

**SERIES: Upside Living in a Downside Economy\***  
**Message: Thanksgiving: Investing in God's Future Harvest!**

November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009

Text: James 1: 2-4

*<sup>2</sup>My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup>Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."*

1. Live and Give \_\_\_\_\_, James 1:2-4

2. Live and Give \_\_\_\_\_.

A. Living and giving this way is the opposite of \_\_\_\_\_!

B. Faith is thanking God \_\_\_\_\_ I receive it!  
Philippians 4: 6,7

C. Faith is \_\_\_\_\_ when I don't have it!

**2 Corinthians 8:2-3** <sup>2</sup>*Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. <sup>3</sup>For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own,*

**2 Corinthians 9: 6** <sup>6</sup>*Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.*

3. Live and Give \_\_\_\_\_, John 12: 20-26

<sup>24</sup>*Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.*

**James 4:17** <sup>17</sup>*Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.*

Close: Matthew 25, "It Will Be Worth it All!"

\*Basic outline of this message from Michael Slaughter

**INDIVIDUAL OUR GROUP STUDY GUIDE**  
**Thanks Giving: Investing in God's Future Harvest**  
Sunday, Nov 22 2009

**Our financial commitment to God is the first step to investing in the future. We should be thankful for each blessing so that our hearts are open to giving generously not only to God, but to others as well.**

1. Do you truly recognize that God is the owner of all you have and you are just the steward? How does your life show it?

2. Describe a time that in helping or giving to someone in need you were truly blessed.

3. Would you describe yourself as a person who gives with your life? What are some of the ways you give?

How generous would others say you are with your resources?

4. Do you trust God's promises to bless you and take care of your needs or are you more reliant on yourself to do that? Explain.

5. How can you increase your commitment to giving and following Jesus Christ in terms of your possessions?

6. What do you need to do to begin or increase making your life count for the building of Christ's kingdom?

**Abraham Lincoln's  
Thanksgiving Proclamation  
of 1863**

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord.

We know that by His divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father Who dwelleth in the heavens.

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