

DIVIDING THE SPOIL

***“There was no poverty among them, because people...
brought the money to the apostles to give to others in need.”
(Acts 4:34-35 Living Bible)***

By Jim Hobby

Dear Reader:

Revelations are often few and far apart. They are hard to come by yet so simple. It seems that when you hear or discover a deep truth, you then think, an eight year old could think of this. Like, who invented this hoola hoop? A kid or some engineer, or maybe who made the first wheel? both could have easily been a kid's idea.

In the next few minutes I pray that you will discover the simple truth of “Dividing the spoil.”

I believe that it can and will open an award system for our unsung fighters for the faith that are living testimonies in their homes and workplaces of what Jesus can do in a human life. These are the folks that faithfully do God's labor during the week and are there in the pews each Sunday bringing themselves, their money, their family, their neighbors and their friends to the house of the Lord. It isn't that they are wanting compensation; but they have earned it and they sure do deserve it. We should be rewarding them just as we reward and often over reward some of our “Big Time Religion” preachers.

The real truth is that these are the folks that have done the down and dirty work in building the Kingdom of God and maybe the ones that Jesus himself was speaking of when he said, “...Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.” (Mat. 19:30)

Rewarding these street fighters could unleash a new excitement in our church and a revival like this world has never known. If they have labored this long and this hard for nothing tangible. what will happen when they start getting a little well deserved compensation?

Jim Hobby

A chuckle in our local newspaper read, “Its not so much the rat race, its the fact that I need a little more cheese.”

At times we can all relate to this statement, but the underlying fears and frustrations of not having enough money to pay our bills, provide for our families and have a secure feeling about the future can become very discomfoting.

At the moment I am debt free and things are clicking along just fine but I can look back and well remember when I was in a pit that seemed five miles deep with greased concrete walls, no door and absolutely no way to escape. The horror of financial pressures as millions are facing today are indescribable. They will destroy family, health, happiness and literally put a harness on a ministry to stop any progress. The stress of lack and poverty is enough to drive us to the brink.

I believe this Footsoldier concept of getting some funding to the men and women in the trenches is as scriptural as getting forgiven and getting your ticket to Heaven.

After all, we are earth bound and you don't have to hang around this place very long before you find that you need clothes to wear, a house to live in, food to eat, and a little cash for a secure feeling. That brings up this question.

WHERE IS THE SPOIL (MONEY)?

This is an easy one; the devil has it. He is loaded. Our nations largest cash crop comes from pot and that is not the short for potatoes. Cocaine brings in more than some of our auto makers. The illegal drug industry, pornography, gambling, liquor, along with the robbery coming from Wall Street and the Pharmaceutical and Oil companies is only a fraction of what he is getting. When you add Government waste and every kind of con man crook from Bernie Madoff on down and every other scam that may come to mind you have the answer to this question. The bank robbers have bought the banks and the banks are now doing the robbing. The devil came to steal and to kill and he is doing his job better than we are doing ours. Our preachers are telling us to sow them seeds of money and to wait for the harvest while they are driving Bentleys, living in million dollar plus homes and flying around the world in multimillion dollar jet planes. I believe God has called us to get aggressive and to do spiritual warfare. Farming is good but fighting is better. The Apostle wrote, **“...So fight I, not as one that beateth the air..” (1 Cor. 9:26)** and to **“Fight the good fight of faith...” (Eph. 6:12)**. He also spoke of **“...a great fight of afflictions..”(Heb. 10:32)** He said, **“...For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” (Eph. 6:12)**

Near the end of his life he said, **“I have fought a good fight..” (2 Tim. 4:7)** Nothing about farming a good farm. Jesus said to **“Occupy until I come...” (Luke 19:13)** Our forefathers fought and divided the spoil.

They spoiled the Egyptians:

“But every woman shall borrow of her neighbour, and of her that sojourneth in her house, jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and ye shall put them upon your sons, and upon your daughters; and ye shall spoil the Egyptians.”(Ex. 3:22)

They spoiled the Midianites:

“And the children of Israel took all the women of Midian captives, and their little ones, and took the spoil of all their cattle, and all their flocks, and all their goods.

And they took all the spoil, and all the prey, both of men and of beasts.” (Numbers 31:9)

They divided the spoil of the Midianites:

“Take the sum of the prey that was taken, both of man and of beast, thou, and Eleazar the priest, and the chief fathers of the congregation:

And divide the prey into two parts; between them that took the war upon them, who went out to battle, and between all the congregation..” (Numbers 31:26 & 27)

They fought and spoiled Sihon and the Amorites:

“But Sihon would not let Israel pass through his territory. He mustered his entire army and marched out into the desert against Israel. When he reached Jahaz, he fought with Israel.

