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LIVING

Impact Ministries "Changing the Way the World Sees God"

3516 S. Broad Place | Huntsville, AL 35805 | 256-536-9402 | www.impactministries.com

Living Beyond Lack

By: Jim Richards

The Psalmist boldly declared, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not lack! Centuries before Jesus said, I have come to give them life to its fullest, (John 10:10) the Psalmist declared that following God should always lead us away from lack. God is the God of more than enough not the God of lack! When one sets his sights on following God he, by default, turns his back on that which creates lack.

Lack is a diabolical tool used by the enemy since the Garden. It was, in fact, the false sense of lack that finally caused Adam and Eve to succumb to the devil's plot. Only after they believed that they were not already like God could they be manipulated to pursue what they had come to believe would make them like God. All lack has its roots in our identity, i.e., who we think and feel we are in relation to God! If our sense of self is not one of wholeness, love, and acceptance, we will, from that feeling of lack, make decisions that take us into other areas of lack.

After creating a false sense of identity, all other sense of lack then continues the same course, the refusal to believe God's reality, and thereby takes destructive steps to reconcile the problem. Lack starts by believing a lie and is sustained by pursuing the wrong solution. Those wrong solutions always lead us in our own understanding! They cause us to trust in our own devices while abandoning the wisdom of God! Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. (Prov. 3:5-6, NKJV)

When we turn our face to follow God we will be led in paths of righteousness as opposed to lack! But what is righteousness? The word righteousness, in fact, very often means as it should be. It could even be translated as normal! God's normal, His reality, is one where every need is met and every desire is fulfilled as mankind walks with Him through the various paths of life! Following God is not simply following my idea of God; it is following Him as He revealed Himself in the Scripture.

In fact, the Scripture tells us that one of earliest expressions of God's name, in the Hebrew language means: the One who reveals Himself by His name. If I do not accept who God says He is as revealed by His name, and if I do not accept the word of His promises, and then ultimately if I do not accept every aspect of the provision of the cross of Christ, I cannot claim to actually follow God! Religion has created a concept of God as a hard taskmaster. In direct opposition to all He has revealed about Himself, we believe He leads us in lack to "try" us: He wants us poor to be humble; He robs us of joy to test our loyalty, etc. God is the most slandered being to have ever existed. And most of the lies about Him are sustained by those who claim to give Him their devotion and loyalty!

In one fell swoop God showed us both His nature and how the world should be. In creation He manifested all His desires for man's provision. This was His desire for man. This wasn't the result of someone praying, giving, and compelling God in any way. He created the perfect environment for man before the first prayer was prayed or the first inhabitant created. This was a proactive expression of the heart of a loving God! There was no emotional, physical, or provisional lack. When life was as it should be lack was not an issue.

After the fall, when religion replaced relationship and carnal logic outweighed divine revelation. lack became the norm that replaced abundance! In our ego-driven unbelief and self-deceit we created lack, blamed God, and then created religion to solve the problem. Man would now seek to pay for his failure through lack that would ultimately purge him of his iniquity! Through his vain imaginations man created a problem and a cure that was all based on delusional thinking, devoid of God's reality!

Unrighteous man was not only stuck in a state of behavioral unrighteousness, he was stuck in the realm of unrighteousness. In this realm every thought as well as every behavior deepened the state of lack on every level. His mistrust in a benevolent, loving, giving God has forced him to pursue his need for provision and success independent of God. In fact, many theological concepts present the idea that to walk with God one must live in lack!

The early church was influenced by Gnosticism, Asceticism, and various versions of mysticism. The Ascetic influence seems to have worked its roots into the theology of many different denominational and non-denominational groups. Ascetics believed that all matter is evil. From there

they extrapolate the ideas that enjoying anything in this life is, by extension, evil. Matter, ownership, and pleasure must be denounced to attain spirituality.

Asceticism was addressed in the New Testament many times. Suffering as a means of cleansing directly opposes and denies the finished work of Jesus. It appeals to the ego of man and creates one of the many derivative concepts of works-righteousness! Ironically, denial of *self* is a New Testament doctrine. But dying to self has nothing to do with poverty, lack, and other self-imposed suffering!

