



## Heavenly Bank Account by Dr. Art Mathias

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Dear Friends,

At this time of the year many of us try to reflect about the past and plan for the future. In this process it is important to remember that while life is full of challenges, God has a strategy for every challenge. To learn His strategies we must learn to pay attention to His Word. Proverbs 4:20-22 says: "My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; for they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh." (NKJV)

There is a very interesting story in Genesis 30:25-43. It is one of those that you just shake your head at and wonder why in the world did God do this? Why is it in the Scriptures?

It is the story of Jacob and Laban's agreement. We all know the story of how Laban continually made promises to Jacob if he would only work for him a little longer he would give him his daughter and then daughters. In Genesis 30 it seems like Jacob makes another poor bargain. He proposes and agrees to accept only the spotted and striped sheep and goats for his wages and also allows Laban to take all the existing animals 3 days away. If you know anything about animal husbandry you know this doesn't work. But God revealed His strategy to Jacob. Jacob cut branches and peels some of the bark off so they looked spotted and striped as the white wood under the bark was exposed. Then he does another crazy thing and places these striped and spotted sticks beside the watering trough or streams. He knows the animals will breed when they come to drink. Then, amazingly all of the offspring were spotted or striped! Does this sound too weird? Again, why is God putting this story in the Bible?

Let me tell you about Pastor Jeff Johns of White Horse Church, Lafayette, Indiana. He is also a farmer and has just faith to actually do what the Bible teaches. A few years ago he told a group of pastors how he built a herd of specialty beef cattle and he wanted them all to be specific red color. So he cut sticks and peeled them, revealing the red wood under the bark, and then put the sticks beside the water and feed troughs. Guess what happened? Over a ten year period of time, every calf was red and there was only one bull calf--born! He built a herd in record time. This is the second example of genetic engineering--God's way.

Does God have a strategy for our finances? Let's take a look.

In Philippians 4: 15-17 Paul says, "And you Philippians yourselves know that in the early days of my work spreading the Good News, when I left Macedonia, not a single congregation shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving -- only you. Indeed, in Thessalonica when I needed it, you sent me aid twice. I am not seeking the gift; rather, I am looking for what will increase the credit balance of your account." CJB

Verse 17 says that Paul is not seeking the gift, but that which will increase the balance of your account. What is he talking about? It is obvious that Paul needed help but there is a bigger picture. Mathew 6: 19-21 tells us: "Do not store up for yourselves wealth here on earth, where moths and rust destroy, and burglars break in and steal. Instead, store up for yourselves wealth in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and burglars do not break in or steal. For where your wealth is, there your heart will be also."(CJB) It looks like we have the ability to build up a heavenly bank account that according to I Timothy 6 we can call upon now. But how do we build this "Heavenly Bank Account? What are His strategies?

First, we have to make deposits into this account. As we all understand, we have to make a deposit to have the ability to make a withdrawal. Let's look at several ways to make deposits. One of the basic rules in

Scripture is sowing and reaping. We will reap according to what we sow. The first and most basic principle of making a deposit is to tithe. Are we bringing our tithe into His house for His Kingdom?

Are we investing in His Kingdom? Are we investing in His Gospel? **Where is our heart? Where are we making investments or deposits?** Mark 6: 29-30 says: "I tell you the truth," Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life." (NIV)

**If we follow His strategy there is a double blessing; one in this life and another in the next life. We cannot out give God!**

Are we helping the poor? Proverbs 19:17 says: "He who is kind to the poor is lending to Adonai; and he will repay him for his good deed." (CJB) James 1:27 says that the "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (NIV)

At Wellspring we never turn anyone away because they cannot pay for our counseling services. Thus we need to bring in over a \$100,000 every year from other sources to make up the short fall.

The fourth and most powerful strategy is to praise Him. This may be the most difficult one to follow. Do we really believe the promises in the Scriptures about His faithfulness? All through Scripture we see example after example of people in their darkest hour praising God for His faithfulness.

Acts 16:25 says: "But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them..." (NASB) Paul and Silas were beaten and put in jail for preaching the Gospel. In one of their darkest hours their praise resulted in a miracle. Can this be true for each of us also? Why not? God is not a respecter of persons; we are all His favorite!

Now that we have His strategies for making deposits into our heavenly bank account how do we make withdrawals?

Remember, first we must make a deposit. What is our need? James 1:5-8 teaches us to go before God and seek His wisdom and then walk in confidence, without doubting His faithfulness. So if we really believe that we are walking according to His Word, then we should have the confidence to stand even in the darkest time.

Does this sound easy? I don't think so. For me, understanding what faith really is, is very helpful. Biblical faith is an action, not a thing. Sometimes we look at faith as an amount of a substance, like water in a glass. But in Scripture faith is always a verb, an action; not a noun or a substance.

Let me give you an example. In Mathew 14 the disciples were in a boat in a storm, and Jesus comes walking on the water telling them not to be afraid. Peter calls out, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." Jesus said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and began to walk toward Jesus and then seeing the wind he became frightened and began to sink.

What happened? Most versions say that Jesus condemned him for having "little faith." Did Jesus ever condemn anyone? Is faith a substance or an action? Peter actually walked on the water, (would you?) but he stopped walking when he became frightened. In the original language Jesus was actually saying "Peter, why did you stop walking." Peter's focus switched from Jesus to the wind and he began to sink. Does this sound familiar? Faith is not something we can conjure up. Faith is continuing to walk even when the wind blows and the trials of life are overwhelming!! If we are in fear or worried or angry we are not walking. This might be a good time to repent! If we have a legitimate need then we need to identify that need and keep walking until it happens! That is faith!

Remember we have an enemy that wants to steal God's promises. He comes with worry and fears to steal, kill, and destroy, but God comes with abundant life. (John 10:10) James 4:7-8 says, "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded." (NIV) This is our job or choice to put God first and choose to obey, then we also need to tell the enemy to go and then God's power enforces our command! God always responds to us. We come near to God by repenting for our disobedience. In our

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repentance He comes near because we have dealt with our sin through His forgiveness that is made available by His sacrifice. He always responds to us!

We must remember to continually praise Him! David says in Psalms 34:1, "I will bless Adonai at all times; his praise will always be in my mouth." Never entertain any thought or idea that it can't or won't happen. Never allow the devils fear or worry or anger to take your focus off Jesus. Without Him what is left?

Never Give Up!

Thank you for partnering with all of us at Wellspring in one of God's greatest times to be alive. We have opportunities that few in human history have ever had. There are millions of people needing healing and salvation and doors are open like never before. I never dreamed we would play a part in starting churches in Pakistan or Nepal, or Cuba, and many other places. I never dreamed that the Wellspring message of God's forgiveness would spread all over the world; that our books would be translated into over 14 languages; that there would be orphanages; farms; and thousands of others ministering and healing in His power!

We are choosing to keep on walking! We pray that you will continue to walk with us! We cannot do this without each other or without God's strategies! Exercise your faith and walk with us by praying, ministering and giving. Add to your Heavenly bank account! Be part of God's miracles! Once again thank you so much!

God bless You!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Art".

Dr. Art and the Wellspring Staff

PS: If you can stand with us please go to our website: [akwellspring.com](http://akwellspring.com). Let us know that you are praying for us and partnering with us by investing in the Kingdom, so we can continue to stand.

**Hebrews 13:15 "Through Jesus, therefore let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess His name."**

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