

BISHOP TERRELL L. MURPHY

The OVERCOMER'S KIT

FINANCES
HEALTH
KINGDOM OF GOD
THE MIND
RELATIONSHIPS



The OVERCOMER'S KIT

Contents

Greetings from Bishop Murphy 3

ONE - **Let's Live in the Kingdom** 2

TWO - **It's OK to be an Alien** 2

THREE - **Thought Life**

FOUR - **Health** 2

FIVE - **Finance: Part One** 2

SIX - **Finance: Part Two** 2

SEVEN - **Relationships** 2

EIGHT - **Curing the Dating Mess** 2

NINE - **Money Lessons of the Recession** 2

TEN - **Sent by a Sender** 2

RESOURCE LIST - 34

CREDITS - 35

Dear Overcomer:

GREETINGS IN THE NAME OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST!

Did you catch how I addressed you in the beginning of this letter? It may very well be that I don't know your name, but I do stand confident in knowing who God has created you to be. You are an overcomer! Note I didn't greet you as a survivor. Why? Because in the Kingdom of God, we live as overcomers and more than conquerors. You were born a winner, and regardless of life's challenges and circumstances, God has given you everything you need to overcome and enter into new levels of victory.



Throughout the remaining pages provided for your self-reflection and spiritual growth, I invite you to incline your minds to principles and relevant truths that make up what I call "The Overcomer's Kit." As a pastor, I have been in touch with the hardships many have faced since 2010 as a result of an economy still at a downturn, coupled with the day-to-day issues that can arise with life in itself. My passion to see people rise above their struggles incited me to develop this kit as a blueprint for this present time and beyond.

Jesus said in this life we are guaranteed tribulations, but we are prepared for them because He has overcome the world, and as He is in this world, so are we: Overcomers! In this Overcomer's Kit, you will learn how to thrive, flourish and live victoriously in times when so much else seems to be failing. Through the contents of this kit, I look to build interactive dialogue with you that will further prepare you to achieve success and significance in key areas of your life.

The Overcomer's Kit will undoubtedly help you rediscover how to live in The Kingdom of God within a world turned upside down. Explore the mind with Dr. Caroline Leaf as she gives insight as to how your thought life impacts your sense of physical and emotional wellbeing. Have you ever made commitments to losing weight and to getting in better physical shape? In this kit, I emphasize our spiritual responsibility concerning nutrition and exercise. You will gain a Kingdom perspective on financial management and stewardship to help you build wealth in a time when it seems there is a famine. And just as you begin to near the final pages, there is no better way to conclude than on renewing and building God-centered relationships, with a special emphasis on God's perspective about dating.

Now that sounds like quite a bit...but guess what? Your life is that important! As you navigate through this year, let this resource serve as a map to keeping you on the path God has prescribed for you. Furthermore, let me encourage you to invest in the 10-part CD series that complements this literary resource. You may secure your copy of the audio series and other empowerment resources by visiting our online Called to Conquer Bookstore at www.newbirthcharlotte.org (click on 'Bookstore').

I have great expectancy of the days that are still in front of you. Set your mind on things above, and speak the Word of God to those things that have desired to destroy your destiny. I declare greater grace and strength to you to overcome and lead even in adverse times. You are in it to win it!

In Him –

A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads "Terrell L. Murphy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bishop Terrell L. Murphy, Senior Pastor
New Birth-Charlotte

CHAPTER ONE

Let's Live in the Kingdom

Entering the Kingdom of God

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What is the Kingdom of God?

How does one enter the Kingdom of God?

Genesis 1:26-28

Luke 17:20-21

John 14:6

The Lord designed you to demonstrate His character in the earth. In the creation of man (and woman), God's desire was to establish a physical kingdom on earth as an extension of His spiritual Kingdom in heaven. God's intent and purpose for your life is clearly stated in Genesis 1:26-28.

When sin entered the earth through disobedience, you and I were separated from the Creator (God). The only way to reestablish man's relationship with the King and enter into life in His Kingdom

is through His Son, Jesus the Christ. Jesus made this truth very clear when He said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me*" (John 14:6).

When a person receives Jesus Christ as his or her personal Lord & Savior, he has available to him the Kingdom that Adam forfeited when he and Eve sinned in the garden. It is not a visible Kingdom; it is within us by the Spirit of God (Luke 17:20-21). The Pharisees who questioned

Jesus about this made the error of looking for something external/tangible and temporal, but the Kingdom is spiritual.

In his book, *Rediscovering the Kingdom: Ancient Hope for Our 21st Century World*, Dr. Myles Munroe describes the Kingdom of God as, "...a realm ruled by a God who is mighty and everlasting, and who is a Wonderful Counselor (a wise and just Judge); a realm characterized by peace, justice, and righteousness." It is when we live in the Kingdom that we live the highest quality of life available to us.

Everybody Wants the Kingdom

In *Rediscovering the Kingdom*, Dr. Munroe writes, "People everywhere are looking for the Kingdom, even if they don't recognize it by that name." This truth is evidenced in these words:

"I believe the worst thing a human being can do to another human being is take away their God. At the end of the day, what we're all trying to do is figure out how to live this life being fulfilled."

-Jada Pinkett-Smith

Everyone, even those who do not believe in Jesus Christ, wants fulfillment in life. However, many omit that true fulfillment comes

via an intimate relationship with God. Scriptures in the Holy Bible give numerous examples of people of all types seeking the Kingdom. Whether it was Nicodemus, a respected Jewish leader (John 3:3), or a rich young ruler (Mark 10:17), or a Samaritan woman with a troubled past (John 4:15), they all sought the Kingdom. Tragically, not all are willing to commit to what is necessary to gain the Kingdom, as we see with the rich young ruler. Are you?

When we receive Christ, the Kingdom comes with Him. This means that anything in us (our attitudes, mindsets, behaviors) that is not like

Him has to be removed. We have to be retrained to think and act like God. This is an uncomfortable process because we are so used to living according to our own ways. When Christ comes into a person's heart, he no longer looks at things the same way. The things we were once comfortable in will no longer be comfortable. Why is that? It is because God wants to rule every part of our lives.

Challenge

If there is anything in your life that hinders your walk with God, let me encourage you to surrender it to God so you can experience **4** the life He has for you.

Reflection

What fulfills you as a human being and why?

What things are keeping you from experiencing the life God has destined you to live in His Kingdom?

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

What are the benefits of being a citizen of God's Kingdom?

Romans 14:17
Philippians 3:20

"In 2011, you cannot afford to chase imitations."

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

What are the seven mountains and how were they established?

Genesis 3
Daniel 7:15-22

Righteousness, Peace & Joy and Kingdom Government

The Proper Response

Wouldn't you agree that we live in difficult times where hopelessness seems to prevail? Every way we turn, we see the ramifications of living life outside of God's desires. This raises the question: is there any hope? The answer is YES. The proper response to the situations of life reveals the Kingdom in us. If we respond with righteousness, peace and joy (Romans 14:17) despite the circumstances, we are demonstrating a Kingdom mindset. You may not think of righteousness (doing that

which is rightly aligned to God's Word) often, but you can easily relate to peace and joy...everyone wants peace and joy. Anytime we live not exhibiting these characteristics, we have stepped out of the Kingdom of God. It is as if being in a room with light and then entering one without; life outside of the Kingdom of God causes one to leave God's presence and enter into a dark place, or what we might call the kingdom of darkness

Sovereign Ruler

God's Kingdom comprises of all the necessary components of an earthly kingdom including a territory (earth), a constitution (Holy Bible) and a citizenry (believers in Jesus Christ). There is no physical structure with doors & hinges. Believers are God's ambassadors of the Kingdom to extend His influence in the earth. Our true citizenship is in Heaven (Phil. 3:20). If you are like me, you take pride in where you are from, and you often recognize a person by their culture or dialect. Life in God should be no different. God never intends for us to act in a manner that would point our citizenship to any other place.

