

## Saving Part 3

The church should be a model in the area of wise and careful spending, for the world and the new believers and the new disciples to follow. The church should stand firm and not encourage and honor activities that don't glorify God. Parties and celebrations that the Word of God does not ordain are full of boasting, gossiping, envy, showing off, worldliness, and the loss of financial resources and poverty.

In *Luke 14* Jesus was invited to a banquet, and this is how He admonished the person who had invited him, *"12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee."* (Luke 14:12 KJV) So if Jesus is saying, *"call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours"*, who is left to be invited? Almost no one! \* So in other words, what Jesus means is that we must stop all these parties and stop entertaining people who will be able to reciprocate. The focus of such get together is on people rather than on God. This is a worldly practice. The church must refrain from such practices so that people can grasp the differences between living for Christ and living for people. \* In certain instances, pastors and churches are hardly going into fasting because of the booking of many parties. They are having feasting and no fasting; their God had become their belly! Churches must encourage and invite people for fasting and prayer and offer them spiritual food that will sustain them for life rather than waste money on perishable food that will come out as waste.

Jesus further explained, *"13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind."* (Luke 14:13 KJV) Now the kind of people Jesus was speaking about in the verse above will not accept our invitation and so we need to go to them. The poor are not only those who do not have money. They are those who do not have the Word of God. The lame and the crippled are those who are in trouble and are in need of God's Word. We need to go to them and for this ministry we need resources. Therefore, there is a great need to be a good steward and be recipients of God's blessing so that we can spend on God's work and mission. *"14 And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."* (Luke 14:14 KJV) The will of God for us is to make wealth to reach the lost, to help the saints and to help those who are in need. God truly wants us to serve His purpose in such a manner.

Now for a quick run through of how we can save:

**A. Put it in our minds:** It was not in Pharaoh's mind to save, but Joseph showed him the way. Pharaoh listened to Joseph and obeyed God's instruction. **We need to do the same, to humble down and start to cut down our costs and start to save.**

**B. Discipline ourselves:** For sure Joseph was aware of the extravagant lifestyle of Pharaoh but he took the initiative to educate him on saving for the lean period. **So also we need to be educated in God's principles relating to stewardship, saving, and preparing for the days of famine.** We should not forget that eating in the restaurants, eating expensive food, buying many unnecessary things and accessories, every now and then, changing our computers, our laptops, and our mobiles all need money. We should not say it is a small amount. Small

amounts put together will become a big amount. A dollar per day over seven years will be 2520 dollars; it can be used to buy a car. If that one dollar per day can do so much, how much more if we waste 10 dollars daily?

**C. Collect little by little:** 20% of our income should be kept as savings.

**D. Replace bad habits with good habits:** Stop offering material gifts to people; instead offer them the most priceless gift, the gift of God's Word. Stop wasting resources on useless things and start saving to enjoy the blessing as well as be a blessing unto others; spend money on good projects, like the good Samaritan, by reaching out to the poor and needy, the orphans and the widows, the sick, the imprisoned, the downcast and trodden who need the Gospel to salvage their lives.

**E. Keep in focus the purpose of saving:** What we save should not be used without discretion for the wrong purpose. That is why Joseph said to Pharaoh, *"take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. 35 And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. 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 41:34-36 KJV) Pharaoh was able to see God's wisdom in Joseph's speech and was also aware of his own extravagant lifestyle and realized the need to listen to Joseph's advice. That is why he recommended Joseph to be in charge of amassing the reserve for the lean period, *"which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine."* (Genesis 41:36 KJV) Famine always spells ruin. So here Joseph was telling Pharaoh to cut the cost and save one-fifth of the country's revenue and keep it as reserve. **Reserve cannot be touched. When we save, we need to discipline and control ourselves from using what we have kept as a reserve until the opportune moment.**

We must understand that we cannot use what we save without discretion. We cannot use our saving to buy and purchase casual things. We cannot use our saving for someone want to borrow from us to do certain projects, to build a house, to buy a car, etc. We cannot use our strategic savings for such things because our savings would not be there for the years of famine that is going to come to our lives where in them we will not have an income. The reserve that we have should only be used in the years of famine.