Israel, however, put him to the sword and took over his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, but only as far as the Ammonites, because their border was fortified.” Israel captured all the cities of the Amorites and occupied them, including Heshbon and all its surrounding settlements.

((Num. 21:23-25)

They fought and spoiled Og and Bashan:

“Then they turned and went up along the road toward Bashan, and Og king of Bashan and his whole army marched out to meet them in battle at Edrei.

The LORD said to Moses, “Do not be afraid of him, for I have handed him over to you, with his whole army and his land. Do to him what you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon.”

So they struck him down, together with his sons and his whole army, leaving them no survivors. And they took possession of his land.” (Num. 21:33-35)

They took and spoiled Jericho:

“And they burnt the city (Jericho) with fire, and all that was therein: only the silver, and the gold, and the vessels of brass and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD.” (Josh 6:24)

They defeated and spoiled Ai:

“And thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves....” (Josh. 8:27)

They continued on to other cities:

“And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe.” (Josh 11:14)

Fighting and spoiling the enemy is much more than giving a televangelist a thousand dollars and waiting on something to fall out of Heaven. This brings on this question.

HOW DO WE GET IT?

Almost forty years ago I was pastoring a small church. I was getting a salary and our organist was receiving a small weekly check. One Sunday morning a sixty-eight year old lady came to me and told me she had fifteen visitors that she had brought to church that morning. She had recently rededicated her life to the Lord and was full of enthusiasm working for God. What was she receiving as a material reward? Zip. A little compliment and an “attaboy” was the reward for her labor; and believe me, she was needing money. If she brought that many the next week and the next and the next and they gave a million dollars it would still be zip. That was forty years ago and the picture has not changed. As much as I was wanting that little church to grow, and with as much as she was helping, I would have gladly given her some kind of monetary compensation but I could not figure a way in which to get it done.

This makes you wonder if the church dollar is being spent right. We have invested in buildings and preachers and we have “buildings and preachers.” In too many cases both are empty and here in America they are closing at the rate of two hundred plus every month. Fifty percent of our churches do not get one convert per year.

In many of our cities we build a multimillion dollar stained glass edifice and not give one dollar to the street fighting Footsoldier that brings sinners to the joint.

As good as they are, winning our world to Jesus is not going to be done with Mega Churches, Mass Evangelism or a Television Satellite. *The hurting multitudes need a real touch from a real hand with a real and warm tear of compassion.* Somebody has to do the dirty work and get in the highways and hedges. We must go to the street people, the prisoners, the addicts, drunks and stinky people as well as our gated communities. *God’s soul winning church machine needs all of us with our diverse personalities, DNAs and our unique place in the humanity network.* In order to get this job done, we need to be right in the middle of the devils territory, “out giving his taking” and “out loving his hating.” When we venture into this enemy territory there needs to be some kind of a compensation plan to give financial support to these fighters.

When Jesus said, speaking of the temple, *“I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down,” (Mat. 24:2)* He might have been giving a little hint for us to get out of that place and have church at any moment and at any place with this church that is built in our hearts and

upon the rock of our faith. The church that we carry with us in our hearts every moment of every day.

Just to make sure we remembered these words he put them in the gospels two more times, (Mk. 13:2) & (Luke 21:6) and he did not say to go back and restack them.

There is another scripture which God felt to be so important that he placed it in your bible in three different gospels also. (Luke 11:21, Mat.,12:29, and Mark 3:27) It says, ***“When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoil.”*** (Luke 11: 21 & 22)

Keep in mind this word “spoil.” Meaning property seized by victor: valuables or property seized by the victor in a conflict 2. something gained through effort: something valuable or desirable gained through effort, opportunism, or other means.

Right now there are some six billion plus souls upon our earth. Did you know that if there was only one saved soul roaming our world and he or she happened to get a new convert every ten years and each of his converts did the same; it would take less than three hundred and fifty years to convert the world. In other words if you take one and double it thirty four times you will have over eight and one half billion. We have had about two thousand years and have not done a very good job in filling the empty seats at God’s banquet table.

SOUL VALUE

The material value of a soul is literally unfathomable. When we win a soul to the Lord, God not only gets a soul, he gets everything that goes with this soul. He gets their talent, their influence, their gifts, their liquor money, drug money, gambling money or whatever sin money they are spending and this turns into his tithes and offerings for the promotion of His Kingdom; money for God’s storehouse. This is exactly what happened to me some forty nine years ago and is happening to our new converts today. In my case I was doing everything wrong. Partying was my number one priority. My money went to the above activities plus a few more vices that I will not mention. On Sept. 9, 1962 it all changed. The devil got shut off and I gladly started giving to God’s work and have for Forty nine plus years. When I take a part of this spoil/offering and reward a Footsoldier it will motivate and enable him or her to do more work and to win more souls to the kingdom. This is what was on my mind when that sixty eight year old lady started bringing them in. The scripture says, ***“The wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.”*** (Prov. 13:22) If the wealth is laying there, and it belongs to us, it is our duty to bring the wealth in and in Holy Ghost love, help people to change their spending habits.

