

# IS GOD USING YOU TO YOUR FULL POTENTIAL? – PART 1

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Stuck In A Rut And Never Serving The Lord, God Is Willing And Waiting To Use Us, Reasons Why Christians Stagnate And Don't Blossom, Satan Tries His Best To Prevent Us From Serving God, The Snare And Enticement Of Materialism And Physical Comfort, Seek First God's Heavenly Kingdom, Be Content With What You Have, Satan's Millennia-Old Trick, Satan's Authority To Offer Us Material Things, Examples: Adam And Eve Bit The Forbidden Fruit, Jesus Was Tempted In The Wilderness, Demas Loved This Present World, Prodigal Son Learned A Hard Lesson, Our Lack Of Faith And Fear Of An Unknown Future, Life's Anchors Which Weigh Us Down, God Calls Abraham To Leave Behind Everything He Knows And Go To Canaan, Abraham's Example Of Obedience And Faith, Jesus Had Rather Stiff Requirements For Core Followers, Counting The Cost First, Forsaking All From Our Former Lives, Satan Will Exploit Any Compromise In Our Life, Young Rich Man Who Failed Jesus' Test, Snare Of Material Wealth, Apostles Had Faith And Forsook All Immediately, Genuine Faith Trusts God For The Future And Does Not Hesitate To Obey, List Of Excuses, Isaiah: Here Am I Lord Send Me, Without Faith It Is Impossible To Please God, Christians Stuck In A Rut, Apostles' Road Trip

One of the things which kind of saddens me, is when I see people who repeatedly say that they really wish that God would use them, but then they never do, and are not even willing to do, what needs to be done in order to make it happen. Such people just go on year after year, saying the same thing over and over again, while remaining stuck in the very same old rut of their mundane life. The Devil has them caught in the same loop, so that their life slips on by, and they never do serve the Lord the way they want to do.

I won't name any names here, but there are people in my own life who seem to be just like this. The tragedy is that they don't seem to understand that until they are willing to take a stand of faith, and make a serious effort to move in the direction that God wants them to move in, nothing will ever

change for them. If there is one thing I know from personal experience, it is that God is indeed willing. He is waiting and ready to use you right now. So why isn't it happening? It certainly isn't God's fault, so it must be YOUR fault.

Well, speaking from my own personal observations, I can offer a few ideas which I personally believe are at least some of the reasons why certain Christians stagnate, and never fully blossom, so that God can in fact begin using them to their full potential. Without a doubt, one issue is that some people are not willing to surrender or give up certain things in their life. Such things are holding them back, and keeping them bound to their sad, hum-drum existence.

The fact is, my friends, the enemy of your soul will most certainly do everything within his power to keep you from truly serving the Lord with your whole heart. Of course, as many Christians will already know, one of that old fiend's biggest tactics is found in the following group of Bible verses. These verses not only reveal Satan's tactics, but also what God's Word instructs us to do when Satan throws his tactics at us:

The Devil's tactics:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 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. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

1 John 2:15-17, KJV

"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it."

Luke 4:5-6, KJV

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

"For Demas hath forsaken me, HAVING LOVED THIS PRESENT WORLD, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia."  
2 Timothy 4:10, KJV

The Lord's solution:

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES."  
2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also . . . No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon . . . But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."  
Matthew 6:19-21, 24, 33, KJV

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"  
Mark 8:36-37, KJV

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."  
John 6:27, KJV

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I HAVE LEARNED, IN WHATSOEVER STATE I AM, THEREWITH TO BE CONTENT."  
Philippians 4:11, KJV

"SET YOUR AFFECTION ON THINGS ABOVE, not on things on the earth."  
Colossians 3:2, KJV

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And HAVING FOOD AND RAIMENT LET US BE THEREWITH CONTENT."

1 Timothy 6:6-8, KJV

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and BE CONTENT WITH SUCH THINGS AS YE HAVE: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Hebrews 13:5, KJV

So as you can see by the previous group of verses, one of the Devil's biggest tactics is to TEMPT us with THINGS. He wants to make our lives as comfy-cozy as he possibly can. He wants to surround us with material things so that we are lulled to sleep, and simply put off getting serious with the Lord. Now is that the truth, or isn't it? Satan has in fact been using that same tactic for literally thousands of years, beginning with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. "Ye shall be as gods" he told them, as we see by the following Bible verse. He homed in on their biggest weakness -- their pride -- just as the Apostle John had written in the previous verses. He basically said "Why settle with what you've got when you can have so much more?":

"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and YE SHALL BE AS GODS, knowing good and evil."

