

HOW to TURN THOUGHTS into THINGS



*Use the Law of the Harvest
to Fulfill the Desires of Your Heart*



BO SANCHEZ

#1 Bestselling Author of *Don't Worry, Be Happy*

Learn to live a fantastic life. Log on to www.bosanchez.ph

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*This book is lovingly dedicated to my inner circle of leaders
who have served with me, shoulder to shoulder,
these past amazing 30 years:*

*Pio Español, Jill Ramiscal, Hermie Morelos,
Roy Pasimio, Carl Fontanilla and Tim Duran.*

*Your love for me —
especially your patience for all my shortcomings —
is my indelible proof that God is real.*

*Thank you for taking this great adventure with me.
Indeed, we have turned many thoughts into things!*

*I owe my life to you.
I love you, my brothers.*

HOW TO TURN THOUGHTS INTO THINGS

Use the Law of the Harvest to Fulfill the Desires of Your Heart

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Bo Sanchez

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Requests for information should be addressed to:
SHEPHERD'S VOICE PUBLICATIONS, INC.
#60 Chicago St., Cubao, Quezon City, Philippines 1109
P.O. Box 1331 Quezon City Central Post Office
1153 Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 725-9999, 411-7874 Fax. No. (632) 727-5615
e-mail: sale@shepherdsvoice.com.ph

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Foreword

A Fable with Two Endings

One day, Juan Miguel died.

And instantly, he found himself in a beautiful place.

A woman covered in light approached him and said, “Welcome, Juan Miguel. It’s easy to get to know this place. Just walk around. And if you’re hungry, just wish for it. You can wish for anything you want and it’ll be given to you.”

“Wow! Anything?” Miguel said. “For my appetizers, can I have New Zealand baked oysters? For my main meal, I’d like to have Alaskan crabs with lemon buttered dip — plus a side dish of Cebu *lechon* (*suckling pig*). For my dessert, I want a tall glass of chocolate parfait drizzled with Belgian truffles. Oh, and please give me a diet Coke. I’m trying to watch my weight.”

The woman said, “In this place, no matter how much you eat, you won’t gain a single pound.”

“This is incredible!” Miguel said. “In that case, can you also add crispy *pata*, *liempo* and *pata tim*?”*

Instantly, all the yummy food he ordered appeared right in front of him in a huge buffet that looked like those served in five-star hotels. Except that the buffet was only for him.

He couldn’t believe his eyes.

* *pata* – pig’s knuckles deeply fried; *liempo*–pork belly grilled; *pata tim* – pork leg cooked in rich flavorful sauce

Instant Gratification

"Wait a minute," the man said. "You mean to tell me that in this place, I can have anything I want?"

The woman said matter-of-factly, "Yes."

"How about a nice car?" he asked.

"Sure. Just name the brand..."

He decided to be daring. "A top-of-the-line BMW!"

The words had not yet left his lips when a shiny silver blue, brand new, custom-made BMW popped in front of him. It even had a diamond-encrusted emblem of his name on the steering wheel.

"Whoa!" he shouted. As he opened the door to examine the leather seats, he turned to the lady and asked, "Can I also have a 10-bedroom house with a swimming pool and jacuzzi?"

In the wink of an eye, a huge mansion appeared in front of him.

"No," Miguel said, "I changed my mind. I want a 127-room castle. And I want my backyard to be a forest spanning a thousand hectares!" And voila, his gigantic castle and gigantic forest appeared before him.

He got into his BMW and drove into the gates of his humongous castle, all the while screaming, "Yipeee! I'm gonna love this place!"

Like a little boy opening his gifts on Christmas Day, he was extremely happy, creating things left and right.

After seven days, something happened: Miguel was no longer happy.

And he couldn't understand why.

So he searched for the woman who welcomed him seven days ago.

When he found her, he asked, "Excuse me, but I'm here to complain. I have everything I need but I'm actually very bored," he said. "In fact, I've never been more miserable in my entire life."

The woman remained silent and just looked at Miguel, her face emotionless.

He began to sob. "How could you call this place heaven?"

The woman shook her head. "Excuse me, Miguel, but who told you this was heaven?"

When You Don't Serve, You're Not in Heaven

Miguel was taken aback. "What?"

The woman said, "Did I ever once tell you that you were in heaven?"

He thought back and realized she never did. "Where am I, then?"

"You're not in heaven, that's for sure," the woman said.

"But everything I want comes true!"

The woman said, "Yes, everything *you* want comes true. Miguel, haven't you noticed? In the past seven days, you never loved anyone. You never served anyone. All you thought about was yourself. What *you* wanted."

"So?" Miguel asked. "Isn't that supposed to be fun?"

The woman said, "Heaven is the perfection of love. Hell is the absence of all love."

Reality hit Miguel like a giant hammer pounding his head. His lips quivered, "Don't tell me..."

The lady said, "Juan Miguel, welcome to hell."

Miguel collapsed to the ground. "Noooooooooooo! How did I end up here?"

"You chose it."

He shook his head. "No, I didn't!"

"We all choose our eternity. Because eternity is a mere continuation of our chosen life on earth. We merely follow its path after our death."

As the woman walked away, she said to Miguel, "Order a few Lear jets, perhaps some giant yachts. It may take away some pain. At least for a few seconds..."

Miguel wept.

For a very long, long time.

A Different Ending

In the Philippines, some of our *telenovelas* (TV soap operas) have two different endings.

Isn't that cool? In one version, Judy Ann Santos dies. In the other, Judy Anne Santos misses the bullet and marries her prince.

So allow me to create a different version of our story.

One day, Juan Miguel died.

And instantly, he found himself in a beautiful place.

Immediately, he saw his grandparents and other family members and friends who had already gone there before him. They greeted him with a group hug as they shouted, "Welcome, Juan Miguel! We missed you so much!"

"Wow, it's so wonderful to see you!" Miguel said.

"We love you, Miguel!" they all said in unison.

After many more tears and hugs and I love yous, his grandmother asked, "Miguel, do you want something to eat? In this place, you can eat anything you want."

"Wow, really? OK, for my appetizers, can I have some Caesar's Salad with Spanish anchovies? For my main meal, I'd like to have *garoupa* with capers and olives plus a little roti on the side. For dessert, I want scoops and scoops of gelato."

And in the wink of an eye, a five-star buffet table filled with food appeared.

"Unbelievable!" he shouted.

"It's all yours, Miguel," they said.

"No way!" Miguel said. He got a plate, filled it with food and gave it to his grandfather. He filled another plate and gave it to his grandmother. "You're all eating with me," Miguel said. "Hey grandma, how are you doing?"

She smiled and said, "Miguel, I'm happy here. In this place, we have enormous power. You can wish for anything — and it will come true."

"Anything? Like cars and houses..."

"Yes!" everyone shouted.

His grandmother said, "Juan Miguel, I have something to give you. Close your eyes..."

Only Love Can Make Anything Beautiful

As he closed his eyes, she snapped her finger and voila — a shiny silver blue, brand new, custom-made BMW popped up in front of him. It even had a diamond-encrusted emblem of his name on the steering wheel. Below his name were the words, "Love, Grandma."

Miguel was speechless. She hugged him tight and said, "I knew you'd like it."

After wiping a tear, he said, "I like the car, Grandma, but it's your love that makes it so special. Hey, can I do these things, too? You know, snap my finger and give you all some gifts?"

"Not in a million years!" his grandfather said.

Everyone laughed.

"Your grandpa is kidding, Miguel," Grandma said. "Of course you have the power to do that."

"But it's my turn to give Miguel something," Grandpa said. "Miguel, I'm going to build you a little house. Would a castle do?"

Everyone laughed again.

"If it's big enough for all of you to live with me, I'll accept it," Miguel said.

The old man said, "But it'll take a while. You see, I won't snap my finger and give you a castle."

"You won't?"

"Nope. I'm going to build you one with my bare hands. I want it to be a labor of love. Just to let you know how much I love you."

"We'll help," the others chimed in.

"Besides, it'll be so much more fun!" Grandpa said.

And you could hear their laughter echo all over heaven.

The Two Things You Need to Be Successful

You can't be successful in life without these two essential things:

Giftedness and godliness.

Let me define them for you.

Giftedness is the ability to turn thoughts into things.

Godliness is the ability to use that giftedness to serve.

Giftedness is being like God in His skills.

Godliness is being like God in His service.

Giftedness is being like God in His power.

Godliness is being like God in His love.

Giftedness is charisma. Godliness is character.

You can be successful with giftedness alone, but success will be short-lived and isolated in one or two areas of your life. For real success that spans your whole life, you need giftedness *and* godliness.

1. Giftedness

Let's talk about giftedness first.

The most successful people in the world have perfected the craft of turning thoughts into things. Successful people are those who have the skill of making their dreams come true. What they think about becomes reality.

One day, Steve Jobs was in his house when he thought of a little gadget that can contain 10,000 songs and that was tiny enough to put in your pocket. And in a few years, Apple produced the iPod and it has taken over the music world by storm.

One day, Warren Buffet thought of buying businesses when the values were cheap. It all started with a thought. Today, Warren Buffet is the second richest man in the world because his company owns thousands of companies.

One day, Manny Pacquiao was in a tiny town in General Santos, thinking of becoming a boxing champ. Today, he's the #1 pound-for-pound fighter in the world.

Friends, you have that gift. All of us do. God has given us that power to turn thoughts into things. He made us His co-creators!

Our problem is that we don't use this enormous gift that we have.

In my preaching at The Feast, our weekly prayer gathering, and in my writings, I constantly remind people of that power that we have to turn thoughts into things.

But giftedness alone isn't enough to create heaven.

2. Godliness

You need godliness, too.

Many people imagine heaven in this way: People floating around in their pajamas and all they do the whole day is sit on fluffy clouds and play their harps.

If that's heaven, I'll be like Juan Miguel in my first story — bored to death.

More than anything else, I believe heaven is a place of service. We'll be serving each other more than ever before. If that doesn't attract you, then you won't like heaven. Yes, I really believe we choose our eternity by our way of life on earth. God won't force heaven upon us. He'll respect how we want to live.

Let me now tell you how this great universe works.



Chapter One

The Operating System of the Universe

You know how old I am?

Here's a hint: My first computer monitor wasn't black and white.

It was green.

And the only real popular computer game in my time?

Pacman. It was a green round character with a big mouth that ate everything in sight. Just like the greedy politicians of the Philippines.

If your dictionary was published before 1980, throw it away. Thanks to the computer, the English vocabulary has radically changed.

When I was young, a mouse was a furry animal.

A mouse pad was the house of a furry animal.

A virus caused the flu.

A bug was an insect.

A hard drive was a difficult journey.

An apple was a fruit.

And windows were rectangular holes on the wall.

My friend (whose name I won't divulge because it'll be hazardous to my health) has been frozen in time when it comes to computers. She refuses to learn. One day, her boss enters her office and says, "I need new Windows for the office." He was referring to the computer's operating system but she didn't have the foggiest idea what he was talking

about. Being the bubbly girl that she was, she said, “Cool! Interior design is my specialty.”

What is an operating system? It’s the system that operates the computer. (Man, I’m bright.) OK, let me try that one more time. The operating system is the most basic program of your computer. Your various applications — Word, Excel and Powerpoint — sit atop the operating system or OS.

Why am I giving you a lecture on computers?

To make a very important announcement.

Friend, I’ve just discovered the operating system of the universe.

It Answers the Mystery

How did I come to this discovery?

I like to ask a lot.

I’ve always wondered why some people are successful and others are failures. I’ve wondered why some people are happy and others unhappy. I’ve wondered why some people have loving families and others have broken families.

What determines success and failure?

I’ve now come to the conclusion that it’s how we relate to the OS of the universe.

The operating system of the universe is the Law that governs all of reality. Success and failure hang on this one Law. Follow this Law and you’ll succeed. Disregard the Law and you’ll fail.

So what is the OS of the universe?

Luck

Some people think luck is the OS of the universe.

If good things happen to you, you’re lucky.

If bad things happen to you, you're unlucky.

So to be successful, just be lucky!

I remember the husband who told his wife, "Sweetheart, when I had a big trial, you were there beside me. When I lost my job, you were there beside me. When I got sick, you were there beside me. When I lost all my wealth, you were there beside me...." His wife was about to cry, so touched was she by his words. And then he said, "I've come to realize that you bring me bad luck."

People who believe that luck is the OS of the universe will wear amulets. They will also knock on wood, follow their horoscope, hang mirrors on their homes and kill a rabbit and bring along its foot. (I can assure you, *that* rabbit wasn't lucky at all.)

