

From Formula to Relationship

by Gary Carpenter

Have you ever heard the phrase, "One word from God can change your life forever?" It is true. I will never forget May 2, 1996. It was during mine and Sue's first year of being full time in the ministry. To the best of our knowledge, we were obeying everything that He had told us to do, yet we had been struggling terribly financially. I knew that was not His perfect will for us, yet I could not seem to break out of the "barely surviving stage" when it came to prosperity.

At that time, I was "serving" the Lord, but I did not "know" the Lord very well. Consequently, I did not know my heavenly Father very well either. My relationship with the Father was still pretty much "performance" centered. Let me say it this way; I only had a relationship by "formula" when it came to my heavenly Father. I felt like, if I did "this," then He would do "that."

Because our financial needs were so great, I was daily in the frame of mind of "how can I get God to meet my needs?" I was following every formula I had ever been taught when it comes to prospering financially in the kingdom. Thank God for the Holy Ghost! He came to my rescue after a season of praying in other tongues and said to me,

"This thought never went through the mind of Jesus; What must I do today to get the Father to meet my needs?"

To me, that was an incredible statement because at the time it seemed that all my waking hours were CONSUMED with thoughts of, "What must I do today to get the Father to meet my needs." I asked the Holy Spirit, "Well, if Jesus did not think like that, how did He think?" The Holy Spirit responded,

"He believed that He was His Father's Son, and heir of all that the Father had."

I did not realize at the time that those two short statements from the Holy Spirit would change my life forever. The whole reason for my financial struggles in the kingdom of God were based on this simple fact: I did not have the revelation of "sonship." I still considered myself to be an "outsider," seeking to obtain the blessings of God based on my performance.

Think about it like this. There is a vast difference in the thinking of an employee of a rich man compared to the son of a rich man. The employee's relationship, financially, with the rich man is based on his performance. The son's relationship, financially, with the rich man is based on his "inheritance." The employee is "paid wages" according to his labor. The son receives freely from his inheritance because the rich man IS his Father!

By grace alone, through the finished work of Jesus Christ, the Father has adopted us into His family. He has made us "joint-heirs" with Jesus Christ. We have a vast

inheritance laid up for us. The teachings in this section lay a solid foundation to help you appropriate from that inheritance.

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