These systems present what seem pleasurable to our natural senses, but in reality are imitations of the real Kingdom because they do not express righteousness, peace and joy found through life in God's Spirit. We must make these systems reflect God.

**The seven mountains will be discussed in more detail in chapter 10 of this kit.*

The Seven Mountains

Satan (the devil) told Eve that if she ate the forbidden fruit, she would be *like* God (see Genesis 3). Yet, Adam and Eve were already like God for they were made in His image. This means that they were endowed with the nature and character of the Creator.

Their disobedience provided an entryway for sin in the earth, which consequently corrupted the minds of people. When Adam and

Eve ate the fruit, they literally took hold of a thought or mindset that said, "I no longer have to operate under the rule of God. I can be the god of my own life."

As a result, seven mountains – or sectors of society – have served to exercise power in their influence of people.

These seven mountains are:
1) Education 2) Government
3) Arts & Entertainment
4) Media 5) Economy
6) Religion and 7) Family.

The Spirit of Issachar

We must know what times we are in and how to navigate through them. All believers should overcome as God instructs us what to do regardless of the times we face. A believer's response can make the Kingdom of God either attractive or unattractive to those who do not believe (the unsaved).

When someone asks you how is it that you have righteousness, peace and joy in such trying times, your response is a catalyst to leading them into life in God's Kingdom. They will want for themselves the fulfillment we are living. However, the Kingdom is realized when one rules from

what God put in you. The horns mentioned in Daniel 7 are enemies of God. They will continue to oppose us, but should not rule over us. In the spirit of Issachar, we must know what to do and rule in power and authority.

The Ancient of Days

God is the Ancient of Days, which articulates His nature as being One who never changes from age to age. God is the same yesterday, today and forever. God wants to help us, but we must allow His will to be done in our lives. We must choose who we want to influence our lives, God or something else. Say this to yourself, I MUST FOLLOW GOD'S WILL, NOT MY OWN!

Distractions will come to try and unseat you from heavenly places. We are to live from a perspective that is higher than our natural minds can conceive; I like to say – we have to live “from Heaven down.”

Let God's will be done on earth! Before you were born, He already knew you. God released you into the earth because you agreed to be what He called you to be. If you yield and surrender to God, He will get you back to the way you existed in Heaven. God would not have placed you here without placing in you what you need to overcome in this life. YOU ARE AN OVERCOMER!

Reflection

Do you know what you and God agreed you would be before you were born? Write it down for this reveals your destiny.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What is needed to overcome in life?

Matthew 6:9-10

CHAPTER TWO

It's OK to be an Alien

The Gospel vs. The Gospel of the Kingdom

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What is the difference between the gospel and the gospel of the Kingdom?

Matthew 24:14

Wherever you travel, take a look around and you would see that there are churches all over the world and on many street corners. Common discussions may center around the number of attendees in a worship setting or possibly the number of people who were saved and became believers. While it is true that salvation is a gift from God that all should desire, it alone is not enough to change the world. If it were, the world would be changed by now. Wouldn't you agree? Jesus came to give His life as a ransom for the sins of humanity, but that is not the only reason He came.

Jesus came for another reason: to reestablish the Kingdom of God on earth that Adam lost when he ate of the fruit and disobeyed God. Many in the church today are preaching the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ but are not preaching the gospel that Jesus Himself preached: the gospel of the Kingdom. Jesus makes a clear distinction between the two throughout Scripture. Salvation assures a person's admittance into Heaven, but does not give total fulfillment in life. Only the Kingdom of God can do that.

The gospel of the Kingdom is the sovereign rule of God where nothing in our lives is off limits to Him. God wants His government established everywhere. Since God paid a price for us, He has a right to expect us to live in the Kingdom. It is not until the gospel of the Kingdom is preached in all nations that Jesus will return (Matthew 24:14).

Reflection

Close your eyes and think back to your last few days. Have you lived life according to the gospel (living by any means because you are saved and waiting to get to heaven) or gospel of the Kingdom (living according to the power God put in you to rule in the earth)?

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What is your spiritual address?

Philippians 3:20

Tap into Your Spiritual Address

"For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."

Philippians 3:20

We are aliens in this world. An alien is a person who is foreign born and not naturalized. We are citizens of Heaven. Heaven is where we are to live *from* while we live *in* the earth! Our spiritualized birth certificate is in Heaven. We are in this world but not of it.

You were not born here! You existed in the mind of God before you entered into the natural realm. Before you were born, He already knew you and had plans for you (Jeremiah 1:5, 29:11). WOW!

The most influential or results attaining people should not be those who approach life from the earth up. It is those who live from Heaven down who should demonstrate the dominion

mandate given to us by our Father (refer back to Genesis 1:26). We cannot allow ourselves to be influenced by those who live from the earth.

It is difficult for us to let go of the world because of the influence of the gods of the world – the seven mountains. We, the body of Christ, must represent a point of difference in the earth. We are called to bring Heaven into the earth. Let's live like where we are from! 7

Essential Questions & Scriptures

Does destiny really matter to you?

What are our children supposed to be doing while they are on the earth?

Hebrew 12:1

“We are not attractive to the world because we don’t have anything but the same problems they experience.”

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What rights did the death and resurrection of the Second Adam afford man?

Romans 5:12
I Corinthians 15:20
Matthew 16:24

Mountains & Children

The seven mountains have changed the place from which we live. This means our thinking has been altered to perpetuate a desired behavior that is contrary to the will of God. This affects our destiny and usefulness. Why is it that HIV/AIDS runs rampant in the African American community, yet every hip-hop song is about sex? It is because there are principalities and powers (people in high ranking positions) that seek to stop you from reaching your destiny.

You have to value and guard the Kingdom that is within you because other kingdoms are attempting to suppress it. If successful, they will derail your destiny.

Mountain Invaders

Not only are we responsible for our own destinies, we are charged with directing our children into their destinies by training them up to infiltrate and take the mountains for the Kingdom of God. We must guard our children, and not just allow them to watch just anything

on television or listen to anything on the radio. Not even all cartoons are appropriate, and in this age of technology, a parent must know who is in the ear of their children. Do you even know what is in your son or daughter’s iPod?

Every child is assigned to rule a mountain for the purposes of God. Have you identified what mountain your child is supposed to invade? Let go of your “specific” dream for your child and train him (or her) up in the way *he (or she)* should go; the way he or she agreed to with God.

Adam, there is no fulfillment (while deception paints a picture to you that there is...sound familiar? – Adam & Eve)

Reflection

Are you delivered from Adam? Do you recognize the finished work of Christ in your life?

Application

After carefully considering the questions above, if you discover you have not fully submitted to the complete work of Christ, ask God to renew your mind and teach you by His Holy Spirit.

rather than everything else that is fighting for our attention. A lifestyle of fasting brings the blessings of God. In Matthew 6, Jesus teaches regarding fasting saying, “*When you fast*” (emphasis added). This indicates fasting is not an option, but essential to us being fulfilled according to God’s pattern. 8

Deliver Me from Adam

From Adam came sin and from sin came death (Romans 5:12). Adam was the first Christ. Christ was the Second Adam. If Adam had done what he was sent to do, Jesus would not have had to die on the cross. In Christ, we were made perfect again. The problem is this...we do not know we have been made perfect again! Ultimately, we do not recognize the finished work presented to us through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We

focus more on what Adam did than what Jesus undid. Adam brought death, while Christ brought the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15:20). We have often lived in Adam instead of living in Christ. If you live in Adam, you live according to the systems of this world. The Second Adam (Christ) gave you dominion and authority, and liberated you over all things. Christ is the Kingdom. In Him, everyone is fulfilled; in

Self-Denial

The greatest hindrance of Kingdom manifestation is the lack of self-denial. The Kingdom is upside down. Jesus taught us to deny ourselves, but the world says, “Satisfy your appetites.” Adam and Eve’s appetite got them kicked out of a perfect environment; an environment without all the issues that now plague us today. Jesus said, “If anyone

desires to come after Me, let him deny himself...” If we deny ourselves, we build an intense enthusiasm for God that will result in intimacy with Him. That is why fasting, disciplining yourself to abstain from a usual, natural means (most often food) in order to devote full dependence on God, is necessary. It allows us to focus on what God wants

Don't Confuse Desire with Religious Activity

Churches everywhere are filled with people who confuse a true desire and passion for God with religious activity. The set leader (pastor, bishop, etc.) has to tell religious people to serve, attend corporate prayer, read the Bible, fast, attend small group meetings and financially give (tithes and offerings). Several people in churches are being strong armed by religion which does not allow them to worship freely. CHRIST NEVER DIED FOR A RELIGION; HE DIED FOR A RELATIONSHIP.

