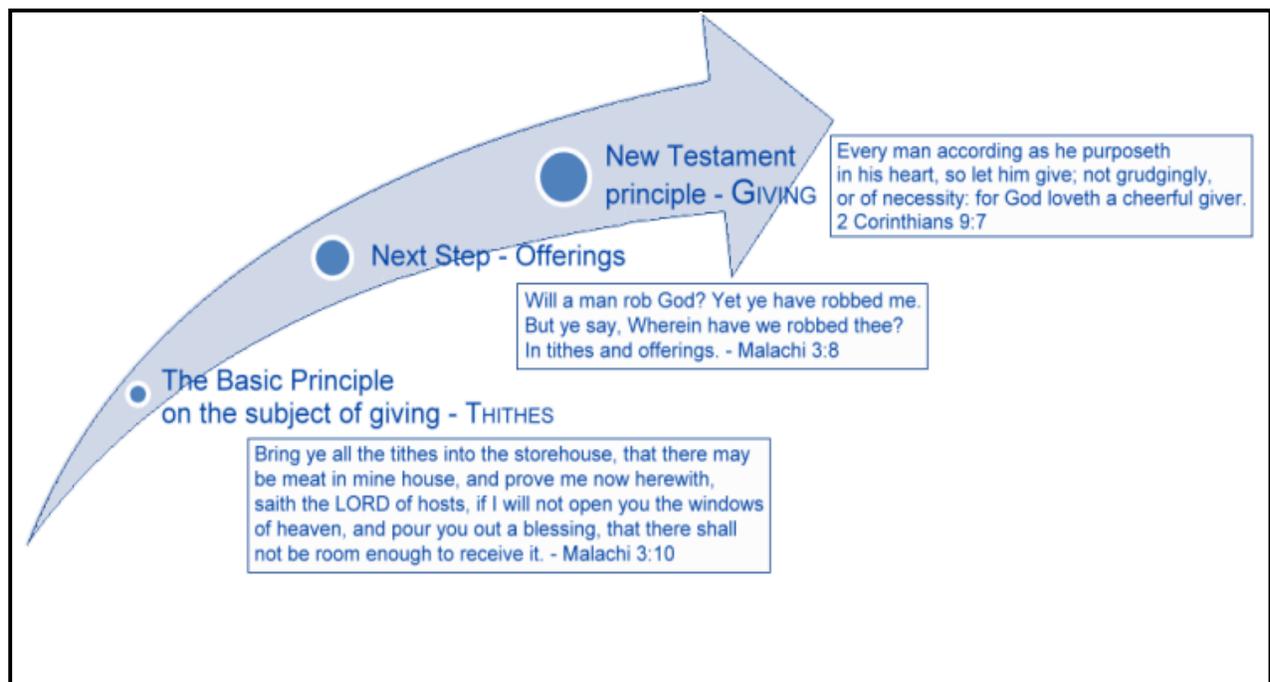
God promises to bless their material goods as we mentioned early in these lessons. The condition? **Obedience.**

28:12 *The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.*

Not only will God bless them individually and as a nation, but He promises again to bless other nations of the world if they interact with the nation of Israel correctly.

28:13-14 *And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them: And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.*

What great promises are found in these verses to the nation of Israel! However, as mentioned several times in our studies on these verses, I believe that the basic principles found here are applicable to the people of God in our modern era. Obedience never goes out of vogue. Since these last few verses apply to material blessings I would like to apply them to the Biblical principles found throughout God's word about the subject of giving.



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