

## **INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS BY THE SPIRIT (e<sup>2</sup>)**

***"... If you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you" (Matthew 17:20).***

Think about the above statement for a moment! Jesus said, "If you have faith as small as a mustard seed nothing will be impossible to you!" Faith is the only way that you and I can receive anything from God, except through a manifestation of the **gifts of the Spirit**. Faith will work for you anytime, but the gifts of the Spirit operate only as the Spirit wills, not according to your wishes or your desires. In the above scripture we are talking about the "God kind of faith"--the kind that God gives to believers when they are born again (Romans 12:3). Understanding the "God kind of faith" and how to develop it, should become the most important quest of any businessperson desiring assistance from the Creator.

### **FAITH IS OFTEN CONSIDERED ONLY IN A RELIGIOUS CONTEXT**

Faith is often thought of only in a religious context, but there is a natural human faith which is available to anyone desiring to achieve success in life. Faith is simply the ability to see something presently not yet visible, as clearly as if it were already visible and available for our use. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Another translation says, "What is faith? Faith gives substance to our hope" The free enterprise system is built upon faith; anyone who wishes to participate in that system has to be willing to work first and then 'hope' for a reward. Nothing is assured, as every task we undertake contains risk. Successful people working in the free enterprise system must have faith that they will succeed; even those who are not believers exercise faith--faith in the system and in their ability to succeed in that system. How much more should believers have faith in their ability to succeed when they have the Creator of the universe backing them?

### **EVERY SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN EXERCISES FAITH**

In order to function effectively in the business world, one must exercise faith! A home builder exercises faith when he builds and markets a home. First, he must find a suitable piece of property, and then he must obtain government permission to sub-divide and develop the property. Next, he must build roads, install water, sewer, power, natural gas and make a myriad of other improvements before he can even start building a home. Then he must obtain a design for the home, order the materials and engage a number of different sub-contractors in order to properly complete the construction of his homes. He might work for months or even years before he is able to sell a single house. And then again he might not sell his homes for the price he needs to make a profit.

### **THE WORLD REWARDS THOSE WHO SEE WITH THE EYES OF FAITH**

The world in which we live is designed in such a way that the ability to see things that are not yet visible as clearly as if they were visible and available for our use is rewarded. Over the years I have applied the "Spiritual Law" described in Matthew 17:20 to move seemingly impossible mountains that had arisen in my business. But because of my lack of understanding, I did not make this and other spiritual principles a part of my daily business life until very late in my business career. You see, I generally viewed these spiritual principles as life preservers which were available to help in the crisis situations that develop in life and business. It was only in the last few years of my business career that I understood that these principles were meant to become a way of life; they were to become a routine part of our daily business activities. I hope that by sharing my spiritual journey that you will be able to avoid some of the spiritual missteps which I have taken.

### **THE PURPOSE OF GODLY PROSPERITY IS TO EXPAND THE KINGDOM**

The primary purpose for God prospering you is world evangelism; it is to fulfill the great commission. If you will learn to follow His Spirit, He will make you wealthy. God is not opposed to you being wealthy; instead He is opposed you being covetous. The Apostle Paul states that if we give bountifully, as we purpose in our heart, and not grudgingly or of necessity, then God is able to make all grace (the entire corporate power of heaven) abound toward us, so that we will always have enough to meet every need. He is able to make us rich in every way, so that we can be generous on every occasion.

If you are willing and obedient, the Holy Spirit will lead **you**. He will expand your resources, and multiply your finances so that together with Him you can increase His kingdom on the earth. And one more thing--when God makes you wealthy, praise Him for it, but be careful to separate what you are from what you own. The eyes of the Lord go throughout the earth to find an obedient individual through whom He can funnel the silver and gold to advance His kingdom.

Some teach that we can use faith to produce whatever we need or want in life; all one needs to do is give into the offering plate, name the things for which we are believing (cars, house, boats, etc.), exercise our faith, and watch these things manifest in the physical world. This is not the biblical prosperity message; it is a hyper-prosperity gospel based on greed and selfish indulgence, taught by the new age and mind science religions. Unfortunately some of these same teachings have found their way into the Christian church. Beware of such teaching; it distorts the biblical faith message and the New Testament prosperity principles.

### **GOD NEVER CHANGES!**

The God of the twenty-first century is the same God that commanded Moses to part the Red Sea by stretching out his rod over the sea (Exodus 14:15-31). He is the same God that caused the walls of Jericho to collapse when Joshua and the Israelites acted in faith on God's word (Joshua 6:1-27). He is the same God that gave Jehoshaphat a dramatic victory against the combined power of three enemy nations--a victory against overwhelming odds, a victory he won without even drawing a sword. Jehoshaphat won the battle the same way we all do, by acting in faith. You see, he told his people, "Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper" (2 Chronicles 20:1-30).

God says, "For I am the Lord; I do not change" (Malachi 3:6). He is the same God to you and me as he was to Moses, Joshua, Jehoshaphat, and a host of other men of faith that God has used throughout history to accomplish great physical feats of victory. You may be thinking that God selected these men and granted them victory because they were special; you may have thought that God blessed them because they were saints, men who had never messed up. No, the overwhelming majority of these biblical heroes were men like you and me! They were ordinary men, ranchers, fishermen, businessmen, military men, tax collectors and government leaders. Even more, most of these biblical heroes continued to work in their secular professions while they performed their work for the Lord.