What we in the church are doing, is uniting to win more converts. Scriptures that encourage us to connect and do this are: ***“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.”*** (Eccl. 4:9 thru 12)

By connecting to and rewarding the Footsoldiers in God’s army I believe we can add considerable speed to the soul winning process. With a reward system that adds another financial supply line to a soldier’s day job income, we buy him more time to do spiritual labor and build the church. This comes from binding the strong man (the devil) and dividing the spoil. (his wealth/our offerings)

Jesus said ***“...Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to***

harvest. And he that reapeth receiveth wages....” (John 4:35 & 36 KJV)

The Living Bibles words it like this:

“...Look around you! Vast fields of human souls are ripening all around us, and are ready for reaping. The reapers will be paid good wages and will be gathering eternal souls into the graineries of heaven! What joy await the sowers and the reaper, both together!”

Here is another one. ***“There is no man that hath left house, or bretheren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospels, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and bretheren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.” (Mark 10:29 & 30)***

When the first church was in its first days of existence, the financial needs of its participants were readily supplied. The bible says, ***“Neither was there any among them that lacked...for distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.” (Acts 4:34 & 35) KJV*** The Living Bible says, ***“There was no poverty among them, because people who owned land or houses sold them and brought the money to the apostles to give to others in need.”(Acts 4:34 &35)***

When folks are selling their farms and bringing money by the millions into the church for distribution you can bet your dentures that you are going to have a crowd; plus a few arguments and misunderstandings.

Somewhere along the line this system went awry and I have a feeling that it was because they failed to develop a fair and transparent distribution system that would pass the smell test. Then it came back to, ***“For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.” (Rom. 15:26)*** When they quit the distribution system they went back to their poverty living and we are still fighting the same old problem.

There are many scriptures other than the ones already listed that instruct us to reward the soul winner(foot soldier) and/or divide the spoil. The Apostle Paul wrote, ***“...Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And the labourer is worthy of his reward.” (1 Tim. 5:18)*** He also mentions, ***“Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.” (Rom. 12:13)***

Someone has said, “Where there is no spoil, there is no war.” This is so true. Why should we be fighting over nothing? Or why should we fight without a reward? With no reward who wants to get out and fight or what salesperson is motivated to sell when there is no commission. Our modern day spoil is in the hip pockets of the Joe Six Packs in our neighborhoods and it is our duty to get them in the church to the altar and to send them home with new spending habits.

WAYS TO DISTRIBUTE

How can dividing the spoil or rewarding the lay person be done in a fair, confidential and transparent way; and especially in the church?

Here are a few suggestions to get started and then everyone’s creativity can go into action.

Part #1/Personal Gifts

- 1. Give access to special printed personal & confidential blessing envelopes.***
- 2. When you wish to bless a fellow footsoldier with anything of value place it in one of these envelopes and put it in the offering basket or another designated location.***
- 3. No one is allowed to open this envelope except the designee whose name is written on the envelope. These***

gifts are anonymous and confidential and do not qualify for tax exemption or go on any church record. It is a person to person very personal gift.

4. The envelopes are then distributed personally to designees.

If someone brought in a new family of visitors it would be easy to slip enough money in an envelope that would cover the cost of taking them to lunch. A little reward that would encourage everyone to do the same every week.

Part #2/Drawings

1. Issue each member a ticket before church service.

2. Have a special offering for these rewards.

3. Have 1st 2nd & 3rd place envelopes with designated prizes. i.e. gift certificates, cash, etc.

This is where everyone's creativity can get in the action.

A gift certificate for services like a free detail for your car or boat, a free lawn mowing job, a free weekend in a beach condo, tickets to events and this list can go on and on. If some generous rich fat cat comes in he could fill up the church single handedly by loading up the drawing with some of his cash. Local merchants could also advertise and bless someone at the same time by giving out gift certificates from their businesses.

4. These drawings take place after your main Sunday service and tickets are distributed before it starts. This will get members there on time and keep them until the final drawing. This can turn into a Christmas every Sunday deal, many will go home with at least part of their needs met and you can bet the farm that attendance is going to sky rocket.

