

Kingdom Mathematics

Multiplication for Service

11

❖ Gizachew and his friends had been Christians most of their lives.¹ They had grown up in a solid church with good teaching. However, they were part of a culture that believes poverty in its society can be significantly reduced only by outside resources. Of course, they had heard of God's power to multiply resources, but could not apply it to their setting. It conflicted with the societal belief that only outside material resources can address poverty. See the box on the right to see how God changed their belief and practice. (Thank you for teaching me, Gizachew.)

Teaching the Teacher

I will never forget visiting a group of young men who are ministering to street people in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. I had met two of their leaders a few years before, when they attended one of our conferences. At that time, they were struggling to befriend a handful of street boys.

During the conference, they had heard that God would multiply the willing sacrifices of His children. Now, two years later I was meeting with Gizachew, the leader of the ministry. In the two years since the conference, the work had greatly expanded. Gizachew showed me a sophisticated organizational chart that represented forty staff and volunteers who provide ministry to hundreds of clients. Their multiple programs ranged from the rehabilitation of prostitutes to working with families to prevent children from leaving home to live on the streets.

I was amazed. I asked, "How did this happen? Gizachew looked at me quizzically. He said, "Why are you asking me? You're the one who taught us Kingdom Mathematics—that God would multiply if we give Him what we have! This is the fruit of that teaching."

¹ Sources for stories marked by ❖ are listed in the Bibliography at the end of the book.

In the last chapter, we looked at *mobilization* for witness. In this chapter, we look at *multiplication* for service. The multiplying agent is God, Himself. This is a simple but powerful message. I enjoy teaching it because I know God uses the truths of this message to free church leaders around the world—especially those who are materially poor—to do the kinds of things in their communities that Jesus would do if He were Mayor.

A mentality of dependency imprisons much of the church in the Two-Thirds World today. God wants to use His church as a channel through which He releases His transforming power to heal brokenness—but He does not do so when the church trusts primarily in resources other than God. God may use outside resources, of course, but the church needs to look to God as its primary resource. When we look anywhere else, we move perilously close to worshipping something other than the Creator—unintentional idolatry.

When we teach Kingdom Mathematics at a conference, we examine familiar biblical stories and turn them into mathematical equations. The first passage we translate into an equation is Isaiah 40:29: “*He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.*” I invite five volunteers to the front of the room. I give each person a large piece of paper to hold, showing words or symbols from the verse. Then I ask the audience to arrange the people holding the papers into a sequence that represents the Isaiah 40:29 passage. Here is how they should arrange the elements:

Our weakness	x	God	=	Strength
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The message of Kingdom Mathematics is summed up in this brief passage. It tells us that, when we give our weakness to God, He multiplies it. He turns our weakness into strength.

The rest of the passage tells us: “*Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*”²

² Isaiah 40:30-31

This is not an ordinary transformation. It is not something that we do ourselves, nor is it something that comes from inside us. It is miraculous. It is God. Kingdom Mathematics is not a philosophy that says, “If you believe enough in yourself and in the power of positive thinking, you can change your circumstances.” It begins with an acknowledgement that we, ourselves, are weak. Even youths grow tired and young men stumble! When we are ready to admit our weakness, we are in a position to come to God and offer our weakness to Him. It is then that He performs the miracle of Kingdom Mathematics and transforms our limitations into His strengths.

In our conferences, I like to describe four biblical accounts as if I were a storyteller. I then ask the attendees to work in small groups and form mathematical equations that tell the story. After they finish the equations, we summarize the truths they learned—truths that free people from dependency on anyone or anything but God.

Biblical Equations

Here is how I like to tell the first story:

Once upon a time, there was a boy named Barak. He was about ten years old. He had heard from neighbors that, this very morning, a famous teacher had come to the lake and was speaking to the people. Barak went to his mother.

“Mom, can I go down to the lake and listen to the teacher?”

“No, son. It’s too far. Your father isn’t home, and I’m afraid to let you go so far away. It’s at least an hour’s walk.”