Genesis 3:5, KJV

As we saw just a minute ago, Satan tried using that tactic on Jesus as well. He offered the Lord the entire physical world, if He would just compromise by simply bowing down and worshipping that foul fiend. You will notice that Satan had the power to do this. He possessed the authority to offer Jesus such things. Thus he said "for that is delivered unto me." And why did the Devil have this authority? Because as the Apostle Paul wrote in the previous group of verses, the Devil is "the god of this world". That's why.

Sadly, Demas was apparently not a very strong Christian. As a result, when the going got tough, he obviously fell for Satan's tactic, and he chose to abandon the Apostle Paul and the ministry. Thus Paul writes of that man "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." What a great tragedy indeed. Demas settled for the husks, exactly as the Prodigal Son had done until he finally came to his senses in the midst of his misery and said the following to himself:

"And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my fathers have bread enough and to spare, and I

perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

Luke 15:17-19, KJV

Thus we clearly see that materialism is a huge weapon in the Devil's bag of tricks. However, it would not be fair or even the full truth if we tried to pin our failures on the Devil alone. The fact of the matter is that our failure to fully and wholeheartedly serve the Lord is quite often due to our own LACK OF FAITH. We become so bound up by fear because we do not know what the future may hold for us if we do commit ourselves to the Lord's service, that in the end, we're just never willing to let go of what is familiar to us, and what comforts us, and what gives us a normal, firm foundation in this life.

These anchors which weigh us down, and which keep us trapped in our secular lives, so that we never truly launch out into the deep for the Lord, can be a variety of things. Maybe we have a good job with benefits that we just aren't willing to give up. Often, a byproduct of our job is that we also have a nice home which provides us with comfort and a familiar environment. Or perhaps we have a great circle of friends who we are simply not willing to leave behind. The anchors obviously vary from person to person. After all, the Devil's enticements are custom-made for each situation. But the end result is that we are very hesitant to leave behind what is familiar to us, aren't we? We don't want to rock the boat of our peaceful existence, or exchange it for a totally unknown future, right?

Well, as I point out in other BBB articles, that is EXACTLY what God demands of those people whom He has called into His service. This Biblical truth is made sufficiently evident in what the Lord said to Abraham while he was still living his very comfy-cozy existence in Haran in Padanaram. Oh, and by the way, for the record, by this time, Terah -- Abraham's father -- had already departed Ur of the Chaldees in what is today a part of southern Iraq. They had settled in Haran, in Padanaram, which was a part of Syria. Consider the Lord's words to Abraham in Haran:

"Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a

great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."

Genesis 12:1-5, KJV

So what did Abraham do? Did he whine and complain and say to the Lord "Oh, Lord, but we have such great lives here in the city of Haran. We are comfortable, and we have everything we could possibly need here. Why leave this wonderful place and go down into Canaan which is full of hostile people who we don't even know? They may not even like us, Lord."? No, he most certainly did NOT. Quite to the contrary, Abraham took the Lord's word BY FAITH, and he did EXACTLY as he had been commanded to do. He left his father Terah's house and off he went with his part of the family and their possessions. Thus, in Hebrews 11 we also read the following verses which serve as a memorial to Abraham, and a badge of courage for him as well:

"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

Hebrews 11:8-10, KJV

My friends, Abraham's example of unwavering faith highlights what has actually and always been God's requirement for full discipleship down through the ages. It has never changed. Not even today. You know, many of us have seen a lot of Christian movies in our lives which depict the life and ministry of Jesus and His followers. A lot of these movies make it seem so easy and simple. Jesus called a certain person to follow Him, and off they went without any degree of hesitation just like that, right? Sadly, not always. The Lord had very stiff requirements for His core followers. He demanded their all. If you doubt that this is so, consider the following Bible

verses:

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

Luke 9:23-24, KJV

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

Luke 14:26-33, KJV

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

Matthew 19:29, KJV

"And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

Mark 10:29-30, KJV

"Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his

disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

Matthew 12:47-50, KJV

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me."

Matthew 10:34-38, KJV

"And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

Mark 10:29-30, KJV

"Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against their parents, and shall cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

Mark 13:12-13, KJV

"Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law."