**F. Wisdom and discernment:** Joseph said to Pharaoh, *"33 Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt."* (Genesis 41:33) What we need now is discernment and wisdom of God to be wise as serpents when it comes to saving. Pharaoh appointed Joseph because he was a man who was discreet and wise to control the process of saving. **Self-control, self-discipline, responsibility, and a mature attitude are all needed in managing our finances today so that we can be ready to face tomorrow.** We need to be like Joseph wise and discerning to do the task entrusted to us today as a church to reach out to the whole world with the Gospel of Christ till the Lord comes and take us.

**G. Do not be deceived by plenty:** *"49 And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number."* (Genesis 41:49 KJV) We notice here that Joseph continued to collect and save even when he had a great quantity. The point here is that Joseph was not deceived by the huge quantity of the gathered corn he saw, because

he knew that the famine was just around the corner and he needed to save and store in accordance with God's Word. **In the same way, we should rise above every kind of deception and continue to obey God's Word and His principles regarding saving resources and wise spending. Then, we will be able to cope with the famine to come.**

**H. Take warning from the Scriptures:** *"27 And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. 28 And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. 29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: 30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."* (Acts 11:27-30 KJV) God allowed famine not only in the Old Testament time but also in the New Testament period. The church in the book of Acts had faced famine. The same may happen to the church today. That is why the church must insist on saving resources. In Acts 11:27-30 a prophet prophesied and warned the church about the coming famine. **\* The message in our hand is a prophetic one, warning the church of today to repent and stop squandering God's resources as the lost son in wild living; parties, traveling here and there, undertaking unnecessary projects, worldliness, religious tours to the land of Israel and so on. \* The church and we who are reading must understand that God would allow famine to come across the life of the church and the famine will be severe and will spread over the entire world. So we need to take warning and repent. As the Lord's second coming is near, famines, wars, and earthquakes will also be there and will compound the severity of the suffering that God would allow. So now we as a church need to be wiser in managing and adjusting our finances. Are we ready to combat these things?**

The Lord wants us to use our minds in living our lives for Him. *"28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? 29 Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, 30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish."* (Luke 14:28-30 KJV) So as disciples, we need to undertake big projects for God. We need to be builders and for that, we need money and finances and that is why Jesus said we need to sit down and count the cost with the wisdom of God. We need to sit down and count how much we need to save for the coming project. Once we venture on something, there should be no shortage of resource.

**\* Some will say God will provide in times of famine. Yes, He will provide, and one way He provides is through what we have today. We need to be like the ants gathering food during the harvest. God may send at once when we are in need. But God will certainly hold us accountable for the amount of money, time and resources that we had not used wisely. \* In certain situations, unexpectedly the Lord may want us to go on a certain mission. God may provide for us through someone who is a good steward for God. God used the Magi to support Jesus' parents' trip to Egypt, *"11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."* (Matthew 2:11 KJV) Those were the Magi who came from the East and presented their gifts to the Lord, and those gifts were important because Joseph and Mary were called in Matthew 2:13 to take Jesus and go to Egypt. They must have used the gifts from the Magi to finance their trip to Egypt and accomplish their mission there. *"13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the***

*young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."* (Matthew 2:13 KJV) The Magi were true worshippers of God and they were good stewards of God's resources and the church (Joseph and Mary) used what they had given to take Jesus to Egypt. **Stewardship is very important; if someone among God's children has given us a gift today, then there is a purpose and a mission. Therefore we need to use what we receive for His glory.**

*"17 Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings."* (Acts 24:17 KJV) Paul mentioned that he went to Jerusalem to bring gifts for the poor. The poor there were the apostles of the Lord passing through famine. Paul was collecting from the churches for them. **The point here is how Paul or we today as a church can collect or give to help the poor or those in famine if there is no saving that has been set aside. So how can we help the saints and the churches that are in need of finance if we ourselves have no savings of what God has given to us?** In Acts 24:17 Paul brought gifts to help those who faced famine and were in need. The same theme we can read in 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, *"1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 2 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. 3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. 4 And if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me."* So here Paul mentions that money should be collected beforehand so that once he reaches, then the money will be sent to help the Lord's people in Jerusalem. Now the practice of the churches today to collect money on the urge of the moment for a particular need is not Biblical. They resort to that because they have no reserve. God's Church should be wise, alert, and smart in keeping reserves to face all odds.

God gives us His Word for us to apply it in our lives. When the apostles of the Lord had to face famine, why not we living in this age and time will face the same? The Scripture is the Word of God to warn us because history can repeat itself.