It was Asceticism that fostered the idea that marriage and sex were evil. Over time their doctrine evolved to allow laity to marry but forbade priests to marry! It was this corrupt ideology that prompted the Apostle Paul to warn against the doctrine of those who forbid marrying, eating meat, and other "earthly pleasures." (1 Tim. 4:1-4) In Col. 2:23 he said, *These things indeed* have an appearance of wisdom in selfimposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

Religion is the most clearly expressed model of "the blind leading the blind." People whose personal bent, coupled with unbelief, lent itself to this type of thinking, vainly imagined God was leading them in their doctrines of selfdenial, suffering, testing, and poverty. Then those with the same warped thinking and paralleled unbelief closed their eyes and blindly followed! These selfserving, self-righteous doctrines seem fairly innocent at first, but upon closer examination reveal a demonic plan to keep God's people from their heritage, cause people to turn away from God, limit the expansion of the Kingdom of God, and empower the most corrupt evils the world has ever seen!

Few things have limited the expansion of the Kingdom of God more than *lack*. The Gospel is free but it costs a fortune to take the Gospel to the world. The poverty mentality that crept into the church has choked generosity from the hearts of believers for two millennia. Most believers are so financially limited they are not only unable to give to every good work; they are unwilling to give to ANY good work!

Continued on page 10



Lack is a despicable enemy designed to rob you of your destiny, diminish your dignity and reduce your life to the selfishness of one-dimensional desperation! God doesn't send lack as a teacher, a helper or a friend. Those are all roles and functions held by the Holy Spirit who will lead you out lack.

God showed us how we should live: He created man to live in paradise, he has prepared man to spend eternity in heaven and He sent Jesus to sustain us in abundant life in the time between these two perfect expressions of God's will!

In this paradigm changing, faith building series Doctor Richards will give you new tools with which to move beyond lack and live life "as it should be!" As our Shepherd, God always leads us away from lack and into life as God intended for it to be.

Discover the power of:

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Abundance in every area
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Eradicate Religious confusion

Establish new core beliefs

Break the "get by" mentality



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TESTIMONIES

He won't brush aside the bruised and the hurt, and he won't disregard the small and insignificant, but he'll steadily and firmly set things right. (IS 42:3, TMB)

Down But Not Out!

Thank you so much, Dr. Richards, for your nuggets of love and wisdom. I won't go into all the details, but I recently stepped down from pastoring a church. It has been a very lonely and degenerative time in my life. I have never experienced this degree of lowness as a Christian. I don't believe in it, and I don't want it in my life. I am facing some things in my life now that I am not strong enough for. Your encouragement on endurance and "showing up" has given me a great push in the right direction.

Just recently the Lord has brought me back in touch with your ministry. While I was in Bible School, I read your book, "Grace: The Power to Change." I consider it the best book I have ever read. I also got out of my closet a tape series about dignity and self-worth. My Lord, Jesus!!! Why didn't I remember this series? Where has it been all my life? It has been like living water. Nothing ever felt so helpful to hear your words, "Every conflict in your life is because of you." It hurt so good to hear this truth. I have been blaming others my whole life and not been accountable for my actions. I knew the scripture in Proverbs that only by pride comes contention. I just thought it was always because of other people's pride. :0)

I am not out of my mess yet, but I am on my way thanks to your ministry. Thanks for telling me the truth that will set me free. I love you and so appreciate your endurance to run your race. God bless you, your staff and your church.

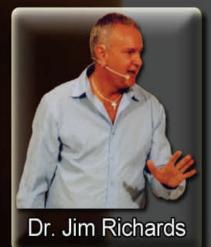
Getting Results!

I still believe James' *The Anatomy of a Miracle* is the best out of over a thousand books that I've read and his latest cd set, *One with God* has to be in the top 3 cds of the thousands of tapes and cds I've listened to (over a period of 35 years). His one thought of don't listen to, read, or watch anything else until you do what this cd set inspires you to do—this is the first time I've really applied it to my life and will continue to believe God's Word is TRUE and it applies to me and to others! In other words these taken together + a few other of his books and cds have made more positive impact on my life than all the others combined, with the exception of a dozen or so books and cds on marketplace ministry.