Luck says that your life is based on how the stars are arranged.

My friend and I were going to have lunch one day. But early in the morning, she called me and said, "I can't meet with you today, Bo."

"Why?"

She said, "My horoscope says I can't leave the house. It says I may have an accident today."

"I have a suggestion," I said. "Buy another magazine where your horoscope says you can get out of your house!"

I don't like my life being controlled by the arrangement of the stars. Because that means my life is totally out of my control.

Because the last time I checked, I can't seem to control those stars. They're a bazillion miles away and they're also bigger than me. Goodness, I can't even control my kids who are only two feet away — and much smaller than I am!

I added, "You shouldn't be superstitious."

"Why?" she asked.

"It's bad luck."

God

Some believe that the operating system of the entire universe is a capricious, self-centered, immature, insecure God.

They don't call Him by that description but that's who their God is. He is a Divine Being who sits on the throne, looking for people to reward because they adore Him — or looking for people to punish because they forget Him.

So to succeed in life, all you have to do is make this capricious God happy. Don't anger Him. And perhaps, He'll throw some rewards in your direction.

Puhl-eeeeez.

That's not my God. That sounds more like the Volcano God in the movie *King Kong*. Whenever the volcano rumbled and spewed more smoke than usual, these primitive people imagined their god was angry. To appease him, they would choose a poor guy among them, tie him up and throw him through the boiling mouth of their volcano god, hoping that this human sacrifice will pay for their sins.

Why would you want to worship such a tyrannical God?

If the OS of the universe isn't lady luck or a self-centered God, what is it then?

To Be Successful, Follow the Operating System

Friends, I don't believe in luck.

I believe in blessing.

Luck is based on chance.

Blessing is 100 percent sure!

What people define as luck, I define as *getting ready to be blessed*.

My belief is simple: *When the soul is ready, the blessing will appear.*

Are you ready for the truth? Right now, you're swimming in an ocean of blessings. You don't see this ocean but it's there all around you.

If you lack blessings, it simply means you lack *readiness* to receive the blessings. There's no shortage of blessings. There's only a shortage of your *readiness*.

The key? *Get ready*.

How? By planting seeds.

Let me now tell you about the Operating System of the Universe.

Friends, the Operating System of the Universe is the *Law of the Harvest*.

This is what governs the world.

And this is what governs your life.

The Law of the Harvest states:

*What you plant, you harvest. What you don't plant, you don't harvest. The more you plant, the more you harvest. The less you plant, the less you harvest.*¹

If you plant mangoes, you get mangoes.

If you plant bananas, you get bananas.

And if you plant love, you harvest love.

If you plant hatred, you harvest hatred, too.

Experiment

Try this out tomorrow.

Put a permanent smile on your face and greet everyone you see. Smile at people walking on the streets. Give a cheery "Good morning!" to the security guard, the janitor, the messenger in the office. And give hugs to the staff in your office.

Though a few might wonder if you had taken shabu for breakfast, I can assure you that you'll receive more smiles

¹ 2 Corinthians 9:6 — Remember this saying, "A few seeds make a small harvest, but a lot of seeds make a big harvest."

than you've ever received before.

That's just how the universe works.

Make a decision now to plant today what you want to harvest tomorrow. Or next week. Or next month. Or next year. Or 10 years from now.

Do you want more joy?

Give joy to others. Face it. The happiest people in the world are those who've planted the most seeds of happiness into others.

I can share with you an example in my life...

Why Am I So Blessed with a Loving Family?

I've got a great family life.

Why? Because for the past 10 years now, I've been planting seeds of love into my family. I spend time with the boys. I play with them every day. In fact, they know my policy that at any time, my home office is always open to them if they want to play with Daddy.

Every day, I bike with Francis. Each week, I have a one-to-one breakfast with Benedict. Each week, I have a romantic date with my wife. In fact, this past week, despite being in Davao and Cebu for a couple of days, I was still able to grab *two* romantic dates with my wife. (I can't get enough of her.)

I've planted all these seeds of love, and I'm now harvesting!

If you want to harvest love, you have to plant seeds of love.

By the way, do you want more money?

How to Harvest More Money

If you want more money, plant value.

Remember: *Money is nothing but a symbol of value.* So the surest way to increase your income is to increase your value

— and share that value with others.

My friends own a chain of restaurants in Metro Manila named Trinity.

Visit them at the Mall of Asia and you'll see that their restaurant is always jam-packed. Why? Go ahead. Try their food. I recommend *sinigang sa miso*.^{*} But before you eat, write your name on a small card and put it in your pocket. Because when you start sipping the soup, I promise you that it's so good that you'll forget your name. Thus, the card in your pocket. My friends are giving you incredible value.

My other friends own In My Womb Prenatal Ultrasound Clinics.

They, too, are prospering because they want to serve the customers.

First, they took the ultrasound out of hospitals and into malls. Pregnant women don't like going to hospitals for their ultrasound. Because they're not sick and don't want to be around sick people. Second, the clinics are such a lovely, family-friendly, attractive place. While a doctor is doing your ultrasound, your family can watch your baby's prenatal videos because they placed a wide-screen, LCD TV on the wall. Third, only OB-gynecologists work on each pregnant woman — not their staff or assistants. That means you get the ultrasound interpreted to you as it's being done.

Do you now understand? The wealthiest person (minus drug lords, etc.) is the one who can give the most value to the most number of people.

Anyone who has a lot of money but not a lot of value will soon lose all that money. Take a look at lotto winners. According to the US Certified Financial Planner Board of Standards, Inc., nearly one-third of lotto winners become bankrupt within five years of their winning. Just five years and the money flies away. Why? Because money symbolizes

^{*} Fish in sour broth and miso

value, and if there's no value behind the symbol, it won't last.
Let me close with one last story.

What You Give, You Receive

In Sagada,* we visited the Echo Valley.

Standing on the edge of the cliff, I told my four-year-old boy, "OK, son, shout *I love you* as loud as you can!" So Francis hollered, "I love youuuuu!"

It was a delight to see the surprise on his face when he heard his high-pitched voice bounce back. "*I love you, I love you, I love you...*"

Being the killjoy that I was, I took him aside and gave him a two-minute lecture on life. "Francis," I said, "life works the same way. The entire universe is a giant Echo Valley. What you give to life, you'll receive back a hundredfold. Imagine if you said, "I hate you." You would have heard, "*I hate you, I hate you, I hate you...*" Hatred will return to you many times over, too. Remember: Whatever you give to the universe, you'll receive it multiplied."

"OK, Daddy," he nodded, "the universe is a giant Echo Valley."

Of course, that was his polite way of getting rid of me.

As I watched my little boy holler more "*I love yous*" to the universe — and receiving it back — I realized how simple God created the world.

Friends, what do you want to harvest in your future?
Plant it today.



* A well-known tourist destination in Mountain Province, Philippines

Chapter Two

How to Have a Breakthrough

Have you ever been denied a visa?
If not, believe me, you don't want to experience it.
I've been denied a visa. Twice. From the US Embassy no less.

Look into my heart and you'll find two ugly scars.

I remember my first attempt.

I was still in my teens.

When I woke up, I was already wet with nervous sweat. It didn't help that when I arrived at the US Embassy, I saw a humongous crowd of hopeful *Pinoy*s outside the gates of American Heaven. They were standing in long lines, all of them begging for a visa. I felt their collective fear. It was nerve-wracking.

Each step closer to the interviewer made my stomach churn. I could actually hear the loud beating of my chest and wondered if everyone else heard it.

Dub-dub. Dub-dub. Dub-dub.

Finally, it was my turn.

I walked up to the glass window and said with a trembling voice, "Good morning..."

Am I Human?

The consul, a thirtysomething guy with square spectacles, was all business. He looked at my passport. I bet he already made up his mind right there but the interview

had to go on. He asked, "So why do you want to go to the US?"

I said, "I'm a preacher and a Catholic convention is inviting me to give a talk."

That was when I realized — my gosh, who in the world would believe me? A pimple-faced, scarecrow-looking teenager being invited to speak in a religious convention?

The man abruptly left his cubicle. I imagined he was laughing out loud and rolling on the floor. When he came back, he said matter-of-factly, "I'm sorry, Mr. Sanchez, I can't possibly give you a visa."

Again, I imagined him say instead, "I'm sorry, Mr. Sanchez, you're so totally unworthy of stepping on the beautiful shores of America because we only accept human beings."

Another Rejection

The second time I applied, the interviewer was an American lady.

She was very kind to me. Instead of saying, "I'm sorry, I can't possibly give you a visa," she said, "I'm *so very* sorry, I can't possibly give you a visa." But it still broke my heart.

On the third time I applied, I thought I was already an expert in the body language of foreign diplomats. I got ready for another denial.

Here were the signs I was looking for:

If the consul had an emotionless zombie look on his face, I'd get denied.

If he shook his head... Denied.

If he raised an eyebrow... Denied.

If he yawned... Denied.

If he looked at his watch... Denied.

If he inhaled oxygen... Denied.

If he existed in front of me... Denied.

I'm a Human Being After All

So I was so shocked when he approved my visa.

Just like that.

Without asking me a question, the guy said, "Have a nice trip."

"Excuse me?" I asked.

He smiled and repeated himself, "Have a nice trip."

"Where am I going?" I asked.

But I finally got it.

I almost ran out of the embassy jumping up and down.

Hey, I'm a human being after all!

Life with a Visa

When I still didn't have a visa, I remember visiting my neighbor who had a potted plant from the US. I put my foot in it and announced, "Hey guys, I've finally stepped on US soil!"

When I didn't have a visa, I couldn't step on an inch of US territory.

But because I got the visa, I've now preached in 34 cities in North America.

Friends, there's something better than a US visa.

There's a visa to the land of abundance and love and victory that God wants you to have.

I should know.

I'm experiencing it right now.

It's Harvest Time for Me

People ask me, "Bo, how can you be so blessed?"

They point to my loving family.

They point to my fantastic job that blesses the world.

They point to my financial blessings from my small businesses.

They point to my incredible circle of friends.

They point to my irresistible good looks. (Note: “They” consist of my mother and my wife.)

Yes, I’m living a dream life.

Sometimes, I have to pinch myself. Is this really happening?

Let me tell you a curious thing that started happening when I hit 40.

In 2006, I was named one of The Outstanding Young Men, awarded by the President in Malacañang Palace no less.

In 2007, I was given the Serviam Award, the highest honor given by the Catholic Mass Media Awards by none other than Cardinal Rosales himself.

And just last week, another fantastic recognition: The Golden Gavel Award from Toastmasters International — the highest award given to non-Toastmasters for public speaking.

Do you know why I’m so blessed?

Here’s my theory:

There are two seasons in this universe:

- The Planting Season
- The Harvest Season

For 40 years, I was in the Planting Season.

Today, I’m in the Harvest Season of my life.

It’s that simple. For years, I’ve planted and planted... and planted! Crossing the line between planting and harvesting was like receiving a visa to a land of abundance and ease. In other words, I’ve experienced a breakthrough.

Let me describe these two seasons as simply as I can. I cannot think of a clearer explanation than this:

In the Planting Season, I chased after blessings.

In the Harvest Season, blessings are chasing after me.

How do you get to the harvest?
There really are only two Powerful Steps.

**Step #1:
Even If You See No Results,
Keep Planting**

Many of you are getting tired of doing good, of doing the right thing.

Why? Because you don't see the results.

So you want to give up.

Don't! Or there will be no harvest.

Perhaps you've been applying for a job but the right job has not been coming. Never mind. Keep applying anyway.

Perhaps you've been reaching out to your son but he's still distant as ever. Never mind. Keep reaching out to him anyway.

Perhaps you've been working on your finances but you're still buried in debt. Never mind. Keep working on your finances anyway.

Perhaps you've been working on your marriage but the relationship is still strained. Never mind. Keep working on your marriage anyway.

A wife said to her husband, "I'm so tired of our fighting. I can't take it anymore. I'm leaving the house!" And the husband said, "Me, too! I can't take it anymore either. I don't want to stay in this house, too! I'm coming with you."

That husband wasn't about to give up!

(Note: I'm not talking about abuse in marriage. These are the exceptions where it may be better for a husband and wife to live apart. In this book, I'm talking about the regular problems that slowly destroy marriages if we don't work at our relationship.)

Some of us think if we plant, we'll harvest.
That's not how this universe works.
You'll need to plant and plant and plant... and then
you'll harvest.
My friends, don't give up.
Believe that harvest is coming!

