**Financial Support for Christian Ministries**

**By Charles Strong of** [Bible One](http://www.bibleone.net/)

This author has for quite some time been concerned with the various Christian “ministries” that exist today, both locally in individual churches and on the radio and television media regarding, along with other issues, their constant quest for funding. In reading the New Testament regarding the matter of financial support for Christian ministries within the Church (Body of Christ), nowhere is there found any particular person or ministry that had proffered a request for such support. Should you be aware of one or more please bring the passage or passages to this author’s attention (e-mail address may be obtained from his website, [www.bibleone.net](http://www.bibleone.net/)).

About the closest a passage comes to this is **1 Corinthians 16:1-3**:

*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem.*

Although it may be assumed that the saints (Christians) in Jerusalem had expressed their needs in a request, it is believed that the apostle Paul simply was aware of them and had given instructions to various churches to give to their needs. He certainly did not wish to execute a fund-raising effort when he arrived in Corinth. In fact, in regards to Paul’s personal ministry for Christ and even though he advocated giving to those who were in need and engaged in transporting financial gifts for those in need, he chose to fund his own ministry by his own efforts (he was a tentmaker — **Acts 18:3**) in order as not to create a financial burden on those to whom he ministered:

*I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive."* (**Acts 20:33-35**)

Of course there is much said regarding *tithing* in our churches today. The following is a paragraph taken from the document in the topical section of this author’s website entitled “New Testament (Church Age) Giving”:

Tithing was an obligatory form of “national taxation,” which provided for the maintenance of the “client-nation Israel” (a theocracy ruled by God personally—a unique union of God and state). Tithing was imposed by God on every person, believer and unbeliever alike, of Israel. The word “tithe” means a “tenth,” and there were 3 separate tithes: (1) Maintenance of the Levites—**Numbers 18:21, 24**, (2) Support of the national feasts and sacrifices—**Deuteronomy 14:22-27** and (3) Every 3rd year for the poor and destitute of the land—**Deuteronomy 14:28-29**). *The New Testament believer is not under the law and thereby not subject to the legalistic tithing of his income*.

It is suggested that any reader review the complete document (study) should he be interested in *tithing* and *giving*, for both are taught, as is presented in the Old Testament. And, this particular document also goes into detail as to what New Testament *giving* should be about.

But back to the original theme, it is believed that there is little if any scriptural support for ministers and ministries that appeal to other Christians for financial support. Rather, it seems clear, especially when viewing the typological lesson regarding this issue as found in **Genesis**, that a different procedure should be followed.

And it is the opinion of this author that no one has brought this forward more effectively than Arlen L. Chitwood in the sixth chapter of his book, [The Bride in Genesis, Ch. 6, by Arlen Chitwood](http://bibleone.net/BiG_06.htm). His presentation of this subject follows (and by the way, Mr. Chitwood practices what he preaches, *i.e.*, I have never experienced him in any way requesting financial support for his ministry; he only gives):

**Go unto Joseph (Genesis 41:55-57)**

When the famine came upon Egypt, "*the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians*,"

"*Go to Joseph; whatever he says to you, do.*

*The famine was over all the face of the earth, and Joseph opened all the storehouses and sold to the Egyptians. And the famine became severe in the land of Egypt*" (**Genesis 41:55-56 [55b]**).

This sets forth a truth that Christians appear to have little appreciation for today. Although the famine in this verse refers to the coming Tribulation in the antitype, the application to Christians during a time of famine (need) today is too evident to pass by without a few comments.

Do you have a need? Do you know how to obtain a supply for any need that might arise in your life? The answer is found in **Genesis 41:55-56**: "*Go to Joseph*; *whatever he says to you*, *do.*" *He will then open* "*all the storehouses.*" A similar thought is set forth in the words of Jesus in **John 14:14**: "*If you will ask anything in My name*, *I will do it.*"

*Asking in the name of Jesus* is a very misunderstood subject today. These words do not constitute a magic formula that can be repeated at the end of a prayer merely to obtain things that an individual may desire to have. "In Jesus' name" implies that the person is acting on the Lord's behalf, using the talents and/or pounds left in their possession to bring forth an increase (**Matthew 25:14-20; Luke 19:11-27**).