Luke 12:51-53, KJV

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower,



sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

Luke 14:26-33, KJV

So as that final verse states, unless we're willing to truly FORSAKE ALL -- meaning everything from our former life -- we CANNOT be the Lord's disciples. Why not? Because anything we try to hold on to from our former life will hold us back. It will be like an anchor which drags us down, and which slows us down. It will be a compromise, and also a weak link in our armor which the Devil will try to exploit as he tries to draw us away from serving the Lord. In fact, as many of my readers will know, that is precisely what happened with the rich man in the Gospels. That man was so very proud of his righteousness. In his blindness, he foolishly assumed that he had done everything right according to the Laws of Moses, and thus, in his view, he merited Eternal Life.

However, my friends, what happened next? For anyone who may not know the story, Jesus gave that man a final test, and sad to say, that man failed it miserably, because he simply was NOT willing to FORSAKE ALL in order to follow the Lord along the dusty roads of Israel. Following is the full story, along with some related Bible verses:

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have

treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Matthew 19:16-24, KJV

". . . Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"

Mark 10:24, KJV

"And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear . . . He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES, CHOKES THE WORD, and he becometh unfruitful."

Matthew 13:3-9, 22, KJV

"But THEY THAT WILL BE RICH FALL INTO TEMPTATION AND A SNARE, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

1 Timothy 6:9-10, KJV

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been

wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."

James 5:1-7, KJV

In contrast to that young rich man who utterly failed when it came to the Lord's final test, we can likewise find the following shining examples of faith and obedience. Despite the fact that they had jobs -- and we can assume a stable lifestyle -- when they heard the Lord's call, these five men -- and quite obviously the rest of the Apostles too -- IMMEDIATELY stopped what they were doing, they forsook all on the spot apparently, and they followed Jesus into a very unknown future. Seriously, folks, those men did NOT know what would happen next, yet they were willing to follow Jesus anyway. Now THAT is real faith:

"And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him."

Matthew 4:18-22, KJV

"Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him."

Mark 1:16-20, KJV

"And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him."

Mark 2:14, KJV

"And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me. And he left all, rose up, and followed him."

Luke 5:27-28, KJV

So as I said, real, genuine faith trusts God for the future, no matter what. It does not vacillate. It does not hesitate. It does not question and doubt. It does not present a list of excuses such as the following, all of which were tried in the Scriptures by different men who tried to get out of what God wanted them to do:

1. I am not a good speaker.
2. I stutter.
3. I am too young.
4. What if people hate me?
5. What if you change your mind, Lord?
6. But I need to go and bury my father first.
7. But you can't really expect me to give up my family.
8. But you can't really expect me to give up my job.
9. But you can't really expect me to give up my wealth.

My friends, the fact of the matter is that real, genuine faith simply obeys the Lord's call and says "Here am I Lord, send me". Furthermore, we are told that without such faith, it is impossible to please God. Consider the following two Bible verses which verify these points:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me."

Isaiah 6:8, KJV

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

Sadly, many Christians today don't possess the kind of faith that is necessary and required to really engage in full-time service for the Lord. As I mentioned earlier, they are stuck in a spiritual rut, because they are afraid of the unknown. They are afraid of a future which they cannot see. They are afraid to jump off of the cliff of what is known, for fear that the Lord will not catch them. How will I eat? Where will I even sleep? Where will my clothes come from? My friends, once you fall into the pit of that negative mentality, it is very hard to pull out of it. Did you know that the Apostles faced the very same thing when Jesus sent them out on the road two by two? I have to wonder if some of them might have been a little shocked when Jesus said the following to them:

"Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat. And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you."

Matthew 10:9-13, KJV

Think about that, my friends. These were men who were used to earning their living through good, honest, hard work. Yet not only had the Lord told them to leave it all behind, but now He was saying to go on the road with basically nothing but the clothes on their backs, and to trust God to provide for them. Wow! Talk about a test of faith! But guess what? As crazy as it must have sounded to them, they obeyed Jesus and did it anyway. Apparently, God did in fact bless their endeavors, because they eventually returned with positive reports to share with Jesus.