Keep Showing Up!

Friends, if you want to succeed in life, you need to show up.
In the US Embassy, I needed to show up for my
interview.

And when I got denied, I just applied again.

When life denies you of what you dream of, here's the
key: Show up again.

What if I got so depressed and I never tried again? I
would never have been able to preach in 34 cities in North
America.

Remember that in the Planting Season, not all your
seeds will grow. Many of your seeds won't reach the Harvest
Season. Some of your seeds will die.²

I remember one area of my life where I had to plant
again and again, almost giving up because it seemed as
though nothing was happening.

Planting Seeds of Love in My Emotions

For almost 30 years, I was run by my fears.

Each morning, I would wake up with a profound sense
of sadness. For many years, I didn't know why I felt so
sickeningly sad. Many years later, I was able to define it:

² *Matthew 13:3-8 — He said: A farmer went out to scatter seed in a field. While the farmer was scattering the seed, some of it fell along the road and was eaten by birds. Other seeds fell on thin, rocky ground and quickly started growing because the soil wasn't very deep. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched and dried up, because they did not have enough roots. Some other seeds fell where thornbushes grew up and choked the plants. But a few seeds did fall on good ground where the plants produced a hundred or sixty or thirty times as much as was scattered.*

it was shame. I had a shame-based personality, rooted in my molestation as a child and as a teenager. (I talk about this painful part of my life in my two books, *Your Past Does Not Define Your Future* and *7 Secrets to Real Freedom*.) I was totally ashamed of who I was. I was ashamed that I existed in the world.

For years, I tried to please everyone. Because if someone didn't like me, I would panic. I would die within. I was desperate for people to love me.

But daily, I *planted* seeds of love in my heart.

I received God's love. I loved myself aggressively. I allowed others to love me. There were days when I was OK. But there were more days when my old fears would grip me again.

There were days when I wanted to give up.

I felt it was all a waste — that I would never get healed.

And then one day — I just noticed it — my fears were lessening. Its intensity was weakening. My shame reared its ugly head less frequently.

I knew a miracle was happening.

I knew love was conquering my soul, edging fear out of my life.

Today, as I write this, my life has totally changed.

Harvest has come!

I now *profoundly* love myself. I'm no longer ashamed of myself. I cannot begin to describe to you the change in my inner life. It's like night changed to day — and I'm a brand new person inside.

But there's a second step to Harvest Season.

Step #2: Plant in the Right Environment

The Law of the Harvest says, "*What you plant, you harvest.*"

But hidden in this Law is the need to plant your seeds

in the right environmental conditions: Good sunlight and abundant water.

If I plant the right seeds in the wrong environment, there will still be no harvest.

What is the right environment? Faith.³

You need to plant your seeds with a blessing mindset. Faith is the water and sunlight of your seeds.

What is a blessing mindset? That no matter what happens, you expect to be blessed. That you expect good things to happen to you.

I know people who work on their finances — but don't expect to be truly rich.

I know people who work on their family relationships — but don't expect that they'll ever get better.

I know people who work on their health — but don't expect healing.

If you want to be blessed you have to expect to be blessed.

You have to expect the harvest.

Let me give you an example.

Develop Your Wealth Mindset

In the previous chapter, I said that if you want to harvest more money, you have to plant *value*. Why? Because money is simply a symbol of value.

But why was it that for the first 30 years of my life, I was poor, even when I was planting the right seeds?

When I started serving God at age 13, preaching almost daily and leading non-profit organizations, I was already planting value into my life and enormous value in others — by helping countless of people. I planted what I believe are the three seeds of wealth — character (integrity), competence (gifting), and connections (relationships).

³ Hebrews 11:1 — Faith makes us sure of what we hope for and gives us proof of what we cannot see.

So why no harvest?

I didn't have the right *blessing mindset* to make the seeds grow. In this case, I lacked a *wealth mindset* to make the seeds of money grow.

In other words, I didn't want to become rich. I didn't expect to be blessed.

It took years to get rid of my *scarcity* mentality. It came from...

- Wrong beliefs about myself: I identified myself with poverty.
- Wrong beliefs about God: I thought He wanted me to be poor.
- Wrong beliefs about money: I believed it was the tool of the devil.

I remained poor because I didn't want the harvest.

I was already giving so much value to people, all I had to do was ask and I'd get paid handsomely. But I didn't want to be paid.

So I remained poor.

When I hit 30 years old, I began to open myself to harvest.

I began to grow a wealth mindset.

And I began to grow my wealth too.

I remember reading all the books I could get on money and searching for all the mentors I could find. Sometimes, it seemed like the more I knew, the more confused I became. But I didn't stop. I kept learning. Until everything made sense.

I also got into eight small businesses — and failed in every single one of them. I lost tons of money. (I didn't have much money then, so "tons" is a relative term.) It was devastating. Depressing! But I never gave up.

And then the breakthrough came.

Today, money flows to me like a river. (Compared to my multimillionaire mentors, my river is more like a trickle

from a leaking faucet. But it sure looks good to me!) I don't look for business opportunities; business opportunities come to me. And the right people, the right resources and the right wisdom just come to me.

Yes, harvest has come.

And greater harvests are coming because I keep planting.

Even at Harvest, Keep Planting

Some of you are enjoying your Harvest Season in various areas of your life.

Don't stop planting.

Don't forget to take some of the seeds that you harvest and plant them.

If you do this, greater Harvest Seasons will come.

In the next section, I share with you the answer to this difficult question:

Is there a right time to quit?



Chapter Three

Quit Often to Succeed in Life

One day, Max, a criminal in death row was about to be executed.

The warden was extra kind that day, so he asked him, "Max, for your last three meals, you can ask for anything you want. What do you want for breakfast?"

Max said, "*Pancit* (Chinese noodles). For long life."

The warden smiled and said, "I don't think it will work. But here's the *pancit* anyway." Max ate with gusto.

After a few hours, the warden asked, "What's your second meal?"

"Spaghetti. Also for long life," Max said.

The warden laughed as he shook his head, "Max, this won't give you long life, but anyway, here it is...." He gave him spaghetti and Max devoured it.

After a few hours, the warden asked, "What's your third meal? *Sotanghon*?" (Another noodle dish.)

"No," Max laughed, "noodle dishes have not been working for me."

"So what will your last meal be?"

Max said, "I want a bowl of fresh strawberries."

The warden said, "But it's not the season of strawberries. That's about 10 months away!"

Max said, "Oh, that's OK. I can wait."

Max had a simple purpose: To extend his life.

If you noticed, his first two strategies didn't work. So he shifted strategy.

Friends, you need to be an expert in using this powerful tool of success.

Are You a Quitter?

I know it sounds shocking.

But I'm serious.

Unless you learn how to quit, you won't reach your dreams.

I don't say that because I read it in a book. I say that from personal experience. I'm successful now because I know when to quit, how to quit, where to quit and what to quit.

By the way, do you have problems?

Today, I'm going to teach you how to solve your problems by quitting.

Let me give you a hint: Most of the time, the best way to solve your problems is not by solving your problems. The best way to solve your problems is by making them *irrelevant*.

And the way to do that is to quit.

I hope I've confused you by now.

Let me now tell you my first story: A love story. A tragic love story.

But I'm going to ask a favor. Notice whenever I use these three words in my story: Purpose, Path and Problem.

Let me define them for you:

- **Purpose** is the final destination
- **Path** is the road going there.
- **Problem** is the barrier on that road.

Ready?

My love story is about Jenny, a beautiful single woman

with many dreams.

Like many single women, her big purpose is to have a happy marriage.

Which includes a lovely wedding, romantic dates each week, cuddling in bed every Saturday morning and hugs under a starlit sky.

One day, Jimboy walks into her world and offers a path to her purpose.

He has good looks. Dresses smart. Speaks well. Has what Filipinos call “arrive” (*may dating*).

She meets him, likes him and walks home with her feet on the clouds.

She also has many profound signs from heaven that they’re meant for each other: They’re fans of the same *artista* (actress).

She’s excited. She believes she has found the man of her dreams.

Unfortunately, the dream turns out to be a nightmare.

The Problem of Jimboy

She discovers that Jimboy is an irresponsible bum.

He always doesn’t have money. His wallet is thick but it’s filled with old receipts, discount cards and an expired driver’s license that he can’t renew because he has no money.

He hasn’t had a steady job for the past five years. When Jenny asks him why, he says he’s a free spirit. But since his spirit is still trapped in a physical body that gets hungry three times a day, Jimboy has to borrow money from Jenny.

Jenny also discovers that Jimboy has mixed blood. He’s 25 percent Filipino, 25 percent Chinese and 50 percent alcohol. When she asks why he drinks so much, he says, “When I drink, I fall asleep. When I fall asleep, I don’t sin.

When I don't sin, I go to heaven. So I drink to go to heaven."

Finally, she also discovers that Jimboy flirts with anything that moves with a skirt. She finds he has other girlfriends. "In case of emergencies," he laughs.

Let's review the three elements of our story.

Her *purpose* is a happy marriage.

Her *path* is Jimboy.

Her *problem* is his character flaws: being a bum, an alcoholic and a playboy.

What should Jenny do?

Wouldn't it be so much simpler if she just quit this path and take another?

But from my experience, many women don't. They just keep on trying to solve their problem — in this case — Jimboy's character flaws.

I see two reasons why people don't quit.

1. When You Confuse Purpose and Path

Jenny has to see her boyfriend Jimboy as a path.

Just a path, not the purpose.

Because if she's confused between purpose and path, she'll be attached to Jimboy. If Jenny confuses Jimboy to be her purpose, then she'll try to solve the problem of his character flaws head on — by trying to change him.

That may include emotional manipulation, sexual blackmail, dragging him to prayer meetings, forcing him to go to counseling and driving out demons via exorcism.

Or she may just marry him and hope that marriage will change him.

Which is a huge mistake. Here's the truth: *Marriage doesn't change anyone, it simply magnifies what's already there.*

But OK, I admit. There are rare exceptions. A few guys do change after their wedding day.

But that's like playing Russian roulette. With a gun that can hold 100 bullets — and 99 are loaded. Do you really want to take that risk?

2. When You Become Unclear with Your Purpose

Emotionally, the Jennys of the world are discombobulated.

They will keep their Jimboys because marriage is no longer their purpose.

For example, if Jenny has a strained relationship with her parents, and her parents tell her that Jimboy isn't good for her, Jenny will keep him as her act of rebellion. In this case, her purpose isn't marriage anymore. It's to get back at Mama and Papa and declare her total independence.

Another example.

If Jenny has a broken self-image and believes — in her subconscious — that she deserves a jerk, then she'll keep him, too. Again, the purpose is no longer to get married. The purpose is to inflict self-punishment for being such a terrible person. Even if Jimboy leaves her, Jenny will continue to search for other jerks. She will be a jerk magnet for the rest of her life.

When the purpose is messed up, our lives are messed up as well.

Sadly, I see this tragedy again and again.

Oh, if only we learn to quit!

But our problem is that we think there's only one path.

So when a problem blocks our way, we try to solve it head on.

We don't understand that sometimes, the best way to solve a problem is to make it *irrelevant*. For example, Jenny can make Jimboy's character flaws irrelevant by simply dumping him — and choosing someone with better husband material.

Life will be much simpler. And happier!

Tell Yourself: There's More Than One Path

People don't know how to quit.

I've met otherwise wonderful people who've been stuck in dead-end relationships for years — because they don't know how to quit.

I've met great employees who — for the past 10 years — have been stuck in a job they don't like, working for a boss they don't like and receiving a pay they don't like — because they don't know how to quit. (I'm not saying you quit tomorrow. Apply for another job first before you quit.)

I've met entrepreneurs who've been stuck in a business that doesn't earn much or that isn't in line with their passion — because they don't know how to quit.

I've met people who — for the past 10 years — have been stuck in abusive religious groups that kill their spirit — because they don't know how to quit.

A friend of mine showed me this principle at work.

There's Got to Be Another Way

A couple of years ago, my friend said he was taking up nursing to go abroad to earn for his family. Though he and his wife owned a school, they still couldn't make ends meet. Because the school had very few students and many parents weren't paying or were delayed in paying their tuition fees.

So the guy went abroad to work.

But after a year, I met him again. He told me something beautiful. It's a line I want you to say often. He said, "Bo, there's got to be another way!"

"What happened?" I asked.

“My kids need me. And I was so lonely out there. I don’t want to go abroad again!” he said.

My friend and his wife decided to work on their little school. They did massive marketing and doubled their enrollees. They also did the unthinkable: They raised their tuition fees. (In the past, their tuition fees were very low.)