That would be to say, they would be trading and trafficking, using that which the Lord had entrusted to them in order to carry out business on His behalf during His time of absence. And, in the process of carrying out this business, a person would have certain needs that must be met. That person could then make requests "in Jesus' name," with the assurance that such requests would be answered and met.

If a person is truly conducting business on the Lord's behalf, in the manner that He has told them to conduct that business, it should go without saying that the person would be doing that which the Lord had told them to do. A person in this position could then go to Jesus with his needs, the storehouses would be opened, and the Lord would supply these needs (***cf.* John 16:23-24; James 4:3; 1 John 3:22**).

One of the main cries heard in Christian circles today is the plea for money to carry on the Lord's work. *That is a strange sound coming from the trumpet*. Reverse that into the type in **Genesis**, chapter **forty-one** and you will have the people of Egypt going out trying to raise money to help Joseph. *NO*!The *only* correct biblical response is to "*GO unto Joseph*; *what he says to you*, *DO*!" *He will THEN open* "*ALL the storehouses*."

The attitude of too many Christians today is, "Tell the people, and trust the Lord." Arno Gaebelein, one of the great Bible teachers in past years, used to say that when you tell the people, you cease to trust the Lord. The attitude of Dr. Gaebelein in this area was far more Scriptural than the position many Christians are taking today.

Not only are there certain pseudo-religious programs on radio and television, which are little more than fund-raising campaigns preying on the biblical ignorance of Christians, but many churches throughout the land are carrying on man-made programs that are little different.

If Christians followed the admonition of Scripture concerning their needs in all areas, they would find that not only would many (probably most) Church-related programs of today cease to exist, but many others would come into existence; and *the Lord would supply the necessary funds to carry on His work*.

Any group of Christians doing what the Lord has told them to do need only ask of the Lord, and He will supply any need that might arise. Any church in financial straits today has not done one or both of two things: The members constituting that church have either not done what He has told them to do or they have not gone to the Lord for their needs.

What has the Lord told you to do? Two related thoughts will be set forth that individuals might consider, and which will perhaps shed light on the central reason why many Christian organizations and churches have been beset by problems — financial and otherwise.

*1) The Attitude of Christians toward the Word of God in General*

God has placed pastor-teachers in churches to lead Christians into a mature knowledge of the Word of God. Christians, in turn, are to take this knowledge and do what God has told them to do in His Word. God speaks to us today through His Word.

This Word is to be taught "*precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.*" The ones whom the Lord will teach "knowledge" and make to understand "doctrine" are those who are "*weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts*" (**Isaiah 28:9-13**). If one follows God's Revelation to man, his teachings will center on God's firstborn Sons — *Jesus*, *Israel*, and *the Church* (awaiting the adoption). Not only will his teachings center on God's firstborn Sons, but the goal toward which all things are moving — the earth's coming Sabbath rest, the Messianic Era — will be placed in its proper perspective.

Teachings concerning *Christ* begin in **Genesis 1:1** (*cf.***John 1:1-5**). Jesus stated that *ALL* Scripture was about Him (**Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39, 46**). Thus, it matters not where a person turns in Scripture, he will find himself studying about some facet of the person and work of Christ.

Teachings concerning *the nation of Israel* also begin in **Genesis**. Not only was Abraham the father of this nation (**Genesis 11:26**ff), but teachings concerning Israel can be seen much earlier in typology. **Genesi**s, chapter **four**, for example, sets forth Cain (responsible for the death of Abel) as a type of Israel (responsible for the death of Christ); and Noah passing through the Flood is a type of Israel passing through the coming Tribulation.

Teachings concerning *the Church* also begin in **Genesis**. Adam and Eve constitute the original type of Christ and His bride, and Enoch and Methuselah constitute a type of Christians being removed before the coming Flood (Tribulation) — some via death as Methuselah, others by being caught up alive as Enoch.

Teachings concerning *the kingdom* also begin in **Genesis**. The Sabbath day of rest (**Genesis 2:1-3**), following six days of work (**Genesis 1:2-31 [2b]**), sets forth the fact that a Sabbath day of rest is coming following six days of work. And each one of these days will be 1,000 years in length (***cf.* Exodus 31:13-17; Hebrews 4:4-9; 2 Peter 1:15-18; 3:3-8**).