God wants you to chase Him. The greatest relationship you can have with God is an intense relationship that encompasses a high level of intimacy.

If we truly desire to be intimate with God, what He can do for us will not really matter. Just being in His presence and building a relationship with the Heavenly Father is enough. We can get results by shifting from *wanting the blessing* to *wanting the One who blesses*.

Take time out to evaluate your desire for God. Do not wait until you get in trouble or face a challenge to start desiring Him. God wants you in constant pursuit of Him. Take time daily to think of how great God is and why He is worth being your One true desire. He wants priority placement in your life – will you give it to Him?

Essential Questions & Scriptures

How hot is your pursuit and desire for God?
What do you need to surrender to God so that He is reinstated as your #1?

CHAPTER THREE

Essential Questions & Scriptures

Why is it dangerous to allow unforgiveness to remain in your heart?

The information presented here is used by permission and can be found at the web address:

http://drleaf.com/thought_life.php

Thought Life...much to think about

Eighty-seven to ninety-five percent of the illnesses that plague us today are a direct result of our thought life. What we think about affects us physically and emotionally. It's an epidemic of toxic emotions. The average person has over 30,000 thoughts a day. Through an uncontrolled thought life, we create the conditions for illness; we make ourselves sick! Research shows that fear, all on its own, triggers more than 1,400 known physical and chemical responses and activates more than 30 different hormones.

Check this...

There are INTELLECTUAL and MEDICAL reasons to FORGIVE! Toxic waste generated by toxic thoughts causes the following illnesses: diabetes, cancer, asthma, skin problems and allergies to name just a few. Consciously control your thought life and start to detox your brain! Medical research increasingly points to the fact that thinking and consciously controlling your thought life is one of the best ways, if not the best way, of detoxing your brain. It allows you to get rid of those toxic thoughts and emotions that can consume and control your mind. Change in your thinking is essential to detox the brain. Consciously controlling your thought life means not letting thoughts rampage through your mind. It

means learning to engage interactively with every single thought that you have, and to analyze it before you decide whether to accept or reject it. How do you go about doing that? By "looking" at your mental processes. That may sound like a strange, if not impossible thing to do. After all, it's not as if you can just crack open your skull like an egg and have a look at what is going on inside your brain.

It is possible; however, to look at your mental processes. In fact, it is not just possible, it is essential. For example, consider the following: How many "could-have", "would-have", "should-have" statements have you made today? How many "if only" were part of your inner vocabulary today? How many times have you replayed in your head a conversation or situation that pained you or one that hasn't even occurred yet? How many scenarios have you created of the unpredictable future? How much is speculation taking out of your day? How passive is your mind? How honest are you with yourself? Are you at cross-purposes with yourself - going through the motions, but not really committed to the goal, saying one thing but

meaning another? How distorted is your thinking? Are you forming a personal identity around, for example, a disease? Do you speak about "my arthritis", "my multiple sclerosis", "my heart problem"? Do you ever make comments like "nothing ever goes right for me"; "everything I touch fails"; "I always mess up"? If you answered yes even to just one of these, your thought life needs detoxing right now.

A potential pitfall on the path towards detoxing your brain is the fact that toxic thoughts come in many guises. On the surface, a thought like "I must do well" seems positive enough. It is only when you look at it closely, and check out the feelings it generates and their effects on your body and mind, that you will be able to judge fairly and squarely if this is a thought that serves you well. If you base your thought life on assumptions like the above, the foundations will be shaky and the edifice (your mind) that you create thereafter will be highly unstable. Let's not forget that Scripture says... "as a man thinks, so is he (Proverbs 23:7)."

As you think more toxic thoughts and generate more toxic emotions, that edifice will show cracks, cave in and eventually collapse altogether as burgeoning illnesses and diseases take hold. Right off, you need to ditch unrealistic thinking and keep in mind some key principles to kick-

start the process of controlling toxic thoughts...

Thoughts create your moods. When you experience a fear-based emotion, you will feel depressed and your thoughts will be characterized by negativity. A negative thought linked to emotional

turmoil will be distorted. According to Scripture, "...bringing all thoughts into captivity to Christ Jesus" (2 Corinthians 10:5) is the golden rule of safe thinking.

The Process of "Bringing All Things into Captivity"

There are four simple techniques involved:

1. Understanding that thoughts are real and have an actual anatomy

Thoughts are real things; they have a structure in your brain and occupy space. Thoughts are the same as memories. Thoughts and memories look like trees and are called neurons or nerve cells. You build a double memory of everything as a mirror image of each other. This means that the memory on the left side of the brain builds from the detail to the big picture, and the memory on the right side builds from the big picture to the detail. When you put these two perspectives of thought together, you get intelligent understanding taking place. As information comes in from the five senses, you process it in certain structures of your brain, and then you grow branches on the "trees" to hold this information in long term memory. In fact, as you are reading this, you are

growing thoughts because thoughts are the result of what we hear and read and see and feel and experience. This means that whatever you grow is part of you; as actual branches in your brain that create your attitude and influence your decisions.

2. Increasing conscious awareness of your thoughts and how you are feeling

Knowledge of the anatomy of thought naturally leads into the process of actively analyzing incoming information and thoughts constantly. You should never let a thought or thoughts roam chaotically and unchecked through your head. Examine every thought you have and ask yourself: is this good for me? Is it from God or Satan or my own confused thinking? Conscious awareness of your thinking should become like a habit. **A habit takes twenty-one days to create.** Today is the first day of that twenty-one...

3. Doing something once you have analyzed the thought

So, whilst technique two is developing a conscious awareness of what you are thinking about. Now technique three is doing something about the thought. This means making a conscious decision to actively accept the thought (if it is good for you) or reject it (if it is bad for you). This means you use your God-given ability of free will (this also has actual structural position in the brain) to do something about the thought you are consciously aware of. Thoughts have as much control as we give them.

Challenge

Your life is centered all around how you think. Initiate the process of destroying all toxic thoughts (black trees) and replacing them with what God says about you (green trees).

It takes 21 days to destroy a toxic thought...START WHERE YOU ARE SO YOU CAN EXPERIENCE THE FULLNESS THE LIFE GOD HAS FOR YOU!

4. Building new memories over the old

This is the really exciting part in dealing with our thought life because accepting or rejecting the thought is changing the neural circuitry of your brain: your brain is growing while you think, and you have control over the process. Technique four happens when the brain steps in and creates a structural representation of what you have chosen to accept (adds more branches on the tree) and converts what you have chosen to reject into hot air!

Let's see how these four techniques work if you have unforgiveness towards someone in your memory trees:

- *Technique one:* this unforgiveness looks like a thorn tree and will hurt you - visualize the twisted bitter thorn tree.
- *Technique two:* be consciously aware of this thought of unforgiveness - where it comes from, how long it has been there, and so on.
- *Technique three:* ask the Holy Spirit to help you use your free will to make the wisdom decision to reject unforgiveness and forgive. Picture the unforgiveness disappearing as hot air.
- *Technique four:* now build a new de-thorned memory to replace the thorny unforgiveness with, for example, quoting scriptures, singing a worship song, praying for the person, and so on.

CHAPTER FOUR

Health

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What are the key contributors to poor health?

I Corinthians 9:24-27

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What are the effects of worrying?