“Oh, Mom, please! I’ll be okay. I *am* ten-years old, you know!”

“Son, it’s meal time, and you haven’t eaten.”

“Mom, I’m not hungry! Please, please, let me go!”

“Okay, but you have to take something to eat.”

So, Barak’s mother spread a napkin out on her kitchen table. She reached into a pottery jar and took out one, two, three,

four, five bread rolls she had baked that morning and two little baked fish she had purchased at the market. She put the rolls and the fish in the napkin, tied it, and gave it to Barak. The boy tucked it into his belt and raced out the door.

Barak ran most of the way to the lake shore. When he got there, he found such a large crowd of people gathered around the teacher that he could not hear a word. An adult would have politely sat at the edge of the crowd, but not a ten-year-old boy! Barak moved through the crowd until he was right in front.

Barak did not understand much of what the teacher said, but the boy was drawn to this man in an unusual way. Like many preachers, this teacher talked a long time! It was about four o'clock before Barak felt his stomach growl. When it did, he immediately thought of the lunch his mother had made. But, he wondered, how would he eat it in front of all these people? He thought, "If I'm careful, perhaps no one will see what I'm doing."

So, Barak slid his little pack of food to the ground and carefully opened it. He was hungry, and it looked good! He was ready to reach for the first roll when he heard some of the teacher's disciples say something to the teacher. They suggested, since it was getting late, that the teacher send the people away so they could get something to eat in the nearby villages. He heard the teacher say, "The people don't need to go away. You give them something to eat."

One disciple, Philip, grumbled that even eight months' salary would not buy enough to give everyone even a small bite of food.

Another disciple, Andrew, happened to be sitting next to Barak and had seen him open his little pack of food. Andrew said to the teacher—who, of course, was Jesus—"Jesus, all

we have here are . . .” At that, Andrew looked into the napkin and counted, “. . . five rolls and two little fish.” Jesus said, “Bring them to me.”

I wonder what was going through Barak’s mind. “I’m hungry. This is all I have. What will I eat if I give my lunch to the teacher? Oh well, I like him. He can have it.”

We know the rest of the story. Barak gave his lunch—all he had—to Andrew, who gave it to Jesus. Jesus gave thanks for the little lunch and then began to break it into pieces and distribute it to the crowd.

You can imagine the conversation between Barak and his mother when he got home that night:

“Mom, Mom! Guess what happened! The teacher took my lunch!”

“He did what?”

“Yeah, Mom! He took my lunch, and he broke it up and fed all those people. There must have been *thousands and thousands and thousands* of them. And when everyone was done eating, there were *twelve* baskets left over!”

“Barak! How many times do I need to tell you to stop exaggerating!” Barak, of course, was not exaggerating.

I then ask the people at the conferences: “How would you have felt if you had been the little boy? What if all you had to eat was packed in your belt, and Jesus asked you for it?” Surely, Jesus could have fed the crowd another way! He healed the blind. He calmed the storm. He walked on water. He could have turned stones into bread. Yet, He did not. Instead, he asked a young boy to give him all He had.³

We then discuss how to express this story in the form of an equation. Each small group at our conferences is given a package

³ John 6:1-14, Matthew 14:13-21

of cutouts that they can discuss and arrange as a mathematical summary of the biblical account. Here is one possibility:

Boy
+ 5 loaves and 2 fish
x Jesus
<hr/>
= Food for 5,000 men
+ Food for women and children
+ 12 baskets

Assuming there were at least 1,000 women and children, this was a multiplication of at least 6,000 times!

Now we have come to our second story:

Jesus was sitting in the temple with His disciples, observing people as they came to deposit their offerings. We can imagine the rich people walking to the treasury box to deposit their gifts. They were standing tall, chests extended. They held their silver coins high enough so, when they fell into the box, they would make an attention-drawing *clink*. Can you imagine Jesus' disgust?