Today, this couple is happy to report that the school is doing so much better. And wonder of wonders, the parents now pay regularly. Why? Because they were able to reach parents of a higher economic bracket who don’t have problems paying tuition fees.

Filipinos think that there’s only one path to financial abundance: Go abroad. Be an Overseas Filipino Worker.

But the problem to that path is huge — leaving your children.

Hey, don’t solve that problem. Make that problem *irrelevant* by choosing another path. Yes, there are other paths to financial abundance!

You can be wealthy here in this country!

One last story...

Choose Another Problem — A Problem You Can Handle

Four years ago, I wanted to build the first Catholic homeschool provider in the Philippines. At the time, all homeschool providers in the country were non-Catholic.

For those who don’t know what homeschooling is, let me give you a simple definition. Homeschooling is when parents teach their own kids at home and try their best not to kill them before the day is over.

Just kidding. I believe in homeschooling so much because kids learn with fun. When done correctly, homeschooled kids can have a broader intelligence than kids from regular schools. And ironically, they can have greater social skills too. Today, two million kids in the US are being homeschooled because it's a fantastic alternative.

I love homeschooling. But my problem was that the Department of Education didn't love homeschooling. (Yet!)

They had this iron-clad condition: If I wanted a license for homeschooling, I needed to build a physical school — complete with a few concrete buildings, an army of teachers, yellow school buses, a nice tall flagpole and a security guard named *Mang Jun* — before they would give me a go signal to open my homeschool center.

That was the giant problem in my path.

Now I could have bulldozed my way through that big problem by simply building a physical school. I knew I could do it. I've built stuff before.

But my goodness! First, I'd need millions. Second, I'd probably become bald from stress — and I don't like to be bald because my head has a funny shape. But more importantly, why build a traditional school if my heart was in homeschooling?

I took one step backward and prayed.

That's when I found another path with a much smaller problem: I could partner with an already existing school and work out a joint-venture agreement with them.

That's when I remembered my dear friend and fellow-preacher Alvin Barcelona and his wife, Tes. They own a wonderful, multi-awarded school called PowerKids. The only problem was whether we could work together on the project.

We solved that small problem over a nice dinner of boneless *bangus** and *quezo*** ice cream in my home. That night, we signed the papers, and kaboom — we launched the www.catholicfilipinoacademy.com the next day.

Today, PowerKids CFA serves almost 150 kids and their very brave parents.

Here's the key to great success: *Be unflinching with your purpose, be flexible with your path.*

Never give up on the dreams that God has placed in your heart.

But you can experiment with various ways in fulfilling them — until you find the right one.

Just like Peter...

Fill Your Nets!

One day, Jesus asked Peter to fish. Peter said they've been fishing all day and have caught nothing. But Peter said that he'd still do it.⁴

But Jesus said something curious.

He just didn't tell them, "Lower your nets one more time."

He said, "Lower your nets in the deeper water. And lower your nets on the other side of the boat."

In other words, quit the old way of doing things and take another path.

Result? Peter's nets were so full of fish they almost broke. That's abundance.

Friends, do you want your nets to be full? Do you want abundance, too?

Don't quit your purpose. Lower your nets still.

But quit *where* you lower your nets.

⁴ Luke 5:4-6

* Milkfish

** Cheese

Quit *when* you lower your nets.

Quit *how* you lower your nets.

Find another path.

Are you going through some problems now?

Ask yourself:

1. What is really my end purpose?

2. Is there another path to this purpose whose problems I can handle?

And take new paths.

And may your nets almost break with your abundant harvest.

In the next chapter, I'll tell you one more reason to quit.

Even when a path seems to be working!



Chapter Four

How to Become a Superstar

Last week, I got a body massage that I'll never forget.

I was massaged by "*Ate Guy*" (not her real name).

I call her "*Ate Guy*" because though she looks like a woman, I have a suspicion she's really a guy. In fact, she has the strength of 10 guys in her little female body. But I'm getting ahead of my story.

One of my friends recommended *Ate Guy* to me, praising her skill to the highest heavens. My friend said, "*Ate Guy*'s singular mission in life is to remove your *lamig* (cold). She's obsessed. She goes berserk when she finds *lamig* in your body. She'll not stop massaging you until the *lamig* is pulverized under her fingers."

With that glowing description, my wife and I contracted her services.

By the way, let me educate my non-Filipino readers. *Lamig* means cold, but it means more than that. Sometimes, it's also called *hangin* or air. When Asians get sick, we say we have *lamig* or *hangin* in our bodies. It doesn't jive with modern medicine, but this belief has lived on for centuries. In fact, it's not uncommon that when you get massaged using this traditional method, you *dighay* and *diglo* a lot. Translation: *Dighay* is burp. *Diglo* is butt burp.

At the agreed time, *Ate Guy* came to our house.

The Torment Begins

I studied *Ate* Guy.

She was 4'11"! Mid-30s. Bordering on thin. Girlish ponytail.

Pretty harmless, I thought to myself.

My wife placed a mattress on the floor of our living room and lay down. She wanted to go first. As *Ate* Guy started massaging her, I sat a few feet away, writing on my computer. I looked at Marowe's face: She was so relaxed. She appeared half-asleep. I got excited. I wanted to relax and sleep, too.

After two hours, my wife stood up and said, "That was great! Bo, it's your turn." Oh goody. I lay down and got ready to relax too.

Ate Guy knelt beside me and held my face.

Ahhhh. Pure bliss.

At least, for the first two seconds.

After that, it was pure torture.

Pure, unadulterated, CIA, KGB, Mafia, Yakuza, Al-Qaeda torture.

During her massage, I reached levels of pain I thought never existed in human experience.

Her little thumbs were like jack hammers. It was like a Sumo wrestler was massaging me.

As I lay on the mattress being massacred, I mean, being massaged by *Ate* Guy, I wondered if I had offended my friend who recommended her to me — that this was his way of revenge.

In the entire two hours, I groaned, "*Aray, aray, aray*" (ouch), the whole time.

Actually, I didn't want to groan. I wanted to scream, "*ARAAAAAAAY!*" But my neighbors might think someone was being raped.

My wife came up to me and with a sly smile asked, "Do you like it, Bo?"

I whispered to her, "I feel I'm being run over by a train again and again."

She laughed. I added, "Please call the US Embassy. Tell the ambassador I have the perfect person to send to their captured terrorists. Just two hours of *Ate* Guy and they'll confess where Osama Bin Laden is hiding."

Ate Guy Is Rich

After two hours of excruciating agony, it dawned on me that I had to pay *Ate* Guy for almost killing me. We live in a crazy world, I tell you.

My wife asked her how much we owed her.

Ate Guy said, "P250 an hour."

Two hours for her and two hours for me. So we paid a thousand bucks for four hours of torment.

I wondered. How much does this little woman earn a month?

I asked her, "*Ate* Guy, how many prisoners, I mean, customers do you massage every day?" She answered, "An average of four to five a day." I learned that she massages every single day. No days off.

"Isn't that tiring?" I asked her. "That's 10 hours a day."

"I like it that way," she said, "If I don't massage anyone, my body looks for it."

Aha! I knew it. She was a closet sadist.

"Do you advertise your services?"

"No. My customers just recommend me to others."

"I'll recommend you to others, too," I said. I started thinking of all the people who owed me money. "But you mean to tell me every single day of your week is full?"

“Yes,” she said. “Because I’ve got *mga suki* (regular customers). Some even want me to massage them three times a week.”

“Three times a week?” I almost fell off my chair. These people need to see a psychiatrist.

That was when it all hit me: *Ate Guy* told me she was a former house helper who earned P3000 a month. Today, she takes home P50,000 to P60,000 a month. Much more than many managers I know.

No doubt about it.

Ate Guy is a Superstar.

Be a Niche Superstar

How much do other masseuses earn? More or less P10,000 a month.

Why does *Ate Guy* earn five times more? Because she stands out.

She’s dominated her niche: The niche of torture camouflaging as a massage.

Other massagers try to please everybody. They’re average. They’re typical. They’re all alike. They’re forgettable.

Not *Ate Guy*.

You either like her or hate her.

Fortunately, there are enough insane people in this world who like her to make her a Superstar. My wife is one of them. She invited her back. I’ve already noted the date of her return — and I’ve arranged to be as far as possible from my house on that day.

You, too, need to find a way to become a Superstar.

But first, let me describe how problems create the phenomenon called Superstars.

Why Problems Create Scarcity, And Scarcity Creates Superstars

When I taught this message, I placed a number of ladders on the stage. I told the audience that life offers many ladders to climb. And that ladders represent opportunities for growth.

A superstar is a person who's able to climb to the top of a ladder.

Do you have problems in your work or business? Each problem is like a step on the ladder. Each problem is an invitation to become a superstar. Superstars are superstars because they can solve problems.

That's why I say problems are wonderful. Without problems, there will be no superstars. (I wish to thank the brilliant Seth Godin for these insights.)

Example? Imagine that you and I can pick diamonds in our backyards.

Would you and I be wealthy? Of course not. In fact, women will stop wearing diamonds, period. Why? Diamonds are superstars precisely because they're scarce. If they're no longer scarce, why bother?

Diamonds are scarce because of the problem of getting them. You have to build underground tunnels and excavate them from beneath the earth.

Think now of the many problems of becoming a great singer, a great artist, a great chef, a great businessman, a great priest, a great father and a great mother.

Problems create scarcity. And scarcity creates superstars. Here are the reasons why you need to be a superstar...

The Rewards of Superstars

People go to superstars.

People watch superstar movies.

People read superstar books.

People eat in superstar restaurants.

Let me ask you: When you see an empty restaurant with two waiters sleeping on the tables, would you go there? Not likely. Something in your brain says, “The food there must be awful.”

But when you see a restaurant filled with people, with a long waiting line outside, you’ll say, “Gosh, I better try that restaurant.”

Before you think that this chapter is just about money, let me also say that superstars are more emotionally fulfilled. They feel they’ve found their place in the world. They feel they’ve found their mission in life.

And superstars can serve God with more impact.

Do you want to become a superstar?

Read on.

Superstars Have Skill and Spirit

To become a superstar, you need Skill and Spirit.

For example, *Ate* Guy studied for six months in a technical school. Not satisfied with that, she enrolled again in another school on specialized massage for two months. But her most important education is massaging almost 60 hours a week — year after year after year.

But what made her develop her skill? Spirit.

When you really think about it, superstars are a little bit crazy.

Superstars are obsessed!

At the end of the day, it's Spirit. Passion. Fire. Love. In Japanese, they call this *otaku*.

For example, *Ate* Guy hates *lamig** with an almost neurotic obsession.

Once, *Ate* Guy had a patient whose *lamig* was stubborn. She ended up massaging this man for four hours straight — free of charge — until she got rid of his *lamig*. I pity the man. He probably became a paraplegic.

But no wonder *Ate* Guy is a superstar. Only people with spirit do those crazy things.

Let me give you an example from my life.

These past five days, I had 14 meetings. But despite that hectic schedule, I was still able to write eight long articles. How did I do it? There's only one answer: I'm crazy. I love writing. I love crafting words.

How much do I love writing?

Others get high on drugs. I get a high choosing the right adjective for a sentence. I'm nuts!

Why Do People Not Become Superstars?

I've met people who aren't superstars *even when they could have been*.

They could have been superstars in their businesses.

They could have been superstars in their careers.

They could have been superstars in their service for God.

But they're not.

Why?

I see three reasons.

* Muscle constriction due to cold weather

1. Wrong Theology

Some people think that God wants them to remain small.

God wants them to remain insignificant.

God wants them to remain humble (a distorted definition).

Their religion tells them, “Don’t stand out. Don’t create waves. Just follow. Just obey. Just be quiet.”

Please. Throw that rubbish way.

Go ahead. Stand out! Create waves. Be the best that you can be!

Use the core gifts that God gave you and develop them to the hilt.

Because your God will be proud.

How do I know? I’m a dad of two boys.

When I see my kids show their Superstar qualities, I get giddy with joy. My heart palpitates. My chest expands. I feel delirious.

Here’s my theology: *You owe it to your Maker to become a Superstar.*⁵

Because when you become a superstar, you’re praising the One who made you.

Here’s the second reason...

2. Wrong Psychology

Some people believe they deserve to be small.

Some people believe they deserve to be failures.

Perhaps because their parents treated them as dirt and not as stars.

Or they had some other past trauma.

⁵Colossians 3:23-24 — *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*

Friends, be aware of this inner programming and reboot!