Matthew 6:25-34

The Clear Picture of Health

Simply put...we cannot be effective for God in the earth with poor health. In I Corinthians 9:27, the Apostle Paul says, “...*I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.*” This should mean that believers “preach” to others by mere lifestyle. How can one preach what he or she isn’t living out?

Many destinies have been aborted because of poor health. We just cannot give

our bodies what it wants all the time. Good health is a resource for Kingdom living. Scripture tells us that the body is the temple of the Lord (I Corinthians 6:19), and the Kingdom of God is within (Luke 17:21). Poor health can potentially restrict or not permit you to accomplish the destiny God designed for you.

Healthy living does not happen automatically. Attaining and maintaining good health requires discipline of will. We

achieve overall health through physical, mental, and social well-being. It is a health triangle; all three are connected. When you take authority over your health, your spiritual effectiveness is improved. It is hard for many to demonstrate the nature of Christ because many believers *choose* to be unhealthy. Catch these contributors to poor health...which ones relate to you (be honest)?

- Overeating
- Under Eating
- Improper Eating
- No Exercise
- Lack of Rest

Worrying

The economy is struggling because our land has turned away from its original design and purpose. We used to be a nation (United States) that honored God. Now that God is out of the equation, our economy is dwindling and our country’s deficit continues to grow daily.

This causes undue stress and worry on the people of this nation. Instead of trusting our Father in Heaven who is still above all things, we fear and worry about our lives. Jesus plainly told us not to worry because it does nothing to help our situation and God is already aware of

all we need (see Matthew 6:25-34). We try to make sense of our present day situation but only God knows the plan that He has for you and this country. Worrying is diametrically opposed to the Word of God. And when you think about it, how does it help anyway? In fact, look at what it really does...

Worrying causes:

- Shortness of days
- Frustration
- Unhealthy relationships
- Inability to make the right decisions
- Use of alcohol and tobacco products

Reflection

God wants us to trust Him and not worry. Look at every situation that has contributed to your worry and choose to cast it upon God who loves and cares for you. As you do, watch His peace, which is beyond comprehension, sustain you.

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

What is God's will concerning health?

Hosea 4:6

*"If we were healthier,
we would be more
obedient."*

Essential Questions

If I go to the doctor, does it mean I do not trust God to heal me?

The Steps to Maintain Healthy Living

Believers often associate God working in our lives with just fasting, praying, reading the Bible, and serving. We think God is only pleased with these areas. NOT TRUE! He is concerned about your health too! God proclaims through the prophet Hosea, "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge*" (4:6). All He needs is your will. **What you do will ultimately determine what God is going to do through your life!**

You have to strategize to be healthy. It will require great sacrifice like vigorous exercise. Note and activate these things you can do to promote a healthier lifestyle:

- Laugh
- Relax
- Listen to music or running water
- Slow down
- Get a massage
- Eat properly
- Get plenty of rest
- Do something different and have fun!

Reflection

Are you doing what it takes to be healthy?

Challenge

Today, make an appointment to get a massage and RELAX! Your DESTINY deserves it!

God Wants Us to Be Active

As stated earlier, God is concerned about every area of our lives including our health. Our total being is fulfillment in the mind of God.

It pleases the Father to make sure we maintain our bodies, get downtime, sleep, and exercise. You may say, "I can't afford a gym membership." You don't need one. All you need is will and a little space. Exercise in your home by

going up and down the steps or by walking in your neighborhood. You can work out with your children or put them to bed earlier to have more exercise time.

And for all you parents, force your children to develop a lifestyle of exercise by encouraging them to follow your example. Youth spend more time being tired by doing nothing. When they begin to develop an active lifestyle,

their energy levels will increase. Charge the entire family to be healthy!

Reflection

Do you want to be more active but feel like it is too hard? Not only ask God to direct your paths, but find someone to serve as your accountability partner so you have active encouragement along the way.

Challenge

Commit to exercising at least 30 minutes every day!

Dr. Fear

Some of us are afraid of doctors because we don't want to hear any bad news. We think what we don't know won't hurt us. Don't allow this toxic thought to resonate. The enemy wants us to be ignorant of his attacks against our bodies so we will not combat him.

When our bodies become irrecoverable, he is amused because that is one less destiny being fulfilled.

Many doctors are believers. They are God's special agents/conduits assisting us in prevention, treatment, and management of illnesses.

Find a doctor you are comfortable with and talk to your doctor about your health. Putting your trust in a doctor does not mean you no longer trust the healing power of God. It means you recognize that God has given us doctors to help steward our health during our stay in the earth.

Detoxify from Toxins

It is not God's desire for you to be in "dis—ease." God has created things we can purchase to be healthier. The body of Christ is supposed to be a point of difference. We need to be aware, alert, and awake! Those attributes make up our inheritance. We cannot enjoy the nice things God has blessed us with if we are unhealthy. Pollutants infiltrate our bodies, accumulate in our tissues, and get into our organs, cell membranes and brains.

Toxins cause the following:

- Fatigue
- Lack of Energy
- Headaches
- Allergies & Sensitivities
- Excessive Mucus Production
- Sinus Problems
- Pneumonia
- Acne
- Forgetfulness
- Foggy Thinking
- Food Allergies
- Mood Changes
- Saggy Skin
- Respiratory Problems
- Psoriasis
- Joint Aches
- Poor Immune Function

Toxins literally eat us alive and enter our bodies through our favorite foods and drinks. We need to stop consuming the following:

- Caffeine
- Pork Products
- Liver and Kidney Meats
- Shellfish
- Salt and Sugar
- Fats in Meat
- Dairy Products
- Trans Fats – Hydrogenated or Partially Hydrogenated with Soy Beans

Sadly, the African American culture prides itself on *soul food* that contains deadly oils found in bread, baked goods, and many other products in the grocery store. Many people do not die because their time comes—they eat themselves to death!

You should aim to ***fast at least one day each month*** to drive pollutants out of your system. You need a diet high in fiber for regular bowel movement. Take a fiber supplement and flax seed oil. It is also recommended that you take a cleanser to help push the toxins out of your body.

Drugs & Medications

Ask your doctor what is in your medication. Taking multiple types of medications can hurt your liver.

Pesticides & Herbicides

Many may think that fruits and vegetables are healthy for you. However, what most of you do not know is that many of the fruit and vegetables we consume have these deadly pesticides and herbicides in them. Often, these deadly chemicals can easily be found in thin peel fruit such as grapes and strawberries. The easiest way to cleanse the fruit is to wash them with a detergent.

Challenge

It is time to clean house. Go through your cabinets and pantry. Get rid of any unhealthy snacks and replace them with a healthy alternative.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What are you putting in your body? What's the healthy alternative?

CHAPTER FIVE

Finance: Part One

Money...who doesn't need it?

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What is funds management?

Money is a part of every individual's life. Sound, biblical financial practices are needed to be effective for Kingdom living. The results of misunderstanding financial stewardship can be seen all around us today. Just look at the current state of our economy or the quality of the public schools of America. It has even been proven that many marriages crumble because of bad financial practices. If we are to live as overcomers as the Bible esteems us to be, we have to understand God's

perspective on money.

Finance is defined as *the science of funds management*. Finance includes all aspects of money management including business, personal, public, and lending. Tithing (giving 10% of any increase to God) alone does not make you a good financial manager. It just means you tithe. After you tithe, there is ninety percent left. God is concerned about the ten percent as well as the ninety percent. Regardless of how

much money you make, godly principles must be applied to manage it. Money must obviously be important if God has more scriptures on money than anything else. No wonder the Bible says money answers all things (Ecclesiastes 10:19).

Everyone in your house needs to know about money; that it loves to work for you, and should be invested. You should diligently manage anything God gives you, as well as cause it to increase.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What principle dictates what is given to us?

Proverbs 27:23

Luke 16:11

Proverbs 27:23 says, "*Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to your herds.*" This verse of Scripture instructs us to know our business, whether in the home or without, and the financial condition of it. We have to be diligent in handling our money so that it yields increase. Give your money something to do (invest it). Do not let it sit idly by, but literally put it to work. Guess what money likes to do the most...**WORK!** Why not let it work for you? Too many are working for money and, consequently, are worn out.

