

Breaking free from the Poverty Mentality

Michele Michaels

Foreword by
Erin Thiele

RestoreMinistries.net



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Foreword

It's both exciting and rewarding to see this book finally becoming a reality. Michele and I have had a long lovely friendship for years soon after she helped me with editing and proofing our RMI books. Our working relationship developed into a true admiration for Michele, which now has led to the honor of writing the forward to her first Real Life Novel.

You'll notice that we have given Michele permission to use portions of other RMI books and also testimonies submitted and sent to RMI. These confirm what Michele is saying that I'm certain will both motivate and encourage you to seek God for wisdom as she has done and also to make the Lord your most prized and cherished relationship as she exhibits throughout this amazing book.

Don't read this book just once, make sure it's your go to when facing any litigation to stay moving along that narrow path that leads to live—the abundant life He died to give us.

Erin Thiele

Restore Ministries International

Chapter 1

The Poverty Mentality Defined

“And my God **will** supply all your needs
according to His riches...”
— Philippians 4:19

So many women, especially women who are the sole providers of their household, seem to fall into what I have begun referring to as the “Poverty Mentality.” The Poverty Mentality is when we use phrases such as, “I can’t afford it” or “I’m on a tight budget” and any other way we slander or shame our heavenly Husband. The danger is, as these phrases and mindset become a part of your vocabulary, it very soon gets buried, entering your heart, and the enemy steals your peace from you.

“For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart” (Matthew 12:34).

It’s very easy to slip into this mindset and mental stronghold, especially when it’s **you who** pays the bills or begins to take over the finances after a divorce. It can hit when you read your divorce papers, what it says you are going to get in the settlement, like the first time I foolishly read through my divorce papers. Or like me this time, when you total up your family’s debt, where you’d been hoping to consolidate the debt you believed was there in order to qualify for a lower percentage loan, but find the amount of debt your ex-husband has left you is hundreds of times larger.

Make no mistake, this sort of thinking and how we speak is a clear and deliberate trap from the enemy—primarily because it is contrary to what Scripture says, and who our Father is, who our Husband is. No, I am not trying to be “spiritually weird” here and encourage us to all go out and buy whatever we want because our spiritual “Sugar Daddy” will pay for it! But

let's each be very careful that we don't fall into thinking like the world, speaking like the world and therefore worrying like the world does—wondering about *how* **we** will make it financially—when the Bible *promises* that God will take care of **all** not just **some** of our needs, but based on His riches!

“And my God will supply **all your needs** according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

Amplified: “And my God will liberally supply (fill until full) your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

Living Bible: “And it is He who will supply all your needs from his riches in glory because of what Christ Jesus has done for us.”

Message: “You can be sure that God will take care of everything you need, his generosity exceeding even yours in the glory that pours from Jesus.”

If you and I can believe that what Jesus did for us is enough to cover our salvation, and maybe a few other areas of our life, then why not believe Him for everything, including our financial needs, wants, and even our desires because it says that He *longs* to give them to us? Do you believe that He only covered most of your sins, but not all of them? Then how could He possibly not provide all you need financially, especially when He also says,

“Therefore the LORD **longs to be gracious** to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; how blessed are all those who long for Him” (Isaiah 30:18).

In addition to your own peace of mind and well-being, there's another reason why we must shift our trust entirely to Him, because God says that without faith it is impossible to please Him (Hebrews 11:6). So, if we look at our finances without faith and blurt out to everyone, “We can't afford it” or “I don't know how we are going to make it” or “I'm on a tight or limited budget” or even saying “I have to watch my budget,” it is like a slap in the face to our heavenly Father and it grieves our Husband reflecting how poor of a Man He is. God never says you need to budget the amount of sin Jesus' blood can cover, nor that He has limited resources to cover you financially. Let's look at this in another way.

How would you feel if your son or daughter told people, like their friends or their teachers at school, that they didn't know if they would be able to "afford" to eat lunch that day; maybe because they were on a budget, when they never asked you for lunch money, or they did but didn't trust you'd provide enough for the next week, so they decided they couldn't afford to trust you?

What if your children walked around the mall with torn up shoes, and when someone stopped to stare, they said they were on a "budget" so they weren't sure if they'd be able to afford to buy the new shoes that they needed? How would you feel if your children shamed you like that? And what would their friends (or people they met) think of you as a parent? Wouldn't they be outraged that you should be able to at least provide for your child's needs, especially if your children had been telling everyone that you were rich and generous? Of course!

It's exactly the same as when you shame your heavenly Father. When you tell people you're a believer, a child of God, yet then you continue to slander His good name and shame Him by telling people that, though you *are* a child of God (again that you profess to everyone), He is unable or unwilling to provide you with what you need, that you can barely make it, and you don't know where you will get enough money to pay your bills. This has to be a painful slap in the face to the One whom we profess to love and trust, and who owns everything here on earth—whose resources are endless.