Then a widow entered. She was not standing tall. In fact, she hoped nobody would notice her. Her gift—the two smallest coins made in that day—was tiny. No matter how high she held the coins, there would be no *clink* when they went into the treasury box. That was not important. Though what she had was small, the widow wanted to give it to God.⁴

Jesus knew exactly what was going on. He could have gone to the woman and said, "Dear woman, God appreciates your sacrifice. But, He owns the cattle on a thousand hills. He really doesn't need your money. I know these two small coins are all you have. You are excused from this offering.

⁴ Mark 12:41-44

Please, go to the market and purchase something to eat. God cares about your physical need. Thank you, but—please, with my Father’s blessing—feed yourself.”

Yet, that is not what Jesus did. On the contrary, He allowed her to give all she had. He did not even say to her, “On behalf of My Father, thank you.” She walked away, hoping no one had seen her. Jesus had seen her, though, and He said something profound: “*I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all of the others.*”⁵

Let’s see what Jesus meant—that she gave more than all the others. Of course, the widow gave *proportionally* more because she gave all she had. The rich gave out of their wealth; the widow gave out of her poverty. The rich did not sacrifice; the widow sacrificed. The rich would eat after their gift; the widow would still be hungry.

These are all true, but I propose that the widow *literally* gave more money than the rich. You might say, “No, she gave only two worthless coins, and the wealthy gave what was worth a hundred or a thousand times more.” That is what I thought until I applied the principle of Kingdom Mathematics to the widow’s gift.

As the small groups at our conferences work with the elements of the equation, they usually determine that this arrangement best summarizes the story:

<p>Widow</p> <p>+ 2 coins</p> <p>x Jesus</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 5px auto;"/> <p>= 2,000 years of inspiration</p>
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⁵ Mark 12:43

How many millions of times has the widow's gift been multiplied in 2,000 years? Christians throughout generations have given more—much more—because of her example. This may be the greatest story of multiplication in all of Scripture!

Now for our third story:

The famine in Israel was very long. Actually, it lasted more than three years. Elijah had asked God to send a famine to punish unrighteousness in Israel. King Ahab was angry and was looking for Elijah. God sent Elijah to hide in a ravine with a stream. He fed Elijah bread and meat brought to him by ravens, and Elijah drank from the stream. The drought got so bad, though, that the stream dried up. God told Elijah to go to a Gentile town called Zarephath, where God would take care of him. The journey was more than 90 miles—145 kilometers—and Elijah walked. That's a long way in a drought-stricken land. By the time Elijah arrived at his destination, he was *thirsty!*

As he came toward the gates of the city, he saw a woman—a widow—gathering sticks for fuel. Elijah was well-known in this area. After all, people wanted to capture and kill him! From the way the woman spoke to him, it is likely that she knew who he was. I imagine she was a bit intimidated by this infamous prophet of God as he asked her for relief from the famine—the famine that he himself had asked God to send! Their conversation might have been something like this:

“Excuse me, ma'am, but I'm very thirsty. Could you get me a jar of water?”

“Yes, sir (with fear in her voice). Please wait here.”

“If you don't mind, would you please bring me something to eat?”

“As the Lord your God lives (with understandable anxiety in her voice), I only have enough flour and oil for one small meal for myself and my son. It is our very last food. After we have eaten it, there will be no more and we will die.”

“Don’t be afraid. God will provide for you. Your flour and oil will last through the drought.”

In faith, the widow returned to her home. She took her last remaining flour and oil, made it into bread, and baked it with the sticks she had gathered at the city gate. Even though she used all she had, there was still oil and flour in her jars! She ran to tell Elijah about this miracle—and the supply lasted and lasted. In fact, it fed the widow, her son, her family, and probably Elijah throughout the famine.⁶

As the small groups at our conferences work with the elements of the equation, we presume that the widow, her son, three more family members, and Elijah ate together for the remaining two years of the three-year famine. Here is a possible equation to summarize this lesson:

Widow	
+ 1 cake	
x God	
<hr/>	
= 2 cakes (meals) per day	
x 6 people (widow, son, Elijah,	
and 3 other family members)	
x 365 days	
x 2 years	
<hr/>	
= 6,570 cakes (meals)	

If the approximate numbers are close to reality, this would be a multiplication equivalent to that in our first story—a multiplication of more than 6,000. That is amazing. What is most amazing, though, is the way God fed His prophet—He used a widow who

⁶ 1 Kings 17:1-16; 18:1

was as poor as anyone can be. She, her son, and family were ready to starve to death for lack of food.