This undoubtedly negatively affects a person's ability to relate to the Father. It keeps him from giving God pure worship because his mind is more focused on the next paycheck or the next bill that is due; now we are getting back into worry, fear and toxic thoughts. What is more, no one can expect further increase from God until proper stewardship is given to what He has already supplied: "*Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?*" (Luke 16:11)

Who will trust you with true riches if you cannot be trusted with the little things? The way you handle \$20 determines how you will handle \$200. God watches to see how we handle our money. He wants to see if we are going to use it for His purposes or for our own selfish gain. If He is not pleased, He holds on to the increase and waits.

Challenge

Create a budget that allows you to tithe, save and spend (in that order) for 2011.

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

Is He Lord over everything?

“Everything that God put in your hand should show increase and be managed diligently.”

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

Who is going to repay our country's debt?

God of Your Money

The spirit of this nation (United States) is one of impatience and instant gratification. We want what we want and we want it now. The result is poor financial management. Generally, the church has operated in the same way. Society wants the body of Christ to believe that God plays no role in the handling of money.

Although we are witnessing tough economic times, many spend unnecessarily. Let's

remember the days when people found creative (and legal) ways to meet their needs without wasting money.

If we do not prioritize our spending, we create problems for our children. Reckless spending does not leave an inheritance or pay for education. If you have all the material things of this world, but nothing to pass to your children but debt, you are *not* living how God

wants you to live. Simply put, you cannot do what you want to do with your money, and confess that He is Lord over your life. If He is Lord, He is Lord over everything, including your money.

9 Trillion in the Hole

The United States presently has a debt of 9 trillion dollars. We have lost our way and are addicted to spending. Many have ignored the principles of financial management: giving, saving, spending, budgeting, and the right type of lending.

Most people want to live better financially, but the challenge is a lack of discipline centered in a lack of faith: *“...without faith it is impossible to please Him, for*

he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith is what moves God into action. When we actively seek God, our confidence in His power and ability grows. Then He is freed by *our wills* to manifest His glory in our lives. This only comes by discipline of will.

If we want to get out of this debt, we have to seek His wisdom and act accordingly...we can't just live as if it doesn't exist!

Reflection

Are you studying, growing, and connecting with resources to better assist you with getting out of debt? Don't let the nation's present practices negatively affect your financial management.

Challenge

This week, pick up a magazine or newspaper and educate yourself on today's economy.

Financial Outlook for the Next Generation

Although young people did not create the 9 trillion dollar debt, they will be responsible to pay it back. How will this happen? They will be severely taxed. The government can, and will do this because they have the power to do it. That is why it is important to know

God's principles of financial stewardship. You have to learn these principles now, or be broke later. We have a responsibility to the generations following us...let's exercise God's principles to create the best now and future for the rising leaders of this world.

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

What keeps people from freely giving to God?

God's Economy

Six figure salaries are great, but if you do not pay off your debt and establish something before you die—it does nothing for the next generation.

The first generation lays the foundation. The second and third generations bear fruit and walk in the lifestyle God has ordained for them, which advances God's Kingdom purposes in the earth. In order to encourage the principles of God, we must identify what contributes to the lack of one's giving to God.

Five attributes to the lack of giving

1. Lack of hearing God's Word
2. Not getting a handle on finances
3. Not seeing things as God sees them
4. No plan for generous giving (you have to write a vision and give money a plan)
5. Fear and unbelief

Some in the body of Christ will not tithe or give an offering (giving beyond the 10% as an expression of faith) because they think they are giving it to the church and not to God. Yet, if one will

take note of his current financial struggles, he will realize it starts with tithing and offering to God. We are to do everything as unto the Lord (Colossians 3:23).

It is *not* okay to skip bills. It is *not* okay to *not* give God what belongs to Him. God gives graciously. Don't complain about the stuff you don't get. That is not the measure of God's goodness.

The breath you breathe is enough to give God a tithe of whatever He wants from you. The economy of God is the only economy that works. In fact, if you are in the Kingdom, the world's economy should never phase you because God always has Heaven backing you up!

Prophecy and Declaration

**Declared by Bishop Terrell L. Murphy to the New Birth-Charlotte congregation.*

God is going to begin breaking debt off you. In this house, I release a multi-millionaire anointing. I declare it released over this house for every man, woman, boy and girl. Spirit of the living God, release what is necessary that we may walk in a multi-millionaire status, so that we may bring glory and honor to You!

CHAPTER SIX

Finance: Part Two

A Country in Trouble

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What is the greatest threat to our nation's well-being?

Proverbs 27:23

Jesus taught more about money than anything else. It was Christ's intent that the church remain connected to the marketplace. In accordance with Proverbs 27:23, we must be diligent in managing our finances and attend to our money. Though this Scripture specifically addresses a primarily agricultural people, the principle applies to us now. Finance is the science of funds management. This includes business, personal and public (local & national economy) finances, as well as saving and lending. Be careful with

lending as it can cause relationship problems. It is better to give, but only do so if you have it to give. We must be like Issachar and understand the times so that we make empowered decisions that advance the Kingdom of God.

The great threat to the United States is not war, disease, terrorism, or healthcare; it is fiscal management. Sadly, self-centered, self-indulgent, one-generational thinking people have handled the finances of America. We are not solving

problems, but creating them and passing them along to our children. Unfortunately, the church has largely ignored its responsibility to be debt free. How can we rule the mountains if we are in bondage to debt?

Challenge

The proof is in the transactions...

For thirty days, record every cent you spend. This will tell you exactly where your money is going.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

How did our nation become so entrenched in debt?

Follow the link to the website below and watch the five-part documentary called *I.O.U.S.A.* This film explains and discusses the seriousness of our country's debt. The website also contains a link to a condensed 30-minute version of the video.

<http://www.iouathemovie.com>

Getting the Message

Teach them to save. Saving is not an option. No matter how little it may seem to be, start saving NOW. We must teach our children to save. Do not perpetuate another generation of instant gratification.

Tithing does not stop. Do not make the mistake of no longer tithing and giving an offering. This is the worst

time to stop tithing. Instead, be diligent and tend to your herd (business). Determine the difference between a need and a want. Then, do what it takes to save without cutting God short. Trust me; if you do anything, you want God to have His first!

It is not a competition. Take care of your household and do not waste time or energy trying to keep up with the family next door.

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

What is your role in God's plan for your economic prosperity?

Deuteronomy 8:18

“There is no way around God's obedience. It's going to show up one way or another; something is going to be in lack.”

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

How do believers defy the recession?

Malachi 3:10b

1 Timothy 6:10, NKJV

A Lesson from Alan Greenspan

In a 2007 interview, Alan Greenspan, former Chairman of the Federal Reserve, said, “The Federal Reserve seeks solely to get as high a level of real material well-being as we can by setting a platform of stability...we cannot pick and choose among various parts of the population because we have no means of doing that. If fiscal policy is lax or savings are exceptionally low, there is nothing monetary policy, or any other central bank, can

do about that. We cannot live in the present ONLY! Human beings cannot survive unless they CREATE provision for the future...”

You are responsible for your future. God has a plan for you, but you have to create provision for your future. Deuteronomy 8:18 confirms that. You must activate what God has placed inside of you. A job will not create wealth for you. You have to

do it yourself.

Missing Out

God desires to give creative, witty ideas to the church to advance the Kingdom. Yet, the church misses these opportunities from God because we are blinded by religion. There are those who are anointed for the marketplace but have not been accepted amongst church people because they do not fit into religion.

Do Not Depend on a Job

Some in Charlotte, North Carolina believe that the economic future of the city rest on Wells Fargo, Bank of America and Duke Energy because of their influence. These companies; however, are reluctant to hire. This is the case, although they all are actually doing well. The bottom line is they have learned to be successful without employing so many people. This is not discriminatory; it's just business. They are making

money, and the number of people out of a job is not at the forefront of their agendas, neither is your situation or your children being made uncomfortable. So what do we need to do?