**Genesis** is *rich beyond degree*. There's not a single biblical doctrine that cannot be found in some form in **Genesis**. In order to correctly understand the work of *the Son* — past, present, and future — along with the place occupied by *Israel* and *the Church* in God's eternal plans and purposes, one *MUST* begin in **Genesis**.

A teaching example for the servants of the Lord to follow has been set by Jesus Himself: "*Beginning at Moses and all the prophets*..." (**Luke 24:27**). Great spiritual lessons concerning *Christ*, *Israel*,and *the Church* can be drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures, beginning with the writings of Moses. And spiritual lessons of this nature can be derived only through extensive studies of the types.

Thus, the import of types in Scripture can immediately be seen. Not only will God's three firstborn Sons — *Christ, Israel,* and *the Church* — be placed in their proper perspective, but teachings drawn from "*Moses and all the prophets*" will be directed toward the earth's coming Sabbath day of rest — the coming Messianic Era, when God's three firstborn Sons (the Church, following the adoption) will be placed in their proper positions on and over the earth. No wonder it was said by more than one great Bible teacher of past years that *types* commend themselves to the spiritually minded.

*2) The Attitude of Christians toward the Word of God in Particular*

The central message of Scripture, the Word of the Kingdom, is the message upon which Satan has centered his attack throughout this dispensation. And this is perhaps nowhere better depicted in Scripture than in the parables of **Matthew** chapter **thirteen**.

In these parables, Satan is the one who seeks to bring about barrenness in the lives of Christians as they find themselves placed in various parts of the world, with a view to their bringing forth fruit (**Matthew 13:4-8, 19-23**); he is the one responsible for sowing tares among the wheat, with a view to barrenness among Christians (**Matthew 13:24-30**); he is the one who produced an unnatural growth in Christendom early in this dispensation, which continues today, resulting in his messengers finding ready acceptance therein (**Matthew 13:31-32**); and he is the one responsible for the leavening process that has been occurring within Christendom throughout this dispensation, resulting in an every-increasing corruption, which will continue *until the whole has been leavened* (**Matthew 13:33**).

Satan's attack in this fashion has not been an attack upon biblical doctrine in general. Rather, it has been an attack upon biblical doctrine in *a very particular and specific manner*. It would be an attack similar to that referred to in military circles today as "a surgical strike [an attack directed at one specific target, using computer-guided missiles, leaving that which surrounds the target untouched]." It has been an attack directed *specifically* at the Word of the Kingdom.

And the direct command to Christians in the Word of God runs *completely contrary* to that which can be seen occurring on almost every hand in Christendom today. To avoid being caught up in the wiles of Satan — in which almost the whole of Christendom finds itself today — Christians are commanded to study the Word, remaining in complete keeping with the Old Testament prophecies.

It is *only through a knowledge gleaned from the Word after this fashion* that Christians can know how to properly array themselves in armor, know how to properly combat the enemy, know how to remain faithful, and know how to maintain a proper spiritual awareness (***cf.* Ephesians 6:10ff; 1 Timothy 1:18-19; 2 Timothy 2:15**).

Further, Christians are commanded to strain every muscle of their being in the present race of the faith, something that they would know very little about apart from a proper study of the Word (**1 Timothy 6:11-19; 2 Timothy 4:7-8; Jude 1:3**). And Christians are to govern their lives after this fashion with a view to *a prize* that awaits the victors at the end of the race of the faith (**1 Peter 4:12-13; 5:1-6**).

And it is not just any prize awaiting Christians who govern their lives after this fashion. Rather, *it is the highest prize of all prizes*. *It is the greatest thing that God could ever design for redeemed man* — that of one day being elevated into the heavens and being privileged to ascend the throne with God's Son, ruling the earth as co-regent with *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*.

Can Christians expect the storehouses to be opened and the blessings of the Lord to flow out, even though they have gone to Him for their needs, if they refuse to do what He has told them? Look once again at the order in **Genesis 41:55-56**:

*GO...DO...and He will THEN open ALL the storehouses*.

(Taken from [The Bride in Genesis](http://bibleone.net/BiG.htm) by Arlen L. Chitwood)