Isn't this amazing? Is this the God we know? Our God is compassionate toward the poor. He could have fed Elijah another way. God could have fed the 5,000 another way, too, but He chose this way. Just as He did with the boy and his lunch, God looked at a widow who only had enough for herself and said, "Me first." Interesting!

These three stories can be summarized in a Kingdom equation, expressed below:

Kingdom Equation	
	All people (even the poor)
+	Faith in God
+	Sacrificial giving
x	God
<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	
=	Great multiplication
+	Blessing to others
+	God is praised
+	Personal blessing (sometimes)

The lessons of these stories are consistent with the life Jesus lived. He had little of this world's goods. He once said: "*Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.*"⁷ Yet, He made the greatest sacrifice anyone ever makes—He gave His life.

There is one last story. This one does not have a happy ending. It is a story Jesus told to illustrate His Kingdom:

A wealthy man was going on a long journey, and he called his servants to give them instructions before he left. He had

⁷ Matthew 8:20

three servants. He told each of them he was going to entrust them with a portion of his resources. He wanted them to invest what he gave them so he could have a profit when he returned. According to their abilities, he gave one servant five talents, another servant received two talents, and the third servant got one talent. Then the wealthy man left.

On his return, he called his servants. The conversation might have gone something like this:

“Well, Simeon, how did you do?”

“Master, the market was very good! I bought and sold and doubled the talents you gave me. Here are ten talents from the five you gave me when you left.”

“Great job, Simeon! Because of your good work, I’m going to put you in charge of much more. Actually, I am going to consider you as a member of my own household!”

Then, the master called his second servant, Joshua:

“Joshua, how did you do while I was gone?”

“Master, the market was very good. I invested and doubled what you left me. Here are four talents for the two you gave me.”

“Well done, Joshua! I’m proud of you. You have done well with what you had. I want you to consider yourself a member of my own household.”

The third servant was called by the master:

“Ananias, welcome! How did you do with the talent I left you?”

You could almost predict what Ananias was going to say by looking at him. He was clearly uncomfortable in the presence of his master and the other two servants.

“Master, you only left me with one talent—just one.”

Ananias glanced with jealousy at his two colleagues. He spoke with a quavering voice:

“As you know, sir, you have a reputation for being a tough

businessman. Because I was aware of that, I was afraid to take chances. So, I didn't. I buried your talent in the ground for safe-keeping. It was protected there. I didn't lose it. I humbly give you back the talent you gave me."

As Ananias was speaking, the face of the master changed. He responded to Ananias, but he did not even call him by name: "You wicked and lazy man! If you knew I was a hard businessman and expected a profit from my resources, why didn't you at least take my money and put it in the bank where I could have received interest? . . . Guards! Take the talent from this worthless man and give it to Simeon. Throw him out of my household to where it is dark and where there is sorrow and regret!"⁸

What a harsh response! Is this the God we know? God has compassion for the poor, and the third servant was clearly the poorest. Could God not have shown him some mercy? Not only did the fearful servant lose what he had, but he was thrown out of his master's kingdom!