Kingdom Economics

We must learn to operate under the umbrella of Kingdom economics; tithes and offerings. Until we move into the obedience of this principle, we cannot expect

to be overcomers. God is not surprised by this recession. He gave us the principle of tithes and offerings so we could be prepared for this situation.

God's promise in Malachi 3:10b defies the recession and national debt, and creates the resources to save. God is calling us into obedience now. Stop waiting to make more money. You need to be diligent and attend to what you currently have. God can do more with what you have than you realize! In fact, He loves showing how strong He is in times of shortage.

Breaking the Cycle

The cycle of debt accumulation must be broken. When there is a problem with the head, the body will ache also. What the government adopts becomes a major influence on the culture. The same problem that exists in our government also exists in our homes. Money is a spiritual thing and spiritual things

transfer. This is a stronghold over our nation. Rethink where your money goes. Get back to God's way. Think of your children. What do you want to leave to them? We must understand that it is ok to be rich. The Bible says, “The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil,” not the root (1 Timothy 6:10, NKJV, emphasis added).

Money simply amplifies who you really are. When the right Spirit-filled, Spirit-led people take control of their money, blessings will flow.

Consecrating and Concentrating

The seven mountains affect our culture (see Chapter 10 “Sent by a Sender”).

Our head, in practice, must be Christ. Our one true desire should be to please Him at all times regardless of who is watching and even when no one is watching.

What is your center? What is your consuming indulgence? If we consecrate without concentrating on God, our consecrating simply becomes a religious experience.

The founding fathers of this nation built its foundation on godly principles. God, for most people, has been made optional. We have lost our way. The consequences are detrimental to our children.

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.”

Hosea 4:6, emphasis added

Many of our children are suffering the consequences of their parents’ turning away from God.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

Why is the nation not as prosperous today as it was in the past?

Hosea 4:6

Genesis 47:13-20

“God will take care of your needs, but you have to mature about your wants.”

The First Kingdom Marketplace Infiltrator

Genesis 47 documents a famine in the lands of Canaan and Egypt. The non-believing people of the land came to Joseph, a believer, for help.

Through his God ordained creativity and proper financial management, Joseph prospered in a famine. Likewise, you can prosper in this recession if you yield to the will of God for your life. God wants us to prosper, but it has to be on His terms.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Relationships

Relationships 101

Essential Questions & Scriptures

Are you ready to step outside of your comfort zone and meet people from other cultures and social groups?

Genesis 2:15 – 25

The first institution God created was a relationship between a man and a woman called marriage. Successful marriage requires good relationship. Relationship is defined as *a connection between two or more people*.

Relationships are formed out of simple commonality. The Kingdom of God is built on Relationships. The Kingdom of God is for all people regardless of our differences. But the church is more segregated than ever before. If you only gravitate to people

like you, you will hinder the move of God in your life and the lives of others. God wants us to connect with everybody and get out of our usual circle of influence. Relationships must be rooted in God's purposes and not pursued for personal benefits and/or gain.

As citizens of the Kingdom of God, we must take additional steps to find God's purposes in connecting to a person.

It is not about simply existing; it is about finding God in everything you touch.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

How important do you think you are to God?

Exodus 20:1

Adam, Eve & Somebody Else

God created Adam & Eve for relationship with one another; however, they were primarily to relate to Him. They entered into a dangerous place that caused a desire to explore an unhealthy relationship at the risk of losing healthy relationships. This still exists today.

In fact, you can be in relationship with a place or thing. Adam and Even represented healthy relationships. Yet, they were led astray by a negative third party. Third parties can be mindsets, attitudes,

unforgiveness, taking offense, people, money, jobs, hobbies and generational failures.

Third parties seek to replace God but you must know that God is possessively watchful. He watches every person you get in relationship with to see if they are getting more of you than He is. That is why it is so important that you set boundaries in relationships. Remember, you are the APPLE OF GOD'S EYE!

Reflection

Have you allowed third party relationships to break your relationship with God?

Challenge

Move away from third party relationships that lead you away from a healthy uninterrupted fellowship with the Father.

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

With respect to your relationships, are you in proper alignment with God or do you need to make some adjustments?

“Relationships should help you see things about yourself that you have not seen before.”

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

Who and what do you abide by?
John 15:5

Proper Alignment

Once the body of Christ understands how God sees it, God will be able to establish proper alignment for the lives of the people. Misalignment is the reason that relationships fall apart and get out of the order they are supposed to be in.

You may be tempted to align yourself with foreign things. A lot of stuff looks enticing, but will take you out of relationship with someone you value. When the

alignment is corrupted, it will release things in your life that you could have avoided if you would have stayed in the right alignment. Just think of it like a car that is out of alignment and begins to veer off the road. Common things and people from your past are coming to get you out of alignment. You have to surround yourself with people who are going to hold you accountable, keep checking on you, not allow you to get

away with just anything, love God and want the will of God for your life. Do not just connect with anybody because you can eventually end up nowhere. Ask yourself these questions before getting into a relationship with anyone:

- What does God want out of this relationship?
- How does He want us connected?
- What does He want us to do together?

Vertical Relationship vs. Horizontal Relationships

When your vertical relationship with God is interrupted, the horizontal relationships suffer severely. God will not allow you to love anybody more than you love Him. Married people sometimes make idols of one another. We get carried away with the “new thing” and forget about the vertical relationship. Sometimes it is hard for you to worship because the vertical is not right. When the vertical is right, the horizontal

relationships can be sustained. The important thing is to keep God first and give all relationships to God.

Prophetic Admonishment
Prophetically speaking, fast talkers and opportunities are going to come at you to tie you into something in 2011. You have to be very mindful. You have to be wise as a serpent and gentle as a dove. You have to be able to deal with those things by the discernment of God and not

move until you hear from God.

You should live, move and have your being in God (see Acts 17:28). The deeper you are in relationship with God, the better you are with those around you. When you DO NOT live and move in God, that is when you become a detriment to those around you. In addition, if the relationship is rooted in God, it is going to be blessed and it will bear much good fruit.

Abide in God or be Cast Out!

Many in the body of Christ are connecting with people who are not abiding in God, but God will cast them out!

You must know your assignment. Learn to ask people questions. Allow them to talk as you listen. Listen carefully to the way

one speaks. What comes out of their mouth is an easy indicator of who and what they abide by.

At that point, you can make a determination on if that relationship (withered branch) should be cast out (see John 15:5). If it is

disconnected with God, you should NOT be connected with it.

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Relationships

Characteristics of Healthy Relationships

- Respect
- Security
- Non-violence
- Resolve conflict satisfactorily
- Enjoy the time you spend with one another
- Support one another
- Non-competiveness
- Privacy
- Trust
- Communicate open and clearly
- More good times than bad
- Centered in Christ
- Demonstrates consistent and active growth
- Takes interest in one another's lives

Characteristics of Unhealthy Relationships

- One or both parties try to control or manipulate the other
- Makes the other feel bad about themselves
- Ridicule
- Call each other names
- Dictate how one dresses
- Not making time for one another
- Overly possessive
- Control the other's money and resources
- Harm or threaten to harm children, family, pets, objects of personal value
- No spiritual conviction or deeds
- No relationship with Christ
- No maturation in Christ

Not Just for Marriage

The glory you create by edifying, exhorting, correcting, rebuking and rejecting in love is not just for your husband or wife. It is for your neighbor, co-worker etc. You have to find out if you are supposed to be connected to that person.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

How do you rate the health of a relationship?

CHAPTER EIGHT

Curing the Dating Mess

Whose Side Are You On?

As we have stated throughout this kit, the church should upset the ways of the world rather than be influenced by them. There should be a point of difference. Unfortunately, many make no distinction between how the church does things and how the world does things. Dating is no exception. The Bible says NOTHING about dating. In the mind of God, it does not exist. However, the Bible is filled with principles of how people

should live in order to get the greatest fulfillment from life, including male and female romantic relationships.