Changing Lives!

We have been very blessed by your ministries. Your book, *The Gospel of Peace*, is one of the best books I have ever read that could bring freedom to all in bondage of religion, sin, and guilt. It is SO the love of God speaking to us.

I am so excited to have found your ministry. ... recommended a book that I have to say has changed my life. *How to Stop the Pain* is wonderful and I have realized what truly is in my heart and how I judge without even realizing it. Thank you so much and God Bless you for NOT compromising the Word of God.



Creating Happy Holidays

Holidays can be a time of incredible joy or tormenting misery. For some, it is a time of bad memories and negative feelings. For others, there is a desire to make the season more spiritual and meaningful. Still others struggle to find ways to meet the needs of everyone in the family. And nearly everyone struggles with over spending. Regardless of which category you fit into you can take absolute steps to create wonderful holidays.

This series of messages has become a real turning point for hundreds. Almost immediately people started taking steps to overcome the negative aspects of the holiday season. Join with those who have decided to begin *Creating Happy Holidays*:

- Free yourself from holiday depression!
- Create a holiday that the whole family enjoys!
- Break out of the Christmas financial trap!
- Bring more spiritual meaning to the season!
- Make every gift meaningful!
- Create your own family traditions!
- Bring spiritual value to the season and still have Christmas fun!



"For years the Christmas holidays were tormenting. Every year I struggled with depression, frustration, and anger. But with the help of my family and close friends and by making new decisions, I have wonderful holidays and you can, too. I can't wait to share this life-changing series with you!" *Jim Richards*

Words of Knowledge

Pastor Eastman Curtis: We've already had two of the words of knowledge that you brought in the Tulsa meetings medically confirmed!

Visitor to Impact: When you brought forth the word about someone's ear opening it was me. I have been deaf in one of my ears for years. I can't believe that no one had to lay hands on me for my miracle to manifest!

Tulsa Testimony

One evening recently when Dr. Richards visited Tulsa he talked about the benefits of 'follwing Jesus.' As he was talking I had a vision of a green, grassy path and I started to walk down it. As I walked down the path I saw Jesus and decided to follow Him (because of the benefits!) Shortly down the path the green grass became beautiful, beautiful flowers! At that very moment I realized that the back pain that I had suffered for more than two years was GONE. It had instantly disappeared! Several weeks have passed and no back pain has returned! I was HEALED INSTANTLY!



Creating Happy Holidays

Holidays create family memories that last a lifetime. Granted, they are sometimes memories of disappointment and heartbreak but sometimes they are memories of love and connection. One way or another, holidays always create what can become lifelong emotional experiences that are lived out year after year after year!

Holidays contain all the factors that are required to write deep-seated beliefs on our heart. Those beliefs can be varied; but they are absolute. The way we relate to hope can be shaped as a result of our holiday expectations. As children we connect our Christmas wishes with being naughty or nice. Poverty, provision, love, acceptance, and a myriad of other core beliefs can be altered by holiday experiences. It is a time that should be strategically planned and enjoyed. It should be an investment into a great future with wonderful memories.

Although for years I believed and had actually heard through news reports and other sources that suicides increased during the holidays; that is not actually true. Crisis workers do agree, however, that holidays can be an extremely stressful and difficult time. Loneliness, depression, financial stress, feelings of loss, and even substance abuse can intensify during this time. Whether people commit suicide or simply struggle with negative associations, the holidays are really tough for millions of people.

For me, the holidays served as an annual reminder of a life of disappointment and fear. Holidays at my

house always started with fighting. Christmas morning fillment of seasonal wishes; it delusional happiness to bro-

...I eventually awakened to the reality that I could create the kind of holiday experiences that I wanted. drinking and always ending with was not when I awakened to the fulwas the awakening from momentary ken promises.

As an adult my Christa new and more powerful dimas dysfunction was exacerbated by mension: being forced to be with peo-

ple I didn't know or didn't like. The hypocrisy of exchanging gifts with people for no reason other than obligation was like throwing gas on my already burning skin. It was more than I could bear!