Get a new internal software!

You deserve to be a superstar because you already are one.

You're made in His image.

God created superstars. Get used to it!

Finally, the third reason.

3. Wrong Strategy

People fail to become superstars because they climb the wrong ladder.

Let me shock you: If a ladder will not make you a superstar, quit.

If you have no hope of reaching the top of that ladder, get off that ladder.

Why? Because you'll always be mediocre. You'll always be average. And in business, average is death. In jobs, average means you'll be the first one to be retrenched. Even in relationships, average is risky. To be good enough is not enough.

You've got to be remarkable. You've got to be phenomenal.

Choose a ladder where you have Spirit and Skill to make you a superstar.

This is just what Rex Robillos did.

Climb the Right Ladder

My friend Rex owns Buns and Pizza, a fast-food chain. Rex already knew he couldn't fight Jollibee. Why climb this ladder where the chance of success was almost zero? Why not

climb another ladder where the chances of success are bigger?

Here's what Rex did: He made Buns and Pizza the superstar in secondary towns where there was no Jollibee. In these smaller, more far-flung places, Buns and Pizza was king. It's usually the only air-conditioned fast-food restaurant in the area. This is where the children of the mayor hang out. He dominated this niche. After only five years, Buns and Pizza now operates 139 branches in the Philippines.

If you're average, it's time to quit.

Be a Superstar in One Thing

Years ago, I was climbing the wrong ladder.

Because of this, earning money was like pulling teeth out of the mouth of the universe. I had to struggle for every peso I earned. It was as though money didn't like me — so I had to drag it with me by force.

My food businesses, which I was so excited about at the start, were collapsing.

My hotdog stand, my ice cream store and squid ball kiosk were all drowning in red ink. Money was flowing out from my hand like water from a broken faucet.

During those dark days, I wondered if I made a mistake in becoming an entrepreneur. I began to doubt my desire to become wealthy. Was this really from God? Perhaps this was God telling me to stop. Perhaps I should have just remained a preacher and kept begging for money whenever I needed it.

But in those agonizing moments, I went deep into my heart and listened.

There was chaos outside, like a signal number 8 typhoon.

But in my heart, I found peace.

Somehow, I *knew* I was doing the right thing.

I was simply climbing the wrong ladder.

That no matter what I did, I'll always be average in the food business.

Because I didn't have *spirit* and *skill* in the food business.

Instead, my passion and gifts were in communication — speaking and writing.

So I closed all my food stores.

Today, my businesses are doing so well because they revolve around communication.

Live to the Max

Friends, the world needs Superstars.

You owe it to the universe to become one.

No one benefits if you play small.

You only live once.

So go full throttle.

Live to the max!

When you do that, you'll enjoy a taste of heaven on earth.



Chapter Five

How to Enjoy Heaven on Earth

I'm living the dream life.

One day, a lady interviewed me for a magazine article. She asked, "Bo, if you had an opportunity to live your life all over again, would you live your life in any other way?" I told her, "Except for my sins, I wouldn't change a single thing. I would still serve God with my life."

Why? Because I've experienced the rewards of service. The Bible says, "And anyone who gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward."⁶

Friends, heaven and hell start here.

God promised rewards. And it will happen.

If you serve, you experience heaven here.

If you don't serve, you experience hell here.

What are the rewards of service? I know I could cite 2,486 examples, but, for lack of space, let me just share three with you:

1. I have so much love in my life.
2. I've grown in my talents.
3. I've protected my spiritual life.

Let me explain...

⁶ *Matthew 10:42*

1. I Have So Much Love in My Life

My friends are the greatest.

Just look at the guys who lead Light of Jesus Family with me. You'll notice that most of them have been with me for 30 years. (I've dedicated this book to them.) Look at the second line of leaders. You'll notice that they've been serving with me for 20 years.

Why do I have these phenomenal friends in my life?

Because we don't just serve God — we serve each other in personal ways.

I repeat: Service is not a set of activities; service is a way of life.

Serving each other means calling each other, doing stuff for each other and praying for each other. We take trips together; we eat together; we laugh together.

We serve each other. That, in one line, is the secret of maintaining the unity of a church or ministry. If you see an organization whose leaders are serving God but not serving each another in personal relationships, mark my words, it won't be long before you see a major split in that organization. Guaranteed.

If you want to fill your life with love, learn to serve.

2. I Grew in My Talents

Yes, I grew in my giftedness.

I started serving when I was 12 years old.

I sang in the choir. I played the guitar. I wrote the song lyrics on Manila paper. (Kids, this was during a prehistoric era when there was no LCD projector yet.) I arranged the chairs. I swept the floor. I cleaned the toilets. Even if I was the speaker, I still had to carry the loud speakers.

For 20 years, almost every day, I would preach to anyone. You name it, I have preached to them. I've preached

to kids, teachers, farmers, executives, prisoners, doctors, judges.... The only audience I haven't preached to are green aliens from outer space. (Perhaps one day.)

Believe me, it was the best public speaking training anyone could ever have!

For 20 years, I served without charge, not knowing that I was being paid in another way...

Because I grew in self-confidence.

I grew in leadership skills.

I grew in relationship skills.

I grew so much in my personal life that by the time I got married at the age of 32 and needed to earn money and start businesses, it was easy. Why? I had all those fantastic skills under my belt.

Listen carefully: *If you want to grow your wealth, you've got to grow you.*

There's no other way.

3. I Protected My Spiritual Life

My service kept me godly.

When I was 21 years old, I had an experience I'll never forget. This was a time when I was still young and irresistible. (Now, I'm just irresistible to my wife.)

I was alone in my office when I heard a knock on the door. When I opened it, I saw a young beautiful woman crying in front of me. She asked if she could speak to me. She said she was in so much pain. So I let her in. (At that time, I still didn't know that men shouldn't counsel attractive young women alone.)

Through much sobbing, she told me about her boyfriend. She told me how he was using her. She told me she had given her body to him and how she regretted it.

As I listened to her story, without warning, she threw herself to me. She knelt in front of me and embraced me. With

her head on my chest and her lovely eyes looking at me, she said, “Bo, you’re really the man I want for my life. I love you, Bo!”

Picture this scene. Here was this gorgeous young woman throwing herself at my feet, telling me she loved me. I could feel her supple body and soft skin. I could smell her sweet scent. I could touch her beautiful hair. At that point, she was putty in my hands and I could do anything I wanted to do with her.

I want to be honest with you. At that moment, I almost forgot I was a Christian. But as ridiculous as this may sound, there was one thing I didn’t forget: *that I had to give a talk in a prayer meeting in two hours!*

That’s what saved me. My thoughts were, “My gosh, how could I face my audience if I did something naughty right now?”

So I pulled her up and led her to the door. She couldn’t understand why I was driving her out. Two times she tried to embrace me again, begging me to love her.

I literally had to push her out the door.

Let me tell you how human I was. After I pushed her out and closed the door, I leaned my back on the door and said, “*Sayang.*”⁷

But 20 years later, all I can say is, “Thank God, nothing happened!”

My service protected me from sin.

What can I say?

I’m a blessed man.



⁷ What a waste.

Chapter 6

Are You a Giver or a Taker?

She was nuts.

When I was a teenager preaching in small prayer groups all over the country, I'd see this woman sneak into the room — trying hard to conceal her face — carrying a mammoth of a tape recorder inside a white plastic bag over her shoulder.

And like clockwork, before I step down the pulpit, she'd sneak out and leave quietly, vanishing into thin air.

This woman would be present in every single one of my talks.

I can only imagine the lunacy of this woman. If she wasn't listening to me live, she was listening to me on tape.

So naturally, when I get home, I knock on my mother's door and say, "Mom, how many times do I have to tell you, stop doing that! You embarrass me!"

My mother would open the door and, with an innocent look that could win an Oscar, ask, "Huh? What are you talking about?"

But behind her, I could already hear my voice playing from her recorder.

"Mom, you're getting too proud," I said, "and that's pride just the same. Look at your room. It's a national museum of my talks, my articles, my photos..."

Mom said, "Bo, don't you know that God has given mothers an exception to that rule? Mothers can be very proud of their children."

“Where did you read that? Vatican III?”

“Go away now. I’m busy,” she said.

No doubt about it. My mother is the founder, chairman of the board, and chief executive officer of Bo’s Fans Club International.

Today, at 84 years old, she hasn’t changed.

Every Sunday, I preach three times at *The Feast*: 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 1 p.m.

Would you believe she attends all three sessions and listens to me preach every single time? Not content with that, before leaving the house on Sundays, she’ll first watch me preach at six in the morning on TV5.

And from Monday to Saturdays, she wakes up really early just to listen to me preach on Radio Veritas at five in the morning. And in the middle of the week, she’ll ask my sister to turn on the Internet so she can watch me at www.PreacherInBlueJeans.com.

Mom loves me. No doubt about it.

I also remember one thing about her.

Mothers Are Givers

We were a big family. Six kids.

And whenever there was a birthday or some other special event, we’d always have fried chicken.

Like all kids, we would fight for the drumstick. Because chickens — for some reason — only have two legs.

All those years growing up, I always thought that Mom’s favorite part of the chicken was the neck. Because every time we had fried chicken, she chose it.

Later on, I realized she chose that piece because no one wanted it.

Why? Because my mother was a giver.

I guess most mothers are givers. They'd rather starve as long as their kids are able to eat.

I love my Mom. I really do.

But I've resigned myself to this undeniable fact — that I'll never love my mother more than she loves me. It's impossible. She loves me so much. My heart is filled with love today because Mom and Dad loved me. I am who I am today because of that love.

I repeat: I think most mothers are givers.

My own wife is a giver, too.

Yes, she is the founder, chairman of the board, and chief executive officer of the Benedict and Francis Fans Club International — our two boys.

When Bene was a toddler, he drew a line for the first time. She screamed, almost in tears, "Bo, look at your son! He was able to draw a line! A line!"

That's the role of the mother and the father — to affirm, to inspire, to love.

Today, my wife homeschools our kids.

It's not easy. I'm so proud of my wife. She gives 100 percent of herself when she teaches our boys at home. Each morning, she wakes up early to prepare her lesson plans — for two little boys! She chooses the activities, prepares test papers and draws charts for them. She spreads out the paraphernalia needed — crayons, scissors, clay, blocks, gizmos.... Every day, she teaches our kids from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

No doubt about it. My wife is a giver.

I repeat: I believe most mothers are givers.

When they're not, bad things happen.

Why Many People Have Problems

I thought all mothers and fathers were givers. That's not true.

How did I find out?

In my 30 years of ministry, I've met people who have so much emotional baggage, so much hurt and violence in their hearts, that they've made terrible choices in life. Consequently, they have monstrous problems. They have addictions. They have really bad relationships.

And through the years, I've found out one common thing among most of them: Their parents weren't givers. They were takers.

Their mothers or their fathers were selfish people — thinking only of themselves, shouting at their kids, beating them up, verbally abusing them or abandoning them all together. When these children became adults, they made terrible choices in life, because they were so desperate for love — they had no anchor, no confidence and no inner peace.

Sometimes, the problem wasn't selfishness. Just ignorance.

"As a child," my friend said, "my mother gave me away to her older sister. Like I was a puppy." Most of these people, now adults, still wonder why they were given away. They have a big hole in their hearts that they desperately want to fill.

My friends, if your parents aren't givers, go to God. God is the Greatest Giver.

*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son.*⁸

Yes, God is the Founder, Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of *your* Fans Club International. He watches every step you make, listens to every word you say.

⁸ John 3:16

He loves you so much.

And He wants you to be a giver, too.

The Lifestyle of Giving

Do you want to receive anything?

More joy? More wisdom? More friends? More money?

Here's what you do: Give away that exact same thing that you want to receive.

Because that's how the universe works.

Whatever you give, you receive.⁹

Take the case of wisdom.

I give wisdom to people. I've written 15 books so far.

But between the author and the reader, who gains more wisdom? The reader reads the book once. But the author rewrites his book 10 times. Guess who remembers the truths more? Yes, I give wisdom. But I gain 10 times the wisdom I give away.

Or how about happiness?

Who are the happiest people in the world? Those who are able to *give* happiness to others.

That's just how God made the world. We receive what we give away.

Even money.

Instant Food

My friend Randy Borromeo has a lovely story to share about giving. Randy is our Feast preacher in Makati and the guy in charge of our media ministry.

Like me, Randy gave his life to God when he was 12 years old.

⁹ Luke 6:38 — "Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return."