A person who has no or is lacking intimacy with God should be disqualified from “dating.” If there is no commitment to God, there is no right to enter into someone else’s life for the purpose of romantic pursuit. Desperation and cultural adaptation cause people to have no serious concern for their own well-being or that

of others. The result is dating that is filled with emotional and physical stress that consequently results in marriages filled with the same.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What disqualifies a person from dating?

Essential Questions & Scriptures

What are God’s standards for choosing a spouse?

I Samuel 16:7
Philippians 2:3
Ephesians 4:25
Proverbs 3:1-2

Dating by Whose Rules

WORLD’S Dating Rules

- Please & impress with outward appearance
- Make a good first impression
- Image is everything
- Live for the moment
- Just do it
- Now is the time
- Look out for number one
- What have you done for me lately?
- What can I get out of this?
- Play games
- Flirt
- Play hard to get
- Follow your heart

GOD’S Standards

- The Lord looks at the heart
- Live for God’s will
- Be patient
- Delay gratification
- Look out for others
- Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit
- Always seek first to serve others
- Be real and honest
- Follow Him

Reflection

Most of us focus on outer appearance when deciding whom to date. We are enticed because “the package” looks nice.

Application & Challenge

If you desire to be married someday, make a list of qualities God desires you to have in a spouse. Then, pray and trust God to bring you someone who meets His standards. If you are currently in a relationship, measure that person against what God revealed to you. You may need to make some changes!

Essential Questions

&

Scriptures

Is it wrong to want to date?

Genesis 2:18

“We would be able to love and experience romantic relationships perfectly if it were not for sin.”

Essential Questions

&

Scriptures

What is wrong with the world’s view of dating?

Psalms 103:1

The Desire to Date

Giving more love to a person than you do to God is creating an idol. The desire for romantic relationships is natural. There is a God-given need for companionship. God said, “*It is not good for man to be alone*” (Genesis 2:18). However, sin has corrupted God’s perfect design for romantic love.

So you’re in Love, Huh?

Out of a hundred married couples asked, twenty-two

said they married their high school crush. Of those twenty-two, seventeen got divorced. Actually, only five of a hundred couples married between ages 18 and 29 remained married to their high school sweet hearts.

You do the math

Twenty-five is the average age people get married in the United States. Complete the following formula to determine how many crushes you will have between now

and the time you will likely get married.

$$25 - (\text{your age}) = (\text{years left before marriage})$$

$$\# \text{ of crushes in last 12 months } * \text{ years left before marriage}$$

=

$$\# \text{ of crushes you will have before you get married}$$

The point is He or SHE is probably NOT the ONE!

What’s wrong with the World’s Definition

The world defines dating as *a form of relational building done by two persons with the aim of each assessing the other’s suitability as a partner in an intimate relationship or as a spouse.*

There are some problems with this definition. Let’s look at some red flags.

Red Flags

Assessing: What is the bar? You cannot properly assess if you do not know God. Your standard must not be

lower than His. Does what God want really matter to you?

Suitability: Does he/she fit what God wants for you? To answer this question, *you* have to know what God wants for you. The person coming into your life must understand that he/she is supposed to help you get into your destiny. We often put our own destinies on hold because of selfish desires. Salvation is necessary to

assess properly. Once you assess, then you can determine the measure of love to give a person.

Each Other’s Assessment: Both assessments must be according to the Word of God. That is why Christians should only marry Christians. Do not go outside the nation. The children of Israel made this grave mistake when they came out of Egypt.

Six Defective Dating Habits

1. Dating tends to skip the friendship stage of the relationship and encourages romantic expectation often prematurely. Romantic attraction that develops out of true friendship is good.

“Friendship is the walking together toward a common goal.”

C.S. Lewis

2. In dating, physical relationship is often mistaken for love. Sexual intimacy and sexual attraction are considered love, but they are actually lust. Scientists have shown how having premarital sex can negatively affect the brain.

3. Dating often isolates a couple from other vital relationships including parents, siblings and other close family members. When you spend a great deal of time with someone you are dating, eventually your world begins to revolve around that person and neglect of other important relationships develops.

4. Dating can distract young adults from their primary responsibility of preparing for their future. Ignoring our current obligations will disqualify us for tomorrow.

5. Dating can cause discontentment with God's gift of singleness. Don't be ashamed of being single. Singleness is a season of life rich with opportunities to serve, grow and learn. However, rather than spend this time developing an intimate relationship with God, many young people weigh themselves down with boyfriends and girlfriends.

6. Dating creates an artificial environment for evaluating a person's character. In this created environment, people can pretend to be something they are not. You have to be able to see people in their natural environments to see who they really are.

One more note on defective dating...Dating should not last forever. Dating is not an end to itself. Somebody in the relationship needs to be bold enough to say, "Marry me or get out of my life!"

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

What are six defective habits of dating?

"Be in control without being controlling."

Courting: God's Answer to the Dating Mess

Courting, unlike dating, has God's desired end in mind. Dating is culturally determined. The difference between the two lies in the intent of the relationship. Those who court view marriage as a covenant, not a contract. In fact, when people court both parties have the understanding that the desired outcome of the relationship is marriage. No casual tryouts allowed! Courting is only for couples who are spiritually and emotionally ready for marriage. There is a process for courtship.

STAGES OF COURTSHIP

Stage 1

Friendship/Acquaintance

Go out in groups without pairing up. This allows you to observe people in an environment where everyone is free to behave naturally. No one exposes him/herself to being hurt.

Stage 2

Casual Friendship

Go out in groups, but this time in pairs. Participate together in church activities. Keep the relationship public. Talk in public, not on the phone.

Stage 3

Communicate Each Other's Heart towards God

Discuss spiritual matters. Ask probing questions that reveal a person's intimacy with God. It is at this stage that you are assessing and evaluating. Talk in public, on the phone.

Stage 4

Discuss Attitudes towards Courtship

Determine whether there are mutual feelings toward entering into courtship. If so, move into the next stage. If not, the courtship process ends without anyone being hurt.

Stage 5

Seek God

Separate from one another for a period to pray and fast. Determine what God is saying. Utilize a prayer partner if desired.

Stage 6

Seek an Accountability Couple

Get a spiritually mature married couple to pray for you as a safeguard and provide you with prayer, guidance, boundaries, discipleship, mentoring, temperance, guidance and more.

Stage 7

Limit Your Time Together

Determine how much time to spend together weekly. In the mean time, learn to express your feelings through letters or some other creative method. This gives the couple something to discuss when they come together. They both learn to express their emotions openly.

Philippians 1:9-10 says,

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ...”

Godly couples will adopt this Scripture. You must have true knowledge of what love is in order to love one another. If a man and woman in a relationship are working toward the fulfillment of this verse, what is not good or acceptable will be moved out and the fruits of righteousness will be abundant. Love one another by the Spirit of God.

CHAPTER NINE

Money Lessons of the Recession

Introduction

Economists may disagree as to whether or not the recession is over. Few can disagree however, about the need for dramatic change in the economic systems the world has adopted for so long. In fact, many of the 'lessons learned' from the recession are *reminders* of what God has been telling us all along. Here are six of the top money lessons of the recession:

Lesson 1 EVERYTHING belongs to God

This includes the house, the car, the job, your family, the money, etc. God is the owner and we are the stewards (managers of another's possessions). As Owner,

it is God's job to provide for us. As stewards, it is our job to trust Him to provide – even during an economic downturn. Learning to become a more faithful steward over what we do have (versus focusing on the accumulation or loss of things) brings new levels

of peace to our lives.

*Moreover, it is required of stewards that a man be found faithful.
(I Corinthians 4:2)*

Lesson 2 Live within your means

Even during a recession, most Americans have a standard of living that eclipses that of more than 90% of the world's population. A tough

economy has caused many of us to discover generics, buy 'needs' instead of 'wants' and reject advertisers' claims that pricey name brands equal prestige. Living beyond your means leads to debt and robs you of peace.