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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Genuine Faith Is Utterly Trusting In The Lord For Our Future, Modern Deception: Work For Many Years At A Secular Job Save Up Lots Of Money And Then Finally Serve The Lord, They're Not Able To Trust God For The Future So They Trust In Themselves For Their Needs, Use The Best Years For Me And Only Give The Lord Leftover Pizza, The Modern Christian Attitude Is Totally Contrary To Jesus' Teachings Concerning Forsaking All, Of No Reputation: Meek Humble Servants, Mocked Ridiculed Despised Rejected Derided Hated Persecuted, Jesus Called Apostles To Serve Him In That Moment And Not Later In Life, God Promises To Provide Our Needs If We Launch Out By Faith And Dedicate Our Lives To Him, God Keeps His Word And Doesn't Lie, Are You Waiting On God Or Is God Waiting On You?, Faith Based On The Scriptures And Not Just On My Words, 162 Verses Reveal God's Thoughts Regarding Christian Discipleship, Excuses For Their Failures Will Be Made, My Job Is Simply To Share Scriptural Truth, Are You Resisting The Spirit?, Questions For Personal Reflection, Concluding Remarks, BBB Suggested Reading List

Continuing our discussion from part one, my friends, that is the way that genuine faith is actually supposed to work. We are simply supposed to throw ourselves utterly on the Lord, and trust Him for our future, whatever it may bring. But as I have already explained to you, today, there exist certain Christians who want to do it a different way. They have in fact invented this modern deception so that they can try to get around living a true life of faith. What am I talking about? The mentality of which I speak basically says "If I work at a secular job for a number of years, and if I save up a lot of money, then I will be free to serve the Lord later on in my life without having to worry about my future needs."

Now if we are truly being honest here, do you see what they are actually saying and doing? If not, let me tell you. They are basically saying that they cannot trust God to provide for them in the future. Even though He created the entire Universe, He just can't see to their needs. It is apparently

too hard for Him. Therefore, they must trust in THEMSELVES. They must slave away at a secular job in the worldly system for many years, so that maybe by the time they are old, they will have enough money to live well, and THEN finally, they will serve the Lord with whatever time they may have left.

In other words, my friends -- this may be hard for some of you to hear -- from my personal perspective, they are only willing to give the Lord peanuts. They do NOT want to give Him the very best years of their lives while they are still young, strong and healthy. They want to keep those years for themselves, so that they can live an easy, comfortable life. Stated another way, they are only willing to give the Lord the cold, leftover pizza in the pizza box. Maybe this very graphic example will strike home with some of you, and help you to understand how offensive such an attitude may be to the Lord.

My friends, the mentality I just described to you is TOTALLY CONTRARY to all the Bible verses we have already examined in this article. We have already clearly seen that the Lord in fact required that all of His followers forsake their worldly wealth, jobs and positions. Forsake them, my friends, and NOT hold onto them, as these modern deceived Christians seem to believe. Quite the opposite. Furthermore, I might as well add in the fact that Jesus' primary followers also had to abandon whatever worldly reputations they may have had at the time.

Speaking plainly, the Apostles were required to become of NO REPUTATION, exactly as Jesus himself had done for our sakes. Any personal pride and ego, and any personal notion of being somebody, had to be left at the door. There was simply no room for such nonsense in the new lives they would be living. They had to become meek and humble servants of all. If you doubt that this is so, then consider the following verses which clearly demonstrate that Jesus was like this, and the Apostles and Disciples who followed Him were like this as well:

"But MADE HIMSELF OF NO REPUTATION, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:"  
Philippians 2:7, KJV

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."  
Isaiah 53:3, KJV

"And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him."

Luke 16:14, KJV

"Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on:"

Luke 18:31-32, KJV

"And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God."

Luke 23:35, KJV

"Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also."

John 15:20, KJV

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

Romans 8:35-36, KJV

"We are fools for Christs sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."

1 Corinthians 4:10-13, KJV

"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

2 Timothy 3:12, KJV

So again, contrary to this modern deception which has been



erroneously embraced by some Christians which says "Work at your secular job your entire life, and then serve the Lord later on after you have saved up a lot of money", Jesus and the Apostles all taught that if we truly want to serve the Lord full-time and with all our hearts, then we simply need to forsake our jobs and strive to seek first God's Kingdom. Think about it. When Jesus called the Apostles to service, He wanted them right then and there in that moment. He most certainly did NOT want to wait for them to save up a stash of money so that they could join Him at some time later.