I loved my kids and wanted them to avoid the pain of my dysfunction; so I did everything I could to cooperate with a wife who loved Christmas and to make the holidays memorable - in a good way! No matter what I did, or what kind of "game face" I put on, for more years than I can remember, I didn't know what it was like to experience the holidays apart from deep depression, unexplainable frustration, and nearly uncontrollable hostility.

Through the patience of my family and the continual attempts of a loving wife, I eventually awakened to the reality that I could create the kind of holiday experiences that I wanted. I could make new traditions and new memories for my children and grandchildren. Order *Creating Happy Holidays* now, in time to strategically plan a holiday season that reflects the love of God and builds a lifetime of memories that will influence future generations!

See the ad on page 5 for information about ordering the CD series *Creating Happy Holidays!*

Words of Knowledge

By: Jim Richards

Flowing in the gifts of the Holy Spirit is as individualized as there are different people. In explaining the variety of applications and expressions of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, Paul said,

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. (1 Cor. 12:4-6, NLT) There are different gifts applied and ministered in various ways but they are all of God!

The church, as is its tendency, only has a limited religious model of *moving in the spirit!* It is a mystical model with a very limited scope of application. So limited, in fact, that it is nearly impossible to imagine how they could flow outside of church. So, as with all that God has freely given to the world, we have reduced these expressions of God's love to something that excludes those who need it most and have regrettably limited those available for use to the religiously pious!

But God is God of variety. Creation itself screams God's capacity and desire for creativity and variety. "Why all the variety?" one might ask. Simple! God works with, through, and for the benefit of people. He uses many different people in many various ways so the most people can benefit! Specific types of expression are more effective at reaching certain types of people. Variety maximizes the potential to do good for all!

Everything God does tains your fingerprint. It is alyour personality, your commudegree within the framework of variety that makes it possible for everyone to be helped.

In ministering to others I fortable with what we have *edge*. Word of knowledge for knowledge about someone that I knowing other than by divine of knowledge it is important that take away from what you sense. God work with the person from

Words of knowledge can Sometimes I feel something in a someone is dealing with an isbody. At times I have a quick

through you always mainways expressed through nication style, and to some your comfort zone. It is this anyone to be used and for

have always been very comcome to call word of knowlme is where I experience would have no way of revelation. In sharing words you don't add, embellish, or Share what you have and let there!

come to you in several ways. part of my body and I realize sue in that same part of their "mental glimpse" of some-

thing. At other times I internally hear a word. It is never a sentence, rarely a phrase, usually just a word: back pain, kidneys, right eye, or something like that. I don't try to understand it or expand it; I simply share the part of the body the person is dealing with and lead them in prayer.

Since there are many ways to administer these gifts there is no right or wrong way. The right way is the way that is effective for you. I seldom call people forward to lay hands on them; I usually pray for them where they are, but occasionally God will impress me to call someone forward.

My use of the gifts was developed in street ministry. I shared words of knowledge on a street corner before I ever shared them at an altar. They look very different when expressed in the real world than they do in a church setting. I believe it's the mystical expression of the gifts in church that has kept them isolated from the world. Let's face it: it's hard to prophesy in Wal-Mart the same way it's usually done in church. It would probably get you a trip to your local mental ward!

One of the greatest differences when applied in the real world is the necessity to do so with humility. In the world we submit these impressions to those we seek to serve. We never do it in arrogance or showmanship. The gifts are manifestations of God's love and character. It is God expressing Himself through us. Every aspect of that expression must demonstrate the character of God.

There is no truly safe way to launch out in the gifts. All you can do is begin to humbly *submit* the impression you have. So many times I begin a conversation with something like, "Is there something going on with your back today?" That can immediately blossom into a ministry opportunity. Sometimes God gives me something very clear and definitive. When He does I share accordingly. As you allow God to move through you, you will become more confident in His ability to use you and more absolute in your awareness of His love for everyone!

The Most Incredible Offer We've Ever Made!

As I travel across the country the greatest need I see in the church today is for leaders to be fully trained with leadership tools that really work.