The key is learning to be content with what God *has* provided.

*But godliness with contentment is great gain.
(I Corinthians 6:6)*

Lesson 3 Continue to give

While it may be tempting to stop giving during difficult economic times, do not stop. Giving is an act of worship and a demonstration of the fact that you trust God to

provide. Do not focus exclusively on the amount of the gift, because in God's economy, attitude is more important than the amount. As faithful stewards, continue to give tithes (the ten percent) and offerings of all that God entrusts to you.

*For God so loved the world that He gave...
(John 3:16)*

Lesson 4
Develop a written
spending plan

Yeah, yeah, you've heard this one a thousand times. The truth is that only a very small percentage of people actually have a written spending plan (budget). Most of us would readily agree that

any business that did not have a written plan of its income and expenses was not very well run. The same applies to our household. This tool will show you where resources should be going and signal you when they are out of line so they can be corrected. Don't avoid the initial effort of developing

your written plan. It's well worth the effort!

For which of you intending to build a tower does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it.
(Luke 14:28)

Lesson 5
Develop the habit of
saving regularly

For many, the recession hit particularly hard because there were no personal savings to weather an economic downturn or sudden job loss. The bible encourages saving and experts have long recommended an

emergency fund of six months income in a low risk, accessible account such as a savings or money market account. If it is just \$10 a month, practice the discipline of saving regularly and watch it grow over time.

Overseer or ruler provides her supplies in the summer and gathers her food in the harvest.
(Proverbs 6: 6-7)

Go to the ant you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which having no captain or

Lesson 6
Capitalize on the most
valuable asset – family

When difficult times occur, we often shift

priorities and rediscover the true riches in life. One of the all-important lessons from the recession is the inestimable value of God-given family and

friends. Redeeming time (not necessarily money) with them is one of the greatest gifts you can ever give.

CHAPTER TEN

Sent by a Sender

Focus on People

Jesus taught us to pray petitioning the Lord to send “laborers into *His* harvest” (Matthew 9:38, emphasis added). It is not our responsibility to save people. Only God can do that, but it is our duty to go and share the gospel of the Kingdom.

People are not supposed to be living the way they are. Many live destitute of life. We should be ushering them into a greater dimension of living. Even in these challenging times, we have a responsibility to lead people to Christ. In fact, your current

hardship should cause a greater witness for Him because you are still alive. He has kept you. We are obligated to sow into the lives of others in order to build God’s harvest.

We can’t be any help to others if we are also living in survival mode rather than living an overcoming lifestyle. Salvation is only a part of what God wants to do in the lives of those He loves. Once we wake up to who God has called us to be, then we will take our focus off ourselves and begin to

reach outward to other people in challenging circumstances and conditions. Let’s continue to pray for God to send laborers to His harvest.

Essential Questions & Scriptures

Do you know what God has called you to fulfill on His behalf?

Matthew 9:35-38

Essential Questions & Scriptures

How do you see yourself?

How many people are you keeping from reaching their destiny?

Numbers 13-14

Don’t Be Like the Ten

Others will view you the way you view self. Read Numbers 13 and 14. Moses commanded twelve leaders, one from each tribe, to go spy out the land and bring back a report. Only two of them saw what God saw. The other ten did not trust God.

Instead, they saw themselves as grasshoppers in the eyes of the enemy. The result was millions kept from their rightful inheritance. See yourself the way God sees you, not the way the enemy sees you. If you see yourself from His point of view, the people you attract will be likeminded. You attract what is like you, so if

you are attracting bad company...

Change your perspective and see yourself as a son or daughter of God.

The question is this: How many people are we keeping from their destinies?

Obedience is required to do the will of the Lord. God expects us to evangelize (reach out to those who are lost – don’t believe). You must be a witness and allow others to witness to you. If you are not evangelizing, rebellion to the purposes of God has gripped you.

Do not live ashamed of the gospel of the Kingdom lived through Jesus Christ, but

walk in power and boldness. Don’t ostracize the work of an evangelist to a certain group in the church. God holds you responsible for your household, family and community. Always be obedient to God’s instructions.

Reflection

Do not live defeated. Know what God says about you. You have a key to unlock someone else’s life.

Application

Study what God says about His creation. Boldly proclaim His Word over your life and the lives of others.

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

What does it mean to be apostolic?

The Apostolic Nature of God

By nature, God is apostolic. He is a sender. Abraham, Moses, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Twelve, and the Seventy were all sent. This is not a reference to the office of apostle, but the very nature of God.

An apostle has the ability to send and commission people to spread the gospel of the Kingdom. You must understand what it means to be apostolic. Under the apostolic anointing, there is

no fear or cowardice. To believe you are inadequate and ineffective is contrary to the apostolic order. You have an inheritance that allows you to lead others to Christ. You have the right anointing, but many fail to realize it. The two who gave a good report in Numbers 14 had faith that they could accomplish what they were sent to do. They did not need to see the fruit first. Many of us will not approach others with the

Kingdom of God because, like the ten, we want to see the fruit first.

We would have no problem evangelizing if we knew the person we would be speaking to was going to accept salvation. Be bold and remember you have been *sent* by God to witness to others.

“If I am of the order of a Lion, I can’t live as a sheep.”

The Seven

No one is exempt from the Kingdom of God. Listen for the prompting of the Holy Spirit to evangelize, and then follow through. Church has taught us that salvation alone is good enough. This is a farce. God intends for us, the saved (born again believers), to recruit the unsaved. We are to impact every area of the culture. Nothing is off limits. Nowhere is off limits. No time is off limits.

Seven areas (7 mountains) of the culture must be impacted by the believer: family, media, education, government, economy, arts & entertainment and religion.

In the past, the church has ignored these institutions while they have run rampant

in society. Each of these seven is represented by a nation mentioned in Deuteronomy 9. God declares that the children of God will dispossess these nations and has called us to reign on the earth. Jesus died *to receive* (Revelation 5:12) seven attributes from every nation.

That means you cannot discriminate with whom you share Christ because everyone has something in him or her that belongs to God. The seven represent seven foundations of power that the Lamb has because of His awesome act of redemption on the cross. He died for *every person*, not just you and the people you know.

Jesus did not die for souls only. He redeemed the

entire world and everything that was lost in the Garden of Eden. This includes sickness and disease, bad relationships, fear, doubt and everything else that entered the earth through sin. Jesus required this authority in order to establish the rule of God on the seven pillars of culture. Everything must line up under the order of God. We have been put here to invade every mountain.

Application

Read *The Seven Mountain Prophecy* by Johnny Enlow.

*Essential Questions
&
Scriptures*

Why did Jesus die?

Deuteronomy 9:1

Revelations 5

Matthew 28:18

Thank you for allowing this resource to remind you of the lifestyle
God has wired you for as an overcomer.
In 2011 and beyond, know that YOU WERE BORN TO RULE!
YOU ARE AN OVERCOMER!

Do you want to check out more resources from Bishop Terrell L. Murphy?

Feel free to visit our website, www.newbirthcharlotte.org! Click on *Enter Site* and follow the link entitled *Bookstore* in the left margin to build your personal library with the available resources. **The Overcomer's Kit is also available in an audio series for your convenience.**

To further enhance your study, you can purchase the following books at New Birth-Charlotte's Called to Conquer Bookstore located at 17001 New Birth Drive, Huntersville, NC 28078:

- *The Seven Mountain Prophecy*, Johnny Enlow
- *Rediscovering the Kingdom*, Dr. Myles Munroe
- *Switch On Your Brain*, Dr. Carolinna Leaf



© 2011 New Birth-Charlotte
Bishop Terrell L. Murphy, Senior Pastor
17001 New Birth Drive
Huntersville, NC 28078
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
704.895.2607 (Phone)
704.895.2608 (Fax)
info@newbirthcharlotte.org (Email)
WWW.NEWBIRTHCHARLOTTE.ORG