He shared how, as a young kid, he started tithing or giving 10 percent of his allowance to God.

When he was a teenager, he recalled that life was hard. He had nine siblings. And one day, his helper *Aling* Esther said, "Randy, there's no food in the house."

Randy told her, "Pray to the Lord. God will provide."

So *Aling* Esther prayed, "Lord, give us four viands!"

Randy was shocked. "*Aling* Esther, why did you ask for four viands? One is enough!" He turned around and prayed, "Lord, you better answer her prayer. I don't want us to lose face."

A few minutes later, someone rang the doorbell.

Randy opened the gate and saw a woman carrying a tray of food. It was Mrs. Cabigao, their neighbor. "It's my birthday today! I hope you can use some food..."

Randy quickly counted the viands on the tray. There were four viands!

As the family gathered around the table, still mesmerized by how God blessed them, the doorbell rang again. When they opened the gate, it was Mrs. Cabigao again, this time bringing ice cream for everyone. God gave more than what they asked for.

Randy said, "Even if life was hard, I tithed. Because I saw that God cannot be out-given." And almost 30 years later, he continues to tithe. Whatever he gave, God gave back to him many times over.

Let me share with you one last story.

Be a Giver Until the End

One day, a woman was dying of cancer.

In a few days, she would celebrate her birthday. And deep in her heart, she knew it was the last birthday she'd ever have. But there was no bitterness or sadness.

So she called all her closest friends and invited them to a party. She told them the truth: “You better come,” she said, “because I think this will be my last birthday party.”

Her friends came and they had lots of laughter together.

After the meal, she brought them all to her living room.

She faced them and said, “For years, I was in the gathering phase of my life. Today, I’m no longer in that phase. I’m in the surrendering phase. As I’m about to depart this earth, I no longer need material things. I have only one need in my life now. I need to love. I need to love you. So before you go home, please allow me to love you...”

She then spread on the table all her most precious belongings — a favorite teacup, a lovely pitcher, a scarf, a warm jacket, a watch, a few pieces of jewelry...

She said to her friends, “Please bring one gift that you need. I don’t need any of them anymore. So that every time you use it, hold it or look at it, you’ll remember that I love you. It’ll be our connection.”

Many tears were shed in that party. But much laughter as well.

Six weeks later, this woman went to heaven.

She was a wise woman.

She gave until the last breath of her life.

She knew the language of heaven.



Chapter 7

The Embrace of Heaven

My last birthday was a blast.

I received 280 plus text messages and almost 600 emails — not counting greetings from Facebook, Multiply, Friendster, etc... On the day itself, I received phone calls from all over the world — Canada, Australia, Singapore...

And at our Sunday prayer gathering, The Feast, I probably received a thousand hugs! If we had more time, I would have embraced every single person there.

It felt so good to be loved! And so good to love.

And wherever you are right now, let me give you my “spiritual” hug, too.

Because the *embrace* is so important to my life.

Let me tell you why.

My Morning Prayer

Every morning, I tell God to embrace me.

I close my eyes, stretch my arms, smile a big smile, and say in Tagalog, “*Yakap naman, Lord.*”¹⁰ And I just stay there in that tight, warm, lingering embrace for a while. Believe me, it makes my day.

The embrace is my basic form of prayer. I love it so much, I even wrote a tiny prayer book entitled *Embraced*.

How did I learn to do this?

¹⁰ “Hug me, Lord.”

Blood in the Brain

Fourteen years ago, at 75 years old, my father was changing a light bulb in our garage. He stood on a chair for greater reach. He lost his balance and went crashing down. His head hit the concrete floor and blood spurted out like water from an open faucet.

Because of the impact, there was like a dripping faucet inside his brain as well. He had blood clots in his brain and he began to experience paralysis in his body. The gravest blow was severe pneumonia, an infection that developed after a few months of staying in the hospital. His lungs were filled with fluid and that was when the crisis hit.

My Last Embrace

On that fateful night, the doctor called us up, telling us to rush to the ICU because he could go anytime.

When I entered the room, I saw Dad hooked up to a respirator. At that point, he was only absorbing 20 percent of the oxygen they were pumping to him. A person doesn't last too long in that state.

I looked at Dad's hands and face, and they were bluish in color. I whispered to his ear, "I love you, Dad. If you see Jesus anywhere, just go with Him. It's OK."

That was when the miracle happened. He opened his eyes.

Then he did something that he had not done in the past 25 years. He raised his hands towards my face and clasped me on both cheeks. Then he brought me down towards him and gave me a hug.

My father gave me a hug.

My father was not the hugging type. He probably hugged me when I was a kid, some 20 plus years ago. But he

never hugged me as an adult.

A volcano of emotions erupted within me.

One moment, I was happy he was hugging me.

At the next, I was sad, knowing it may be his last embrace.

And the following second, I was angry. I wanted to ask, “Dad, why only now? Why didn’t you embrace me when you were stronger?” But truthfully, I was also angry at myself. I asked myself, “Why didn’t I hug him before?”

After a while, his arms collapsed on his side.

The Great Miracle

I took one step backward as the doctors and nurses attended to him.

After 15 minutes, the doctor faced me and gave me a surprise. He said, “Bo, you can go home now. Your father is out of critical danger. He’s better now.”

When I visited him the next day, Dad was even better. And he got better and better and better.

This was the great miracle in our lives. Dad was able to walk out of that hospital. And he lived for another 12 years!

Guess what we were doing during those 12 years?

We were hugging each other every day.

Sometimes, we’d meet in a mall. We wouldn’t care if there were thousands of people walking by us. We’d still hug each other.

Being hugged by my father — and feeling so loved by him — gave me an idea of how much my Heavenly Father wanted to embrace me.

Thus, it became my morning prayer — to get embraced by God.

Alas, many people don’t feel that embrace.

Let me now ask you a question.

A very big question.

Are You Afraid to Die?

Most people are.

Sometimes, people are afraid to die because they're leaving behind unfinished businesses in their world. Like kids. Or dreams. Or projects.

But that's just half of the story.

Most of the time, people are afraid to die because they have unfinished business in their *inner* world. I'm talking about stuff in their life that they know is wrong. Stuff called sin.

Sin is excess baggage that weighs down our souls.

It steals away our joy.

It robs us of our peace.

When you know you have but a few days to live, spontaneously you want to get rid of sin in your life.

First, you want to be forgiven.

Second, you don't want to sin anymore.

When you know you've washed your soul, then you're ready to die.

You're not afraid of death.

I don't speak from a book.

I share from experience.

I've Stood Beside a Lot of Deathbeds

For the past 30 years of ministry, I've stood beside many deathbeds. Many times, I've prayed over people who were in the last moments of life.

When it comes to death, I've realized that there are only two kinds of people: Those who are afraid to die. And those who are not afraid to die.

All classifications disappear. Rich. Poor. Educated. Not educated. When it comes to death, they're all the same. They're either afraid or not afraid to die.

I've noticed that when a person's heart is filled with love, he isn't afraid to die. But a person whose heart lacks love has great fear of death.

I've noticed that many of them weren't loved as children. Or they experienced traumas early in life, making them fearful people.

I've realized that behind all our minor fears is really The One Great Fear: the fear of death. If you fear rejection, you actually fear social death. If you fear heights, or sickness, or anything else in this world, you actually fear the loss of self — which is another word for death.

Here's what the Bible says: *Perfect love casts out all fear.*¹¹

I've noticed that people whose hearts are filled with God's love aren't afraid to die. They know death will bring them more of God and more of love.

The Biggest Question

A few weeks ago, I prayed over a woman on her deathbed.

As I put my hand over her arm, in a very weak voice, she asked me, "Brother Bo, where am I going when I die?"

It's a question that dying people ask. Except for atheists who don't believe in souls, everyone nearing death asks the question.

But that's precisely my message: *We're all a dying people.* Some today, some in 10 years, some in 50 years. We just don't know when. But it doesn't matter. We're all going to die.

So the question asked by that woman is important for us all: *Where am I going when I die?*

¹¹ 1 John 4:18

I answered her question with another question, “Why don’t we pray that God bring you to heaven?”

I held her hand and asked her to repeat after me. I let her ask for forgiveness from God for all her sins. I made her invite Jesus into her heart. Though it was difficult for her to speak, she repeated my prayer.

And I inserted my favorite prayer: “Lord, embrace me!”

When we finished, she had a smile on her face.

She was ready.

A few days later, she breathed her last.

She continued the Eternal Embrace that she began on earth.



Chapter 8

The Greatest Reward of Giving

Like any ordinary boy, my four-year-old Francis sometimes quarrels with his playmates. We hear him shout, “Mine! Mine! Mine!”

So for two years now, we’ve been teaching him how to share his toys. We’ve told him, “Francis, sharing is good!” It’s almost a mantra we repeat to him.

We also remind him of the rewards of sharing. “Francis, if you share your toys with your playmates, you’ll have more fun. You’ll gain more friends. You’ll cry less.”

Yesterday, my wife went with our little boy to eat. He ordered fried chicken and *palabok* (Filipino noodle). He then asked his mother, “How about you, Mommy?” My wife was touched, elated that the four-year-old was thinking of her. But then the little guy added, “Mommy, why don’t you order French fries? Then you can share it with me. Remember, sharing is good!”

Yes, sharing is good.

What I tell Francis applies to you, too: If you share, you’ll have more fun every day. You’ll gain more friends. And you’ll cry less! Because I believe many of our problems come from not sharing.

Friends, let me introduce you to one of the most powerful forces in the universe. This one thing will give you miracles, deepen your happiness, enrich your relationships, unite your family, prosper your job and business, make your

body healthier and bring you closer to God.

What could this force be?

Yesterday, I again welcomed this force into my life.

You Don't Receive Your Rewards Only Once!

Yesterday, I spent the afternoon playing with my boys.

We drew spaceships, airplanes and roller coasters. We played a video game. (Can you imagine me, a 43-year-old guy, playing *Mariocart* with his four-year-old kid? I'm nuts.) And finally, I brought Francis to the barbershop. We didn't have a car yesterday so we rode the tricycle together. Francis loved it so much. Every time we passed over a hump, he raised his arms and said, "Wheee!"

When we were in the barbershop, Francis had so much fun getting his haircut, making faces in the mirror, twirling in the barber's chair, laughing and singing the entire time. He was so happy.

But guess who was happier? The Daddy, of course.

Yesterday, I was generous with my time with the kids. Despite a mountain of work that I had to do (including this book), I put it all aside and spent time with the boys.

Instantly, I received the reward of my generosity. Just listening to the happy laughter of my kids was music to my soul. It made me feel wonderful. It removed my stress, made me healthier and refreshed my spirit.

Friends, there is an absolute law written in the fabric of the universe. It states, "When you give, you will receive a reward."¹² Always. No exceptions. Oh yes, there can be delays. Sometimes you'll have to wait for a long time. But the reward will always come.

And the Bible also says that we will receive *more* than what we give. Example: In the years to come, I know I'll

¹² Mark 4:24 — "In the measure you give, you shall receive, and more besides."

receive an even greater reward for spending time with my kids yesterday. Because they'll grow up to be men secure in their father's love.

It doesn't end there. In heaven, I'll receive even greater rewards. (More on this in the next chapter.)

Let me explain why you get rewards.

Too Full to Receive Anything Better

Once during my talk, I showed people a big fishbowl filled with ordinary grey stones. It was overflowing with them. I then showed some gold nuggets. (OK, they really weren't gold nuggets. They were stones covered with gold paper, but don't spoil my illustration. Imagine them to be real gold nuggets!)

Even if I wanted to put gold nuggets in the bowl, I couldn't, because it was already filled with stones.

This is a perfect picture of a selfish person.

God is a generous God. He wants to give us better things. But He can't do that if there's no space to receive new and better things in our lives.

I then removed one stone from the bowl. I explained to the audience that the first reward of giving is "space." And space is beautiful. Space means we can grow.

I placed one gold nugget in the bowl and explained, "Some people give only a little and so receive only a little. But there are people who give more," I explained, removing more grey stones from the bowl, "and thus create more space for God's new blessings." I quickly filled the bowl with more gold nuggets.

Remember, when we don't receive much, the problem is not with the Giver. The problem is with the Receiver. The Lord wants to give more in our lives (that's His default posture), but the Receiver has not created enough space to receive more.

And friends, the universe abhors space. The universe will fill up that space with better things.

But what if you don't get your rewards?

Real Generosity

One person asked me, "But Bo, I've been giving and giving and giving all my life — but I haven't been receiving my rewards!"

Perhaps because it may not be generosity at all.