The small groups at our conferences then work with the elements of this equation. Here is one suggestion to summarize the parable:

Servant
+ 1 talent
x 0

= 0
+ Servant thrown into darkness

⁸ Matthew 25:14-30

Implications for the Kingdom

These four stories have important implications for all Christians, but especially for those who believe they have only enough resources to take care of themselves. The stories and equations teach the following:

- All people, regardless of their material possessions or positions in life, are called by God to give Him what they have. There are no exceptions, even for the poor.
- There are no circumstances in which what we have is “too little” or “too insignificant” to be used by God.
- We need to give to God when He asks, regardless of our own circumstances.
- Faith in God and love for God should be our motives for giving. Material gain should not motivate us. Gain and provision may come, but giving should never be based on the expectation of receiving something in return.
- Sacrificial giving leads to multiplication. God always multiplies what we give Him.
- The greater the sacrifice, the greater the increase.
- The last lesson is perhaps the hardest: If we do not invest what God has entrusted to us, we not only lose it, but risk being thrown out of the Master’s household.

As we consider these four biblical accounts in our conferences, people sometimes wonder why a God of love would require such large sacrifices of people—but they also see that the power of God’s Kingdom is released when people act with loving and obedient sacrifice. God wants us to be like Him, and loving sacrifice reflects the character of God Himself. As we become like Him, His power is released, we flourish, and the world around us flourishes. The call to sacrifice is indeed from a God who loves us—from a God who is Love.

“What Is That in Your Hand?”

Many Christians look at themselves and say: “I can’t do anything for the Kingdom. I don’t have charisma. I’m not a leader. I can’t preach and teach. I don’t have enough to help needy people.” They feel

inadequate. One of the first examples of this in Scripture was Moses.⁹

God met Moses at the burning bush and said, “Moses, I want you to go to Pharaoh and lead my people out of Egypt into the land that I promised their forefathers.” We can imagine what is in Moses’ mind: “God, You don’t understand! I have a price on my head in Egypt. I killed a man. I’ve been out of Egypt for forty years. I don’t know the culture or what’s been happening there. I’m truly unprepared to do this.” Moses basically said: “Who, me?” He asked, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and demand to bring the enslaved people of Israel out of Egypt?”

God answered: “But, Moses, I will be with you.” Moses then made a series of excuses: “God, I don’t speak too well. I’m not very charismatic. My brother is better at this than I am.”

Then God said to Moses (and I can almost hear the disgust in His voice): “Moses, what is that in your hand?” Moses replied: “It’s just a stick—a staff.” God told Moses to throw it down. Moses threw it down, and it became a snake! God told Moses to pick it up. Amazingly, Moses did. It was once again a stick. God used that stick to demonstrate his power before Pharaoh. He used it to divide the Red Sea so the Israelites could cross ahead of the Egyptian army. He used it to strike a rock and provide water for a thirsty nation in the middle of a desert. He used it in sustaining the power of Israel’s army to defeat the enemies. It was only a stick, until God used it. Moses thought he was incapable of doing what God asked, and he thought the stick was insignificant. In asking Moses to throw his stick down on the ground, God was saying, “Moses, give me whatever you have in your hand, and I will take it and use it to extend my Kingdom.”

We need to remember that God wants us to give Him whatever we have in our hands, for His use! This can seem risky. In a modern-day African nation, Gizachew and his colleagues risked. They sacrificially invested in the Kingdom as they ministered to street children and others in need. God has blessed their efforts!

⁹ Exodus 3 and 4

Implications for Local Churches

There are compelling implications for local churches:

- Local churches—even those with few members or few material resources—are not powerless. God will use what they give in loving obedience, and He will multiply it to glorify Himself. When God is glorified, His Kingdom is extended.
- It is dangerous for local churches to keep what they have for their own use. Churches should also use resources to demonstrate God’s compassion for the needs of others.
- When people outside the Kingdom receive help that was given sacrificially, the impact is far greater than if it comes from someone’s surplus.
- Churches need to teach their people to give. We must teach principles of Kingdom Mathematics. To not teach these truths robs the people of the blessings God wants to give them.
- Local churches should mirror the sacrificial giving of its people, not using resources only within the church but gladly and sacrificially investing them in service outside the church.
- Churches must not be afraid, but have confidence in God, the multiplier. One difference between the servants in the parable of the talents was how they spelled “F-A-I-T-H.” The first two spelled it “R-I-S-K.” This was not blind trust, but trust in God. The third servant spelled it “F-E-A-R”—the fear of losing the little he had.