There is no lack of men and women who know the Word of God and know how to flow in the gifts of the Holy Sprit, but as so many are finding, it takes more than gifting to build and sustain a ministry.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit touch people; **leaders** build people; but we need both! Most people in ministry know how to pray and get in touch with God, but they do not know how to organize. Their leadership skills cannot sustain the opportunities their gifting creates!

Gifts of the Holy Spirit touch people, Leaders build people!

All across the country people are praying for revival; but revival that cannot be sustained will be of little value to future generations. Many great revivals have been launched by the Spirit of God only to be quenched by poor leadership skills!

The Holy Spirit starts revivals, poor leadership ends them!

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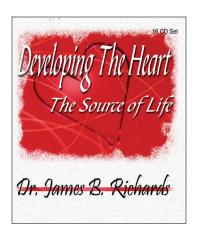
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Developing the Heart: The Source of Life

I have spent more of my personal study of God's Word on the heart than any other issue. It is the condition of your heart that determines everything about your life. When your heart is established you will find the consistency, the victor, and the fulfillment you've searched for.

In this 16-message series I share the essence of what I have spent more than thirty years learning. Understanding the heart is the missing element in ministry and life.





UPCOMING EVENTS!

December 6-9, 2009

Glory Oasis Fellowship Angella Michels, Pastor 10 Raymond Ave. Poukeepsie, NY 12603 845.485.2582

January 10 & 13, 2010

Family Bible Church Allen & Janice Speegle, Pastors 801 Orange Ave. Eustis, FL 32726

Jan. 31-Feb. 5, 2010

Escape to Paradise Playa de Carmen Mexico

See page 11 for details!

February 20-22, 2010

Mountain High Christian Center Ed & Mona Shirley, Pastors Conifer, CO

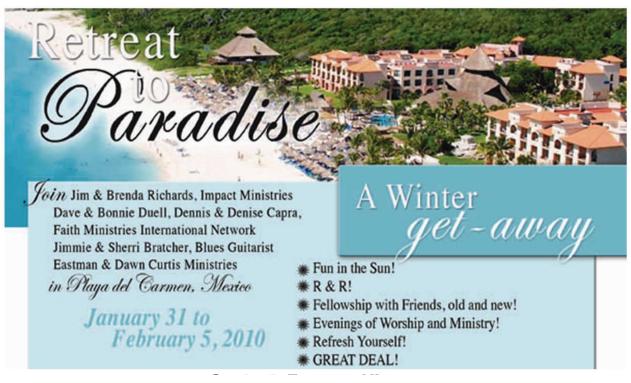
Watch for Updates & Details!

Throughout history as the church's resources diminished, welfare, education, and many other social programs were given over to the state. Some of our greatest doors to present the Gospel disappeared. Now, even though there has been a faith-based initiative in America, Christianity has been pushed further and further from a place of influence. And when opportunity to touch the world presents itself the church is limited in its ability to respond because of its desperate state of lack. We are holding our hands out in need to the very people who have come to us for help! Our lack has blinded us to their need!

Besides the fact that believers can't finance the Gospel for other s who are willing to go, very few believers could actually follow God to their own destiny because of their personal financial limitations. Joehovah-Jireh is the One who gives the power to get wealth. He is the One who supplies every need. He is the One who created a world without lack, told us to pray for the world to be *as it is in the kingdom*, and He will be the One who ultimately restores the world to a place of paradise with every need met.

Living Beyond Lack is a place that few have experienced; but it is not a place for the "precious few." It is a realm reserved for all who will trust and follow God into new dimensions of living. God wants you living in abundance. He wants your abundance to permeate every aspect of your being. He wants you to experience abundance in spirit, soul, and body! He desires to lead you down a path of how life should be; but making this journey will require a renewing of the mind and a willingness to travel pathways that are new to you. Yet you will have no reason to fear; God Himself will be with you; He will comfort you and He will never leave or forsake you. It will not be a pathway of financial gimmicks and charlatan exploitation. It will be a journey of personal growth, integrity, and trust. It will be an indulgence into the boundless love of a generous God and His perfect provision.

This article is based on the new series *Living Beyond Lack*. See page 3 for details.



Contact Frances Hiner at 972-805-5100 #9, ext. 3411

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