You see, there are two types of giving that happens in the world.

1. When we give because we love.

2. When we give because we want to be loved.

Look. There's nothing wrong if you want to be loved. It's your most basic need. But friends, never use generosity as a way of getting love. That's toxic. You call that co-dependent love and it's lethal. Pleasing people so that they will love you is slow suicide.

If your "love tank" is empty, you need to do two things. First, allow God to love you. And second, love yourself. Unless you learn to be generous to yourself, your generosity will not be real.

My friend Mila (not her real name) was such a woman. She always gave gifts to her friends. Food. Clothes. Flowers. Sometimes, expensive stuff like cell phones and iPods. People would tell her, "Oh, you're so generous." But deep within, I know Mila is one of the most miserable people on earth. She's constantly depressed. Because she has no true friends. Her friends are there simply because she gives them stuff. People abuse her constantly, asking things from her.

Mila isn't receiving the rewards of her generosity because she's not really generous. She is needy.

When you give out of need, you will become even more

needy. But if you give out of love, you will receive more love.

Remember the bowl with grey stones? Mila gives away her white stones — creating space in her heart. But because she's giving out of need and fear and not out of love, misery and bitterness fill up that space she created.

I repeat: Real generosity is giving out of love, which fills our lives with more love.

And let me share with you the biggest reward of generosity.

The Greatest Reward of Giving

My friend and fellow preacher Arun Gogna just came from Japan. He met a Filipina there who told him a wonderful story.

Years ago, this Filipina married a Japanese man. Her husband was earning very well and asked her to manage his money. So every payday, he gave all of his money to her.

This Filipina loved God and wanted to follow Him in the area of giving. So she gave 10 percent of her husband's earnings to the Lord. When the husband — who was an atheist — found out about it, he asked her, "What are you doing with 10 percent of my salary?" She said, "I give it to my God." The amazing thing was that he didn't object at all. He let her be. So she continued to do it every single month.

Here's the great news: A few years later, this man converted and is now a baptized Catholic. Today, with his wife, he serves in a Church ministry in Japan.

What's so beautiful about this story? Even before he got baptized, he was already generous to a God that he didn't fully know.

My point?

Generosity brings you closer to God.

Let me tell you why.

Your Heart Follows Your Treasure

Last year, I bought stocks in Ayala Land.¹³

I noticed that whenever I read the newspaper, I would be very interested to read anything about Ayala Land. I would read their ads. I would ask people in the industry about what's happening to this company.

Before I bought stocks in this company, I didn't give a hoot. I didn't care. I didn't read their articles or their ads.

Why the change? Simple: The Bible says that my heart follows my treasure.¹⁴ Wherever my treasure goes, my heart will go there, too.

When your money goes to God, your heart goes to Him as well. Yes, even if He really doesn't need your money.

Tithing Is a Declaration of God's Importance in Your Life

God doesn't need your money.

But why is it that the Bible says over and over again, "Give the first fruits of your harvest to God"?¹⁵ Yes, God doesn't need your money, but God wants what your money represents. Money represents value. What do you value the most? When you make God your first expense, you're saying that God is first in your life.

Tithing is a declaration that all things — including your life — belong to God. The biblical standard of 10 percent is a fantastic guideline to follow. When you give 10 percent, you're saying that 100 percent belongs to God. Tithing is your declaration of God's ownership over your life. God gave to you all that you own. When you die, you'll give it all back. So all you have is lent to you. You're a steward of His assets. As

¹³ I borrowed this illustration from Rick Warren.

¹⁴ Matthew 6:21

¹⁵ Proverbs 3:9-10

stewards, you use material blessings for His purposes. That's what you declare when you tithe.

Friends, I invite you to give because you love.

Then receive the fantastic rewards of generosity.



Chapter 9

The Best Investment in the World

When I was a kid, I learned that my mother lived during the war. With great excitement, I asked her, “Did you meet Magellan and Lapu-lapu?”

I was disappointed when she said, “No, I’m not 450 years old.” So I asked, “Did you meet Jose Rizal and Andres Bonifacio?”

That’s when she explained to me that she didn’t live through World War I but World War II.

She’s 84 years old today and I grew up with her war stories.

I remember her stories about the Japanese peso.

“When the Japanese came, they printed their own money,” she said. “Eventually, we all got used to them. But after many months, the Japanese peso began to lose its value. Soon, everyone called it Mickey Mouse money. It became play money.”

“Why?” I asked.

“Because of the rumors that the Americans were coming back. You won’t believe me, but when we heard over the radio that the American planes were coming, I remember how I had to bring a *bayong* of Japanese money to the market to buy a *bayong* of food. One duck egg cost P75...”

Here's a photo of the Japanese money at the start of the war...



Two years later, they had to print 1000 bills to cope with inflation.



My friend, *Nanay* Coring, the founder of National Bookstore, also lived during the war. She, too, was a young woman when the war broke out. But unlike my mother, she had business savvy.

With her Japanese money, she bought goods that could be stored until the war ended. Early in the war, she foresaw what was going to happen. So she converted all her Japanese money to another currency — goods and inventory.

One day, a Japanese officer walked to her little store and asked if she wanted a warehouse filled with whisky. She said, “Yes, I’ll buy it,” not knowing where she’d get the money. She gathered as much Japanese money as she could find and

bought the entire stock. When the US soldiers came, she sold every bottle to the Americans who paid her in US dollars.

On the contrary, Mom didn't do anything. She kept her Japanese money in her *bayong*. When the Americans came, the money was just good for burning because it had become useless.

No wonder *Nanay* Coring now owns 157 branches of National Bookstore all over the country while my mother runs a tiny bookshop in her house!

Why am I sharing this with you?

Question: Are You Business-Wise?

When you die, all the money you hold becomes Mickey Mouse money. All. The dollars, the euros, the yen, the yuan, the peso...

You know that.

But are you doing something about it?

You need to be business-wise like *Nanay* Coring.

You need to start converting your material wealth into eternal wealth. How? Start giving generously to God and to the poor.¹⁶

Giving to God isn't just a spiritual thing. At the end of the day, it's also the wisest, most practical thing to do. It makes all the business sense in the world.

I know of a lot of very rich businessmen who aren't giving to God or to others. So their wealth will be very short-lived. It will only last until their life on earth.

I strongly suggest you convert your worldly money to the only currency that heaven will accept. Heaven has only one currency: love. Loving God and others is really the only thing you can bring with you when you die.

Read carefully what Jesus says. You'll be shocked:

¹⁶ Luke 12:33 — "Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys."

*Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. **But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven**, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*¹⁷

Wow. Can you believe it?

It's actually possible to exchange what you have for the currency of your future home. While on planet earth, you can actually store great treasure in heaven.

That's why I believe generosity is the wisest, the best, the most perfect investment in the world.

How Much Is Your Balance?

Let me ask you a very important question: *How much of your worldly wealth have you used to create your heavenly wealth?*

How much investments have you already “wired” to heaven?

When you put your money in the bank, the bank gives you a bank book. There, you find a history of your deposits. If heaven issued you a “bank book,” how much deposits have you already made so far?

In other words, how much have you loved?

How much have you served?

How much have you used your material wealth to give love?

¹⁷ Matthew 6: 19-21

¹⁸ Philippians 4:16-17 — For even in Thessalonica you sent [me contributions] for my needs, not only once but a second time. Not that I seek or am eager for [your] gift, but I do seek and am eager for the fruit which increases to your credit [the harvest of blessing that is accumulating to your account].

But Let Me Clarify: It's Building Heaven on Planet Earth!

Warning: What I'll say next will be hard to swallow.

So chew on it. This is definitely not milk for those starting in the spiritual journey, but solid food for the mature.

I've met Christians whose only goal in life is to go to heaven. Their only concern is to guarantee a heavenly visa. To them, this is what salvation is all about. Nothing else.

Friends, I want you to outgrow that attitude.

Because I don't believe this is the point of Christianity.

Think with me: Today, there are 25,000 children who die every single day because of poverty and hunger — and all we can think of is our personal heaven? Today, there are many people around us who are starving for God's love — and all we can think of is our personal heaven?

Jesus didn't call you to be His disciple just so you can go to heaven *only*. Jesus called you to be His disciple so that you can bring heaven down to earth, specifically to those who are in "hell" right now because of their material, emotional and spiritual poverty. Jesus called you to be His disciple to love the way He did. Jesus died on the Cross so that you, too, can die for others.

So what am I saying?

Every time you're generous because of love, you transfer your wealth to a particular heaven *that starts now*, right here on planet earth. And it's not a personal heaven, but a heaven for others.

I've got one last thing to say...

Among These Five, Who Are You?

When it comes to managing money, there are five kinds of people in this world. Who are you?

#1: Gloria Gastadora:

Gloria Gastadora lives on 100 percent of her income. Sometimes, when she borrows money, she lives on 120 percent of her income. She's never absent during midnight sales. Her credit cards are faded due to overuse. Even if she wants to give to God or invest in her future, she cannot. Obviously, after all is spent, she has nothing to give to God except her loose change. In church, Gloria Gastadora isn't a tither but a tipper.

#2: Kunat Kuripot:

Kunat is a frugal and fearful fellow. He lives on 80 percent of his income, because he saves 20 percent or more for his future. He lives in fear. He feels safe only when he knows he's got lots of money in the bank. It really seems safe, except that he doesn't know that putting his life savings in the bank isn't such a wise idea at all. When he retires, Kunat will realize that his savings isn't enough. And like Gloria Gastadora, Kunat Kuripot can only give his spare change to God — because he's always afraid of his future.

#3: Bertong Bulag:

As a kid, Berto was a financial whiz. Upon graduating college, he had already opened a mutual fund account. He also started investing in a blue chip company in the stock market, putting small amounts of money every month. He also started a business and it has done very well. Berto has become wealthy. The problem is that he still cannot give to God because he sees it as an expense, like it was a luxury he can't afford. He doesn't realize that giving to God is also an investment — the most secure and long-term investment of them all.

#4: Wally Waldas:

Wally has no problem giving to others. He is very generous to others but he isn't generous to himself. Because he doesn't invest for the future. Wally just likes giving his money away to people who end up abusing him. His close friends tell him that his giving is no longer helping others because they have become parasites. But he's blinded by his need for their attention. Wally, in the long run, cannot even give to God because his money will be long gone.

#5: Manny Mapagmahal:

Manny gives to God, gives to others and gives to himself. After receiving his income, the first thing he does is set aside 10 percent to God. The second thing he does is set aside 20 percent to put in investment vehicles — such as funds, stocks, businesses and real estate. He also has set aside an emergency fund — three to six months of his salary in the bank. The third thing he does is limit his expenses to 70 percent of his income.

Today, Manny is prosperous. He now gives 20 percent to God, invests 30 percent and lives on 50 percent of his income. In his old age, he'll continue to be even more generous.

Among these five people, who are you?



Chapter 10

A Life of Abundance

I'm terrible when it comes to picking gifts for my wife. The first gift I gave her was a dress.

When I saw it, I thought it was beautiful. But when I gave it to her, I learned again the truth that beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Because she said, "Oh, Bo, I love you for giving me a dress. Thank you so much. But I suggest you stick to preaching. Your fashion sense is awful."

I pouted, "You mean you won't wear the dress?"

She smiled. "If I become suddenly suicidal, perhaps. In other words, I won't be caught alive wearing that thing."

But last month, I hit the jackpot. I finally got her a birthday gift she really adored.

I bought her a book. But it was no ordinary book.

It was a gigantic 1,000-page book containing beautiful, stunning pictures of the most gorgeous places all over the world. She loved the book because I wrote on the first page, "Sweets, when our kids are grown up, I'll bring you to these places."

She loved the book because it wasn't just a book. It was a promise. I promised, "I'll grow old with you. I'll stay with you forever. I'll love you forever." Because I wasn't really giving a book. I was really giving myself.

My marriage is abundant because these past 11 years, I've been giving my time, effort, attention and energy to my marriage.

Here's what I learned: Life is not one bucket.

Life Is a Collection of Buckets

You can't expect abundance in one bucket when you're giving into another bucket.

Some religious people think that if they give their time to their religious bucket, their family life will be abundant too. That won't happen.

I've met a lot of religious people who are always in church, attending their religious activities, but they don't give their time, attention and energy to their family life. Thus, their family life is empty. They complain to God, "Lord, I gave my time to You! Why is my marriage suffering? Why is my relationship with my kids suffering?"

Simple. Because life is not one bucket but a collection of buckets. If you want to harvest abundance in a particular area of your life, you have to plant *in that specific bucket*.