God has not changed! Here are several “Kingdom Mathematics” stories from today’s local churches:

❖ A cell church meets in a neighborhood that is eighty percent Muslim. At first, the church was scorned by the neighborhood, but the members started tutoring Muslim neighborhood children every Saturday morning. (Many children in the neighborhood had been abandoned by their fathers and were too poor to go to school.) The cell group started teaching five children. In a short while, more than fifty children came! One of the church members moved the furniture

out of her apartment so two rooms could serve as classrooms, while a third group met on her porch. The cell group members decided, instead of buying nonessentials for themselves, they would send some of the children to school. The mostly Muslim community openly embraced this group of young, dedicated Christians. One of our staff asked the cell group members: “What relief agencies from the West did you approach to financially support your project, and how much money did they give you?” They laughed! “No,” they said, “you don’t understand. We did this with what we had. Nothing from the outside—just our own resources.” They threw down what was in their hand—and God multiplied it.

❖ La Verdad is a church in a slum area of Guatemala. The church building was made of wooden planks, a tin roof, and a dirt floor. There were about eighty church members. When the church heard the teaching on serving their neighbors by sharing what they had, they said, “We are so poor; we cannot do that.” Their pastor challenged them: “You may not have much, but you can share a small amount of sugar, rice, soap, or something else with those who have less than you.” Each week, the members brought small amounts of food and put them into a common basket. Each week, the church gave the food basket to a poor, non-Christian family. Each week, God multiplied individual sacrificial gifts into an adequate supply of food for a needy family.

❖ God even multiplies resources so children can have fun! An Arizona church had a clothing drive to help a ministry that works with the poor. This ministry operates a summer day-camp program for hundreds of poor children. One of their favorite activities is going to a city swimming pool, but few of the children own a swimsuit, which is required at the city pool. The need for children’s swimsuits was announced at a church, and an out-of-town visitor was moved by the Lord to donate \$1,000 to purchase swimsuits! David, a church member, went to several stores, trying to find where he could get the best value for \$1,000. He chose the store that offered the best discount, carefully selected 150 children’s swimsuits, and piled them all in front of the cashier! Several people behind him reacted

with dismay, knowing that this big purchase would delay them. An older woman who was directly behind him, though, asked him if he had a large family. He laughingly said, “No” and explained that the swimsuits were to be given to poor children who were going to a Christian summer day-camp. The woman continued to watch while the clerk totaled the cost. Finally, the total reached \$1,000. This paid for 125 suits, leaving 25 unpaid. David told the clerk he would put the extra swimsuits back on the sales rack in the store. The woman behind him said, “No, I would like to pay for the extra twenty-five suits.” David was astounded by this unknown woman’s generosity and by the goodness of God. He was sure he had just seen another example of Kingdom Mathematics.

❖ We first conducted a training conference in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 2002. Here is a report received by the trainer only a few months after the first conference:

The conference is beginning to bear fruit as people learn to provide for their needs. Already, we have planted a field of four hectares (ten acres) with vegetables. We also have developed small pens for raising ducks and chickens at our homes. We also had the opportunity of procuring two cameras, and they are now being used in a small photo studio. All of this is to say that the projects are bearing fruit. Long-term, we hope to open a small bakery in our neighborhood. Our project is called “Amukeni,” which means “Wake up!” You came to wake us up from our ignorance.

Now, let’s move up to February of 2004. The same trainer was speaking at a conference in another part of the D.R. Congo. People from the first conference traveled a great distance over dangerous roads to participate in the second conference. Our trainer reported:

The men arrived from [the far-away city in the D.R. Congo] yesterday. Praise the Lord! They are astounding us with stories of how the people are learning to care for themselves after the war, thanks to the teaching. The work with people in the fields outside the city is progressing well. People generally are afraid to show they are prospering because

of fear of witchcraft, so they will plant only tiny plots for food and wear clothing that looks like they are in distress. When they can be freed from these lies of Satan into the truth of God, they can grow larger plots of food and care for their families. One area is a refugee camp. Now that the war is over, there is no more assistance for displaced people, so the group from the conference taught them to care for themselves without outside resources! They even rebuilt a medical clinic and organized themselves to man it. They are now looking for medicine. This amazes me! Our great God is able to do so much with so little!