Okay, so maybe you don't go around telling everyone, you just keep it to yourself, but your appearance shouts the same message to everyone. Your clothes are old and you haven't bought anything new in years, you let the roots grow out in your hair and you don't keep your hair cut in a current style. And your reason for not looking your best is because you *see* that if you take care of any of your own needs, you're sure you won't have enough money for shoes for your children or you're sure you won't be able to pay your bills. The sad truth is, you're the picture of poverty, even though you have a heavenly Father who has all that you need. A Husband who longs to treat you as His bride.

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things **not seen**" (Hebrews 11:1).

In order to break free from the poverty mentality, you need to begin taking care of what He's already given you: your appearance, your home, your lawn, your car (inside and out), and also your children—since each reflects Who *has* faithfully taken care of you. Then whenever you have anything you need, or even something you want, just simply ask your Father or your Husband for it—He is just waiting for you to ask! Trust me, He wants to bless you with good things, just so long as you take care of what He has entrusted to you, and you show your gratitude by what comes out of your mouth; what you say to others, and by how you live.

Gratitude is all He asks in return; simply praising Him to others, sharing how awesomely giving your Father is, letting them know how lovingly generous your Husband is—so that people you know or meet will also want a relationship with the One Whom you admire and trust! It's very important that you never forget Who it is who *gave* the blessings to you either, because it says, "... you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is *He* who is **giving you power to make wealth**, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day" (Deuteronomy 8:17–18). The world believes you need a good education, a good paying job or some earthly inheritance to live abundantly—but that's only because they're attempting to do everything on their own— independent from the One who longs to care for and love them.

Sadly, when a Christian believes they are poor, their countenance, appearance, and what they **say** and do always reflects poverty. Yet, if a person believes they are rich (according to His riches in Christ Jesus) then their countenance, appearance, and everything that they say and do will radiate wealth!

Financial Testimony #1

"My Husband is Rich!"

While Erin was visiting me, she told me a story I'd read about before, but hadn't heard directly from her until then. So, it's with her permission that I share it here:

My husband used to get irritated with me because I always told everyone that we were "rich!" Saying I was rich all began years ago when I saw a very poor tall black man who was trying to sell some pecans in a fast food

hamburger restaurant in order to buy something to eat. When they said no to him at the counter, I went up and asked if I could buy him a meal. He said, “No, that’s okay” after looking at me, then looking down at the floor. Without thinking, I said, “Well, my husband is very rich and he would want me to buy you something to eat.” So, I paid for his meal and went back to my table. What I said was not a lie; in comparison to what this man had—even my earthly husband was very rich!

Later, when the man got his tray of food, he walked up and asked if he could sit with me. I could smell that he reeked of alcohol and filth, but I said, “Please do.” Without looking up, keeping his eyes on his food, he asked me, “Why did you do that? Why did you buy me this food?” I told him that God had sent me there because he was hungry, and God just wanted him to know that He loved him. I said that I was on my way to church for the Revival that night and really wasn’t even hungry because I’d had dinner, but I sensed I needed to come in and sit to wait since God had sent me. Then I told him when I heard him trying to sell the pecans for some food, I knew why God had sent me there that night—God loved him and He wanted him to know that He cared for him very much.

The man took another bite then asked me about the revival he’d seen going on, and when I was done and he was done eating, he said, “I’ll go to church with you.” I replied, “But there are no strings attached to me buying your meal. You don’t need to go anywhere or do anything. He simply loves you.” His reply was, “If you’re willing to take me, I want to go.” As we walked out, it was then that I realized everyone in the restaurant hadn’t been talking, but instead had been listening to our entire conversation.

As we walked out to my van and he got in, I saw every eye was still on us, including the staff of the restaurant, many of whom had come out from the kitchen to witness what was going on. Since we were late (this being a huge, worldwide revival in Pensacola, Florida going on late in the 1990s when people would get in line before sunrise just to get in), I knew there wouldn’t be any parking available (possibly forcing us to walk several blocks), but as I turned the corner suddenly I noticed a parking spot right by the front door (God had gone before us).

When I walked through the doors with this heavily soiled black man you would have thought I had entered with a king! The ushers came over and

gave him a royal welcome, put their arms around him and opened the main door, and as they did a couple were walking out and said they were leaving, so the usher walked him down the aisle and seated him just a few rows from the front of the church. I turned and headed up to the balcony, finding a space along the side where I could stand to watch. At the end of the service this man was the first at the altar. I saw him on his knees weeping, and that evening he was transformed after accepting His love that changes lives.

A minute later I felt a hand on my shoulder, and when I turned, I saw it was the senior usher who sat me down to “reprimand” me, warning me about my foolishness and the danger I’d put myself in by driving this man to the Revival. Later when I got home, my husband and sons also made me promise I would never do anything like that again. Though I was disappointed that everyone failed to see this was a decision that changed the course of eternity for one soul, I knew in my heart that something amazing had happened, something that was all due to having experienced His love, knowing and hearing His voice, and being in a position to be used to share His love with someone so worthy. Knowing we were rich, God called me to play a very small part in witnessing His power and love to save that man’s soul, where he finally experienced His love and His peace.