Paul said in Acts 20:35, *"I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."* The Word of God is crystal clear. We have a responsibility. The Biblical principle of making wealth is to be shared with those who are in need and can also be used to replenish us in times of need.

*"19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* (Matthew 28:19-20 KJV) To go and make disciples, we need money to spend on our journeys and to give to those in need. That is why we need to save because we need to travel to give the Word of God to the lost, to give Bibles, clothes and food and medical help to those who are in need, to help churches and workers, to help widows and orphans, prisoners, and sick people who are in need; that is the part of the Great Commission.

James 1:27, says, *"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."* **We need to save so that we can care and spend on orphans and widows and the rest of the population of people who are in need. James 1:27 gives a very valid point about how we can**

save: *“and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”* Worldliness and a worldly life will push us to spend our money on pleasures and on unnecessary things and that will hinder us from saving and disable us from pursuing the mission of the Lord.

Some people say that they don't need to save and they will quote: *Matthew 10:9-10 KJV* “*9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, 10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.*” And they say Jesus is saying, *“Provide neither.... for your journey, ...”*, then they will tell us, ‘Why are you telling us to save and keep things to be used for the future in the ministry and mission?’ But, let us read, *Luke 22: 35-36*, “*35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. 36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.*” (*Luke 22:35-36 KJV*) What Jesus says here is that there is a time of evil will come and we need to be ready. The people who say, ‘*Do not take with you because He will provide*’, will be proved right only if something far beyond our comprehension and expectations happens. Then He will make a way for us, and He will provide. God is there for us but we also need to be wise and discerning and do our part. God has said in His Word to take and keep; therefore you are required to have your money, to have your transport, to have your savings, your clothes, and food, to have your bags and belongings, to sit down and plan and draw an estimate. In this way, we can be satisfied that we have planned well.

If our mind tells us: ‘*By faith God will provide even if we do not plan or keep or save*’, then that is not correct and not acceptable to God because in this way we are putting God to the test and we are living our lives without wisdom and without discernment like worldly people who spend everything without planning, and with no saving for the future. God wants us to have wealth for a good purpose, and we need to do it in accordance with the Word of God.

My dear brothers and sisters, let us be God-pleasers rather than men-pleasers and follow the principles of stewardship, avoiding unnecessary expenses, avoiding sin and worldliness, trusting God, disciplining ourselves in the way God ordained in His Word and spread the Gospel to all parts of the world even to the next generation.

Let us further explore the Scriptures that will motivate us and teach us to save by highlighting the benefits of saving and its positive outcome:

*“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.”* (*Genesis 41:56 KJV*) Joseph sold to the Egyptians what he had had as a reserve in the storehouses. So here we can see that Joseph never incurred any loss but gained money. What we save in the time of plenty will back us up at the time of scarcity and will enable us to use what we had stored to earn an additional income as we can read further from the life of Joseph.

*“13 And there was no bread in all the land; for the famine was very sore, so that the land of Egypt and all the land of Canaan fainted by reason of the famine. 14 And Joseph gathered up all the money that was found in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, for the corn which they bought: and Joseph brought the money into Pharaoh's house. 15 And when money failed in the land of Egypt, and in the land of Canaan, all the Egyptians came unto*

*Joseph, and said, Give us bread: for why should we die in thy presence? for the money faileth. 16 And Joseph said, Give your cattle; and I will give you for your cattle, if money fail. 17 And they brought their cattle unto Joseph: and Joseph gave them bread in exchange for horses, and for the flocks, and for the cattle of the herds, and for the asses: and he fed them with bread for all their cattle for that year. 18 When that year was ended, they came unto him the second year, and said unto him, We will not hide it from my lord, how that our money is spent; my lord also hath our herds of cattle; there is not ought left in the sight of my lord, but our bodies, and our lands: 19 Wherefore shall we die before thine eyes, both we and our land? buy us and our land for bread, and we and our land will be servants unto Pharaoh: and give us seed, that we may live, and not die, that the land be not desolate. 20 And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them: so the land became Pharaoh's. 21 And as for the people, he removed them to cities from one end of the borders of Egypt even to the other end thereof. 22 Only the land of the priests bought he not; for the priests had a portion assigned them of Pharaoh, and did eat their portion which Pharaoh gave them: wherefore they sold not their lands. 23 Then Joseph said unto the people, Behold, I have bought you this day and your land for Pharaoh: lo, here is seed for you, and ye shall sow the land. 24 And it shall come to pass in the increase, that ye shall give the fifth part unto Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones. 25 And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants. 26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.”* (*Genesis 47:13-26 KJV*) As we read, the stores that Joseph prepared was not consumed but was replaced with money, then with cattle, and then with human power and land. So from the story of Joseph, we can learn further the following things:

**1. Good stewardship will be rewarded:** Good stewardship of what God has entrusted to us will enable us not to lose what we worked for, even in the years of famine. God will reward our good stewardships and will replenish us and will sustain us and our families, churches and our disciples.

**2. Good stewardship will save lives:** The Egyptians said to Joseph, “*And they said, Thou hast saved our lives.*” (*Genesis 47:25 KJV*) Now Jesus is our Savior and has taught us in His Word to be good stewards and manage whatever we receive from Him well. If we don't pay heed to God's command and fulfill the task that the Lord has entrusted to us, then we are putting ourselves and others who are under our care in unnecessary trouble.

**3. Good stewardship will adopt the divine principle of saving the one fifth:** What God had revealed to Pharaoh in his dream to save a fifth of all the income of the land was agreed upon in Egypt. “*26 And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part,*” (*Genesis 47:26 KJV*) Let us adopt this law of God in our lives and obey it by practicing it and let us see how God will continually bless us. Adopting this law will afford to us relief and comfort, will spare us troubles and will secure stable and financial-free troubles future for us and for our children, our families, our descendants, our disciples, and our churches.



**My dear and beloved:** This teaching that we discussed will be a part of reality once we put into practice what we had learned. The future for us and for our children and disciples will be determined by the mind set up that we are keeping today. Jesus said, **“10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” (John 10:10 KJV)** All that we have discussed is from the Word of God mentioned in the Bible. Jesus is the living Word and when we apply every Word of the Scripture in the right place and at the right time, then we will be blessed and His blessing will flow through us to others. But if we refuse the Word of God as some do and mock it, then it is for our ruin. The devil is a thief who would hate God’s people to apply God’s Word in their lives and find relief. Hence, if we don’t apply God’s Word, we will actually allow the devil to steal, kill, and destroy. **Therefore, let’s make the right choice in taking more heed of the message today and apply it carefully in our lives and reap the blessing of God and keep it in the coming future, to the next generation, until Jesus comes.** Let us pray ...

**My Prayer:** *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose from death to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your teaching about saving and your motivation for me toward saving the one fifth of my income. Lord thank you for various resources that I had received from you. Lord thank you for all the corrections, the rebukes and the admonishments that I received in this message.*

*Repent and renounce all your sins. Renounce your bad stewardship and wasting your resources. Repent of your non willingness to go and reach those who are poor, the sick and the disabled. Repent of your worldliness, your love for material things and your unnecessary spending on parties, accessories, cars, perfumes, watches, mobiles and laptops. Repent of your lack of reading your Bible and your lack of prayers. Repent of wasting your time on the Media and with friends. Repent of your non willingness to suffer for God and to serve Him in preaching the gospel of Jesus. Lord I repent and renounce the following sins*  
\_\_\_\_\_.

*Lord I commit myself to live according to the teaching and the correction I received in this message, and to apply the divine principle in saving the fifth of my income. Lord I am willing to serve you in the way that you want me to move in order to reach the sick, the poor and crippled.*

*Lord, thank you for my Brothers and Sisters who repented of their sins and are willing to follow your Word and live the style of life that you want them to live, to save the fifth of their income and to serve you according to the ministry that you prepared for them. Lord reward them as they obey you and use their lives as good example to others to follow you.*

*Lord bless us as a church and help us to continue to teach and admonish your people about the importance of saving and to help them to implement that in their lives. Lord refill us with the Holy Spirit and give us the Spiritual gifts that we needs in our lives to go on and evangelize, and make new disciples and train new workers to go and plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church. Lord we pray for more people to be water Baptized and receive the Holy Spirit Baptism. Lord prepare us for your coming to go with you when you come. Lord fulfill the vision of the church, ‘Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God.’ Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us and free us from harm so*

*that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus name, Amen.*

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