A few days later, the trainer sent another e-mail about Kingdom Mathematics—true stories that were told at the same conference:

Having the men from the D.R. Congo with us is a plus. They have lived through a similar situation to the one here, and God has SO GREATLY multiplied their resources during the last one-and-a-half years. For example, they are raising pigs, having purchased two pregnant sows. The pigs are multiplying, and the group is able to distribute pigs to people in need. They had no money to buy food for the pigs—but by-products from the brewery next door make great pig food! Another Kingdom Mathematics story is about a one-hectare field they purchased to help a village raise food. After receiving the land title, they discovered that the soil is rich in cobalt and copper! The government recently signed a bill giving small miners permission to mine by hand. They are preparing to do just that. If they can make enough this way, they will have seed money for other projects. For example, they are helping the people of this same village prepare to build their own elementary school by teaching them how to make their own bricks. They can even cut their own timber to make the rafters. The only thing lacking will be laminated roofing, but perhaps with mining proceeds they will be able to help the village even with this.

Just a few days later, these hardy Christians returned to their city from the conference, and the trainer soon received another e-mail from them:

As soon as I arrived back home, I began a marathon program. Every Saturday, I bring together Christians and those who live in a neighborhood near our city, to give them the teachings. This neighborhood for a long time has lacked electricity. As I write to you, we are in the process of putting up poles and purchasing electrical wire to deliver electricity to the neighborhood. We are taking old, unused posts from an old railway that is no longer viable. Our hope is that, at the end of three months, this neighborhood will be lit up.

We have not heard the end of the story from these brothers, nor have we heard the end of how God multiplies what people sacrificially invest. As children of the Creator, we have reason to risk in the midst of apparent lack. This risk is not blind trust, but trust in God. It is important to recall, as we risk for the Kingdom, that what we risk is not our own. What we risk is the “talent” God entrusted to us. The Bible explains: *“His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.”*¹⁰ He has already given us all we need to honor Him. There is hope. There is certainty that God honors the faithfulness of His children. The church must be courageous in its expression of God’s love. Real sacrifice takes courage. However, “a life incapable of significant sacrifice is also incapable of courageous action.”¹¹

In Conclusion

In Kingdom Mathematics we saw that God calls all of His children—rich or poor—to sacrificially give Him what is in their hand for the extension of His Kingdom. The motive is not to receive, but to allow God to use our gifts to glorify Him. When

¹⁰ 2 Peter 1:3

¹¹ Holmes, quoted in Ruben, *A Guide to Prayer for Ministers and Other Servants*, 204.

we respond in loving obedience, He uses our sacrifice beyond our imaginations—whether or not we see the results. God calls us to give him whatever we have, wherever we are. The task is truly cosmic, but so is the multiplying power that God has released through His church to accomplish the task he has given it!

Many materially poor churches look first to the outside world for resources in order to minister holistically. They develop a mentality of poverty, not realizing that looking to a primary source other than God is idolatry. God may indeed bring us resources from outside our communities, but our trust needs to remain first in Him.

We have seen stories of courageous men and women of the church, followers of Christ, who are representing and serving Jesus the Mayor in various sectors of their societies. We will meet still more of them. How we thank God for our brothers and sisters whose lives and actions illustrate the truth of His Word and principles!

Also in the next part are useful tools that enable local churches and church members to be doers of the Word, to represent Christ in their communities. The tools have been used all over the world for many years, helping followers of Christ pray, strategize, and demonstrate God's love to the world in which God has placed them. I pray you will find them useful, as well.



PART FOUR

Tools for Transformation

I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.

—John 12:24