So, if we are willing to forsake all, if we are willing to launch out into the unknown by faith trusting that we will land in God's hands, if we are willing to give the Lord our time and our service immediately, right now and not at some point in the future, and if we have the faith to actually do it, then God promises to provide our every need in some way. I obviously cannot say how God will choose to do it in your particular life, but I do know, and I have no doubt, that He WILL do it, just as He has done it for me for many years now. Jesus promised it, and some of the Apostles wrote about it as well. Consider the following verses as proof of what I am saying here:

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

Matthew 6:33-34, KJV

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:19, KJV

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

1 John 5:14-15, KJV

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened . . . If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good

things to them that ask him?"

Matthew 7:7-8, 11, KJV

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

Matthew 21:22, KJV

"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows . . . And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. 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? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Luke 12:6-7, 22-31, KJV

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Romans 8:32, KJV

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."

Ephesians 3:20-21, KJV

"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear:"

Isaiah 59:1, KJV

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart . . . I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

Psalms 37:4, 25, KJV

"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."

Malachi 3:10, KJV

My friends, those verses are God's promises of provision. He will abide by His promises, and He will fulfill His Word to you to the letter, if you do your part and step out by faith as He requires you to do, and you will be amazed. As both Jesus and the Apostle John both say in those verses, all we need to do is ask. God will do the rest as we seek first His Kingdom, because He does NOT lie, as we can plainly see by the following Bible verse:

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

Numbers 23:19, KJV

Some Christians claim that they are waiting on the Lord to reveal His Will to them. This is obviously a very noble and a very wise position to adopt, if it is true. In fact, I've written an article regarding this subject entitled "What Is God's Will for My Life?", which you will find listed below. However, at the same time, I do wonder if in some cases, due to our own lack of faith, God may actually be waiting on us. After all, He normally does not push us to work for Him. He in fact usually waits patiently for us to yield ourselves to His Will for our lives.

My friends, as has long been my personal custom, in writing this article, and in addressing these issues, I have pointed you straight to the Scriptures. Why? Because your faith needs to be in God's Word, and NOT just in what I say and teach. It may interest some of you to know that this article contains a total of about 162 Bible verses. Out of personal curiosity, I did in fact just count them all. As you have now seen, these verses plainly reveal exactly what God's thoughts are insofar as Christian discipleship, and the cost of discipleship, are

concerned. The verses reveal God's requirements, as they were taught by Jesus and the Apostles. They are obviously NOT my words.

Now, the reason why I make this point, is because I already know that despite the many Bible verses I have shared here to explain the requirements for serving the Lord full-time, and the cost of serving the Lord full-time, nevertheless, there are still going to be those Christians who will try to buck the current, resist the powerful truths which these verses reveal, and try to find a way to justify in their own minds and hearts, their failure to fully dedicate themselves to the Lord's service, as He may possibly be calling them to do. In short, excuses for failure will be made by such people, even if it only remains in the privacy of their own hearts.

For any of my readers who may already be thinking in this fashion -- that is to say, fighting against what is written herein -- let me just say this. My primary job is to reveal the Scriptural truth to you as best as I can. I think all of the verses I have shared here speak for themselves. They do not require a private interpretation. Thus, if you have any problem with them, and if you find any of them difficult to accept, then the problem clearly lies with you, and not with me, and most certainly not with the Lord. If you're resisting the conviction of the Spirit, then you need to pray and find out why you are doing this.

In conclusion, my friends, I ask you to please ask yourself today if God is truly using you to your fullest potential. If that is not the case, then perhaps you need to find out why not. What is hindering you? What is holding you back from a life fully dedicated to the Lord's service? Is there possibly some unyielded area in your life? These are questions which only you can answer. Let me leave you with this final thought for your consideration: The only thing that limits God in how much He can use you is your own faith, and your own obedience to His Will, and nothing else. Think about it, my friends.

With these thoughts, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you've found it informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would really appreciate if you'd take the time to click or tap on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information and further study, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were either mentioned in this article, or which contain topics which are related to this article. All of these articles are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server. To read these articles, simply click or tap on any link you see below.

Abundant Life Doctrine: Scripturally Exposed!

Are You a Burning Ember for the Lord?

Are You Crucified With Christ?

Are You Redeeming the Time?

Going Down the Highway of Life

Have You Sold Your Soul for a Pound of Flesh?

Money-Making Bible Hucksters and Mammon

One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews

Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God"

The Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service

What Is God's Will for My Life?

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