These are just up to date ways of doing the same thing God's people were doing centuries ago.

If you really want to see how powerful distributing the spoil could be look at one of these network marketing schemes. If this could be done in some way that would pass the smell test you would have a full time work opportunity for everyone wanting to do God's work with hundreds of millions of dollars being distributed. Since you can't find three Christians that can agree on the color of the sky and having been approached with every kind of scam imaginable...let's not even talk about this.

Dividing the spoil is a very important activity that has fell through the cracks or for some unknown reason has been ignored. A system, if rightly administered could revolutionize our churches and bring many of the unsaved into God's Kingdom.

Here are a few more of the many instances where God's people battled and took the spoil of the devil.

“And when David came to Ziklag, he sent of the spoil unto the elders of Judah, even to his friends, saying, Behold a present for you of the spoil of the enemies of the LORD..”(1 Sam. 30:26)

“And he took their king's crown from off his head, the weight whereof was a talent of gold with the precious stones: and it was set on David's head. And he brought forth the spoil of the city in great abundance.”(2 Sam. 12:30)

“And they smote all the cities round about Gerar; for the fear of the LORD came upon them: and they spoiled all the cities; for there was exceeding much spoil in them.”

(2 Chron.14:14)

“And when Jehoshaphat and his people came to take away the spoil of them, they found among them in abundance both riches with the dead bodies, and precious jewels, which they stripped off for themselves,

more than they could carry away: and they were three days in gathering of the spoil, it was so much.

And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah; for there they blessed the LORD: therefore the name of the same place was called, The valley of Berachah, unto this day.

Then they returned, every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the forefront of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy; for the LORD had made them to rejoice over their enemies.”

(2 Chron. 20:25,26 & 27)

“And the children of Israel carried away captive of their brethren two hundred thousand, women, sons, and daughters, and took also away much spoil from them, and brought the spoil to Samaria.”

(2 Chron. 28:8)

“I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.”(Ps. 119:162)

“....Men rejoice when they divide the spoil.”(Isa. 9:3)

Having problems with preachers and money is nothing new. Joash, when trying to do some repair work on the church had his problems too. He was apparently on the right side of the argument because the bible says that, “Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD...” (2 Chron. 24:2)

This is how the situation developed and shook out.

“And it came to pass after this, that Joash was minded to repair the house of the LORD.

And he gathered together the priests and the Levites, and said to them, Go out unto the cities of Judah, and gather of all Israel money to repair the house of your God from year to year, and see that ye hasten the matter. Howbeit the Levites hastened it not.

And the king called for Jehoiada the chief, and said unto him, Why hast thou not required of the Levites to bring in out of Judah and out of Jerusalem the collection, according to the commandment of Moses the servant of the LORD, and of the congregation of Israel, for the tabernacle of witness?

For the sons of Athaliah, that wicked woman, had broken up the house of God; and also all the dedicated things of the house of the LORD did they bestow upon Baalim.

And at the king's commandment they made a chest, and set it without at the gate of the house of the LORD.

And they made a proclamation through Judah and Jerusalem, to bring in to the LORD the collection that Moses the servant of God laid upon Israel in the wilderness.

And all the princes and all the people rejoiced, and brought in, and cast into the chest, until they had made an end.

Now it came to pass, that at what time the chest was brought unto the king's office by the hand of the Levites, and when they saw that there was much money, the king's scribe and the high priest's officer came and emptied the chest, and took it, and carried it to his place again. Thus they did day by day, and gathered money in abundance.

And the king and Jehoiada gave it to such as did the work of the service of the house of the LORD, and hired masons and carpenters to repair the house of the LORD, and also such as wrought iron and brass to mend the house of the LORD.

So the workmen wrought, and the work was perfected by them, and they set the house of God in his state, and strengthened it.” (2 Chron. 24:4 thru 13)

This was Joash's way of dividing the spoil so the footsoldier workmen would get their just reward.

There it is and there is much more. We have the power and the devil has the goods that are in the pockets of Joe Six Pack, Paul the porn watcher, Gary the gambler, Charlie the crack head and Peggy the prostitute. It is our command and mission to bring these precious souls to God's altar and help them to find the new and

eternal life that we ourselves have experienced and enjoy every minute of every day. It is also our duty to see that our lay fighters receive their just rewards. The spoil is still here and should be divided in a way that rewards all who have a part in this great commission.

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P.O. Box 2007

Valrico, FL 33595

Jim Hobby Cell 863-581-5135

Email Hgem4@aol.com

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Footsoldier Ministries, Inc.

P. O. Box 2007

Valrico, FL 33595-2007

Jim Hobby

Hgem4@aol.com

Ph. 863-581-5135