The point in Erin’s testimony is this: Our finances and wealth are not so we can store up riches on earth, but so that we can be used by God (in big and small ways) to advance His kingdom. Whatever the man’s meal cost or the danger she’d put herself in is really nothing in comparison to the reward she was able to witness. But, unless you are faithful in small things, you have the relationship with the Lord that enables you to hear and follow His lead, and you are willing to invest whatever you have, even and especially if you’re lacking in anything right now, then you will never be given significant wealth that He wants to entrust you with in order to help bless others!

“And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed.

And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours.’ But his master answered and said to him, ‘you wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed.

Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest. Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away” (Matthew 25:24–29).

About the Author

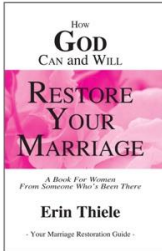
Michele Michaels came to Restore Ministries International when she was facing divorce. At the time she was the mother of two small boys. After reading *How God Can and Will Restore Your Marriage* and *A Wise Woman* and she began helping Erin Thiele with her books, soon after they met while each were in Orlando, Florida. Very soon after Erin visited Michele in her home in Colorado, her marriage was restored.

Almost exactly fourteen years later Michele found herself facing divorce again while helping to update and revise a small Facing Divorce booklet for her church. After returning to RMI to Refresh her mind, Michele began to realize He had planned to use this trial for much good. It was during this new chapter in her life when Michele discovered the real reason God allowed another divorce to happen again and what she had been missing: The Abundant Life.

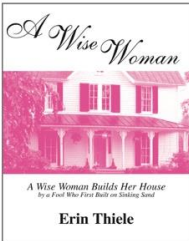
Look for Michele's next books on Encouraging Bookstore.com and also on Amazon.com: *Finding the Abundant Life*, *Living the Abundant Life* and *Moving Mountains* to watch how her Abundant Life unfolds as she travels with her Heavenly Husband along her Restoration Journey.

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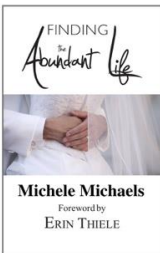
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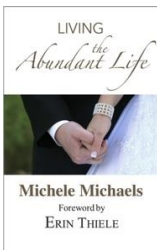
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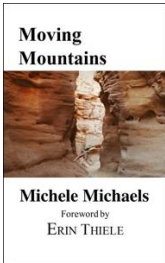
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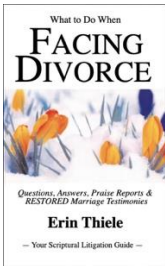
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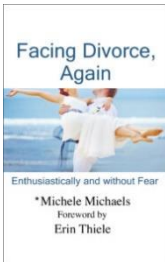
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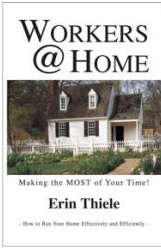
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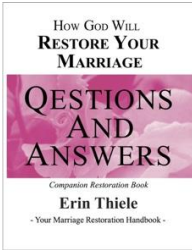
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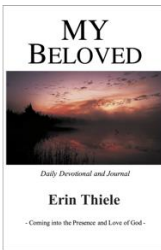
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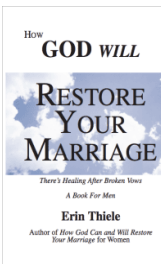
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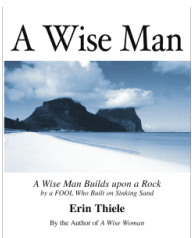
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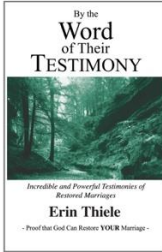
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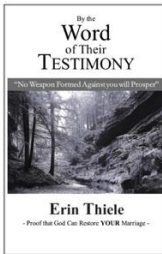
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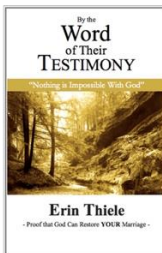
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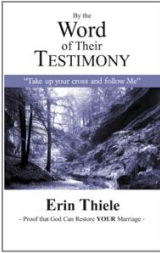
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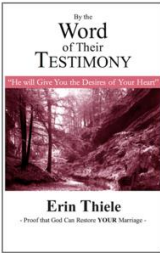
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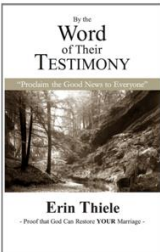
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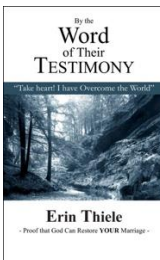
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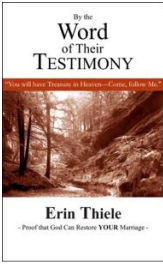
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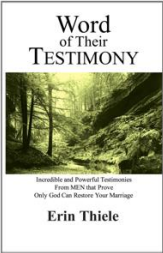
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Restore Ministries International
POB 830 Ozark, MO 65721

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