### **THE OLD TESTAMENT HEROES OF FAITH SPENT TIME WITH GOD**

The thing which set these men apart from their peers was that they spent time with God, meditating on his word, seeking to know His will. Moses spent forty days on the mountain receiving the Law of God (Exodus 24:1-18,). Joshua meditated upon the Word of God day and night, and did all that it required of him, and by doing so he made himself successful (Joshua 1:8-9). Jehoshaphat taught the Word of God to the people and brought reform to the nation of Judah (2 Chronicles 17:1-10). And when he was attacked by three godless kings, he humbled himself before the Lord, and his faith in God's Word defeated his enemies without his ever having to fight a battle. If you are not spending time in prayer and meditation in God's Word, you have no right to ask Him for help. Jesus said, "My people know My voice."

### **BUT THEY WERE HUMAN; THEY MADE MISTAKES**

But all of these men were human; they made mistakes. Moses failed to speak to the rock to bring forth water as God had commanded him, and his disbelief prevented him from entering the promised land (Numbers 20:7-12). Joshua failed to seek the counsel of the Lord concerning the people of Gibeon (Joshua 9:8-16), and his disobedience eventually brought disaster upon the Israelites (2 Samuel 21:1-6). Jehoshaphat allied himself with a wicked king, and his disobedience caused God to rebuke him (2 Chronicles 19: 1-3).

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MANUFACTURER'S HANDBOOK**

When we purchase a new piece of equipment for our business we expect the firm that designed and manufactured the equipment to provide us with operating instructions, a manufacturer's handbook to familiarize us, and guide us in the operation of the equipment. Such a handbook describes the piece of

equipment, gives the purpose of the equipment, and explains how to keep the equipment functioning properly as well as trouble shoot common problems that develop with the equipment. When serious problems occur not covered in the handbook's troubleshooting guide, it is often necessary that we consult directly with the manufacturer, but we need the handbook in order to obtain the phone number or address of the manufacturer. If the equipment were quite complex, it might even be necessary to have the manufacturer's representative instruct us in the use and care of the equipment. Most successful businessmen would never attempt to operate a new piece of equipment without first studying the manufacturer's handbook.

### **OUR MANUFACTURER'S HANDBOOK IS THE BIBLE!**

Perhaps because I think with the systematic, structured mind of an engineer, the existence of the Bible seemed logical to me. If there is a God who dwells in a spiritual unseen world, who created something as vast and complex as our physical universe, and who made a physical being as intricate as a human being, surely he would give us a set of operating instructions to explain how His creation works, a Manufacturer's Handbook so to speak.

After I was born again, my engineering mind reasoned that if I wanted to determine the Manufacturer's plan and purpose for my life, I needed to study the Manufacturer's Handbook, or if you prefer the Creator's Handbook, the Bible. I found that in His handbook, God had provided a description of mankind, His purpose for mankind, and how to keep mankind operating properly. He also gave us pointers on how to trouble shoot common problems that develop in our lives, and when serious problems develop the Creator's Handbook tells us how to make contact with the Creator, our heavenly Father. The Creator's Handbook not only gives purpose and direction to our personal life, but to our business life as well. It instructs and guides us as to how to live a happy, healthy, prosperous life. I refer to the Bible as the Creator's Handbook often in this book because I want you to change the way you think about the Bible. I want you to begin to think of it as having been authored by our creator, the only being who is capable of guiding us to a proper understanding of our lives and the physical and spiritual worlds in which we live. When the Creator's Handbook teaches a principle that contradicts what you perceive with your physical senses, learn to accept and believe the Creator's Handbook.

### **THE CREATOR'S HANDBOOK IS LIKE A GOLD MINE**

The handbook provided by the manufacturer of a new piece of equipment is written in the common language of our day, and it includes illustrations and photographs that make it easy to understand. On the other hand some forty different "men of God," wrote the Bible as the Spirit of God inspired them. Furthermore it was written over a period of approximately sixteen hundred years. The Bible manuscripts that we study today are translations of the original Hebrew and Greek texts. Since God knew the Bible would be used over a period of thousands of years, He had to describe the various human characteristics, and life and business principles, in a language that would transcend time. The Bible, therefore, is like a goldmine through which we have to dig to get to the gold. One of our problems is that Christians in general and Christian businesspeople specifically spend very little time digging for the "gold."

### **GOD WANTS TO BLESS HIS PEOPLE**

God wants to make His people rich, and He promised that He would add no sorrow to their riches (Proverbs 10:22), but in order for Him to fulfill his promise to you and me, we like the biblical heroes of old, must spend time with God. We must meditate on his word day and night, and we must act on His word in faith. Therefore it behooves every Christian businessperson to make the development of faith in the integrity of God's Word, their highest priority. This is the goal of this book: to share with you the secret things of the kingdom of God. They are not secrets because they are hidden; they are secrets because they are spiritually discerned.