Remember: Jesus said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God...."¹⁹ If God is first, then there must be a second, a third, a fourth...

Some people think God wants them to give all their time to Him and be in church all the time and serve in ministries — neglecting their jobs, businesses and families. They reason, "Because if I put God first, God will take care of all these anyway."

Not really.

Even Money

I met a woman recently who said, "Bo, for the past 22 years, I was serving in church full-time. Without a salary. Today, I'm 54, and I just realized I have no money for my old age. So I'm catching up, starting a small business and investing for the future."

¹⁹ Matthew 6:33

In between the lines, I could tell that she was asking, “Lord, why didn’t you take care of me financially? I gave my life to you.”

Many preachers I know simply tell people to give 10 percent to God. I’m one of the few preachers who tell people to give 10 percent to God (as a guide, not as a law) and also give 20 percent to their future in the form of paper assets, businesses, real estate, etc. Why? So that they can keep giving to God in their old age.

Let me state this again: I believe that God blesses us when we are generous to Him.²⁰

But because we lack financial wisdom, many spiritual people simply consume all of His financial blessings. They spend it all instead of setting aside a portion and investing it for their future.

If you want abundance in your finances, you need to give more time, effort and energy into your financial bucket. Grow in financial wisdom, learn new skills, read financial books, attend financial seminars and get financial mentors.

So you see, financial abundance is much more than giving to your spiritual bucket. If you want to grow your money, you need to give to your financial bucket as well.

Where Do You Want to Have Abundance?

Here’s my question.

What bucket of life do you want to experience God’s blessings and abundance? Here’s another way of asking this question: Which bucket in your life is empty or lacking today?

Give to that *specific* bucket!

- If you want abundance in your “marriage bucket,”

²⁰ Malachi 3:10 — *Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. “Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.”*

- give time and attention and love to your spouse.
- If you want abundance in your “family bucket,” give more time and energy and patience to your children.
 - If you want abundance in your “financial bucket,” give time to learn and invest in your financial future.
 - If you want abundance in your “spiritual bucket,” give your time, your service and your tithes to God.

Season of Delay

Here’s my belief: When you give, you receive.

I’ve said this before and I’ll say it again. This is a law in our universe. You’ll even receive much more than what you gave. This is as sure as the sun rising tomorrow. This is 100 percent guaranteed.

Here’s the great mystery of life: When you give, you don’t lose. You gain.

People don’t see this.

Why? Because between our giving and our receiving, there is a *delay*. If you want to receive the blessings of your giving, you need to be patient during the season of delay.

People expect instant returns.

But the greatest things in life — a great marriage, a strong family, a happy friendship, financial freedom and godly character — don’t happen instantly.

When you plant, you don’t harvest right away. You have to enter into a season of delay.

So what do you do while you wait?

Keep on giving.

Why Giving to God Is Crucial

Giving to God will train you to give in the other areas of your life. Personally, I don’t believe that tithing is a law for Christians. (Sorry, too long to explain.) But tithing is a

great guideline and a fantastic training tool for greater giving. Because the first blessing of giving to God is not abundance but an abundance mentality. Without an abundance mentality, it'll be difficult to receive abundance in every area of life.

I have a conspiracy theory.

I believe that the entire physical and spiritual universe around you is conspiring, plotting and conniving to give you massive abundance.

One of the most difficult things to overcome is a scarcity mentality. That there's a limited amount of blessings in the world.

God is an abundant God, not a God of scarcity.

Today, I meet many people trapped in mediocrity and stagnation because of their scarcity mentality. They think that God wants them to stay small, live small and be small.

I've met spiritual people who believe they should be poor.

I've met good people who believe they should always remain in hardship because they are good people.

I was like this for almost 20 years of my life.

But when I was 30 years old, I changed my thinking. I decided I wanted to become a millionaire missionary. It was crazy but I believed it was possible.

Today, I'm still a missionary. I run nine non-profit organizations, doing beautiful work in the world. Only one pays me a salary. I can do that because I earn through my small businesses and other investments.

I've broken out of that scarcity mentality.

I believe God wants abundance for my life.²¹

And I believe God wants abundance for *your* life, too.

Have you ever met a parent who has a secret desire that their children suffer? Parents who pray, "Lord, please make

²¹ John 10:10 — "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

my kids poor?"

I doubt it. There are a few deranged parents out there, but a normal father and mother would want the best for their children.

God wants abundance for your life.

No, it's not primarily money. Abundance is primarily about love. But I believe it includes money — but only so that we can love!

Make Do with My Imperfect Love

Last week, someone told me, "Bo, you're so selfless."
"No," I told her, "I'm a selfish person."

I really am. I know myself!

But at least, I'm trying to love every day of my life.
Every morning, I pray, "Lord, help me to love the people you will send to my path."

Before writing this chapter, I imagined you reading it and I prayed for you. Yes, I love you! My love is very imperfect but you'll have to make do with this imperfect love. This is all that I can offer you.

For the past 30 years, I've been trying to love people with this imperfect love. Let me share with you the five ministries for the poor that I've been involved in.

And it's true. When I gave love, I received so much love. That's been my experience.

Here are the five ministries where I have received so much love:

- **Anawim:** We've picked up 60 abandoned elderly from the streets and are giving them a loving home. We love and care for them until God calls them home.
- **Tahanan ng Pagmamahal:** Led by my friend Rey Ortega, we house 18 orphans in a small home in Pasig.
- **Pag-asa ng Pamilya:** Also led by Rey, we now send

95 poor children to school. For the past 30 years, this ministry has helped graduate hundreds of scholars who are now helping their families.

- **Grace to Be Born:** We counsel pregnant women in crisis who are considering abortion or are being forced to abort their babies. We provide a temporary shelter for them until they give birth. We also care for abandoned babies and facilitate adoption.
- **He Cares Foundation:** Led by my friend Jodean Sola, He Cares Foundation sends 240 streetkids to school and feeds 300 plus of them every week. This ministry also runs a microlending program in six slum areas. We also built a village with 120 plus homes.

Love abundantly.

And receive love abundantly as well.²²



²² I invite you to join me in our ministries. Join us. Help out. Or simply drop by our Feasts. If you don't live in Manila, you can still join me. Log on to www.KerygmaFamily.com and be my partner and support the work of God. You'll be blessed.

Chapter 11

Want More Miracles? Be Generous

This happened some 20 years ago.

One day, I discovered I only had P9,000 left in my savings, tucked safely in my desk drawer. Aside from that, I had P700 in my wallet. That was it. My entire net worth. The total sum of my wealth! I was the poorest “Chairman of the Board” this universe has ever known. (I was chairman of two ministry organizations.)

At about nine that morning, a friend called up and told me that her daughter was in the hospital and that she needed P9000, pronto!

I wanted to ask her, “Are you sure it’s not P9700?”

I closed my eyes and asked God what to do. And as clear as daylight, I felt He told me in my heart, “Give it to her.”

So I told my friend as cheerfully as I could, “Pick up your money here,” hiding my anxiety. At the back of my mind, I was already imagining the morbid consequences of my decision. Living with only P700 in my wallet meant not eating my favorite pizza.

A few minutes later, another friend barged through our front door, weeping about her family problems. It ended with

her very nervous plea, “Bo, can you give me P500?”

I started laughing. “Not P700?”

She shook her head, baffled at my question. I pulled out my wallet and gave her P500. (When you have a very thin wallet, that simple act is very difficult to do!) But as I did that, a small crumpled, folded paper popped out of my wallet. I picked it up and couldn’t believe my eyes: It was another P500!

Where in the world did that come from? Suddenly, I felt God was telling me it was “miracle” time.

In my excitement, I wanted to get my P9000 ready to be given away. (Who knows what will pop out as I did that?)

I went to my room and grabbed the wad of paper bills from my drawer — and shoved it into an envelope. But before sealing it, I thought of recounting the cash.

I counted, “One thousand... two thousand... three thousand... four thousand...” I began to cry when I counted, “ten thousand... eleven thousand... twelve thousand... thirteen thousand... fourteen thousand... fifteen thousand!”

To this day, I don’t know where that extra money came from. Perhaps I counted it wrong the first time. But whatever the reason, it really doesn’t matter. What I knew was God was telling me a very simple message, a message that I still bring in my heart to this day: “When I give, God will take care of me.”

I knelt down and said, “Thank you, Lord. You still want me to eat pizza.”

The Universe Is a Giant Mirror

I’ve never forgotten that lesson in my life.

Life is a mirror. If I smile at the mirror, the mirror will smile back at me. If I frown, the mirror will frown back. I don’t know about you but I’ll be very worried if I smile at the

mirror and the mirror frowns back. Heebiejeebies.

The universe operates like a giant mirror. What I give, I receive. Most of what happens to me is simply a reflection of what I've been giving to the universe.

People ask me why my life is so profoundly blessed. One reason is because I've been giving.

I remember one old story I'd like to share with you.

Trip to Jerusalem

When I was 16 years old, I won a trip to Jerusalem from a Bible quiz on national TV. Not the "Trip to Jerusalem" where kids circle around chairs. (That's how Filipinos call the game "musical chairs.") I really won a trip to Israel.

It was the first time I was going to travel, and I was going to travel all by myself for 41 days, visiting 20 cities all over Europe.

Obviously, as a 16-year-old backpacker, I was scared and excited at the same time. My mother sewed a hidden pouch on my socks and inserted my dollars there. Because they were very few. Her instructions to me: "Don't stay in hotels; stay in convents. Don't eat in restaurants; buy your food and eat on park benches."

My first stopover was Athens, Greece.

I sat in the airport, waiting for my flight to Israel, when a somewhat plumpish woman (OK, she was really plump) came walking towards me carrying two huge suitcases.

I ran to help out. I said, "Madame, can I help carry your things?"

She didn't understand a word I said.

I knew a little Spanish, so I asked, "*Puedo levar stus cosas?*"

She also didn't understand.

Being Charismatic, I was tempted to speak in tongues

but decided against it. Instead, I used the universal language.

I held up my hands as though I was carrying two suitcases.

Immediately, she understood. She handed me her suitcases, thinking perhaps I was a porter.

I then moved my hand like it were a plane, made the “whoooo” sound, and said, “Jerusalem.”

Her face lit up. She did the hand action of a plane, the “whoooo” sound of a plane, and said, “Jerusalem!” We were going to the same place.

We walked to the airline counter. I gave my ticket and the kindly gentleman gave me my boarding pass. I was ready to fly.

It was the woman’s turn. She handed her ticket with a smile. The man read her ticket, shook his head and said, “I’m sorry, Ma’am, this is an invalid ticket. You can’t ride this plane.”

“Buy Her a Ticket!”

She couldn’t understand him.

They had to get a translator, what language I have no idea, to tell her that she had to buy a new ticket if she wanted to fly.

Tearfully, she told them that she had no money. And that this was a stopover for her, too, so she was stranded. The men behind the counter raised their hands in surrender, telling her they couldn’t do anything about it.

She took her suitcases from me. She walked to a corner of the airport, sat down and wept loudly.

I watched her from the distance. How could I leave her like this? But what could a 16-year-old kid do?

So I prayed, "Lord, what do you want me to do?"

I learned then that that is a very dangerous question to ask. Don't ask it flippantly.

Because in my heart, I felt God tell me, "Buy her a ticket." It was absolutely nuts! Didn't He know that my dollars were in my socks?

I walked up to the counter guy and asked, "How much is a ticket to Israel?" He said, "\$256."

Gulp.

But I knew in my heart that I had to do it.

A Miracle Happens

I walked up to the weeping lady.

Through sign language, I told her I was going to buy her a ticket. (I tapped my back pocket and did my plane hand action again.) She understood me immediately. She literally jumped for joy and hugged me. I disappeared in her embrace.

Gently, I brought her down. I checked for broken bones and found none. We both walked to the counter.

"Sir," I announced, "I'm buying a plane ticket for this lady."

The man gasped. He asked, "Do you know her?"

"No, I don't. I just met her here."

He shook his head. "Are you rich?"

I smiled. "No. But my Father is rich!"

He didn't want to sell me a ticket. He called his big boss. In a few minutes, the man marched in and they both argued about our situation.

Finally, when our flight was about to leave, I thought I heard the big boss sigh in exasperation before saying, "OK. Let the lady fly. But don't let this stupid guy pay!"

I couldn't believe it. They were letting her have a free ride. My dollars remained safely in my socks.

Both of us boarded the plane. We even sat beside each other and prayed together.

I was 16 when this happened.

You can imagine the impact this event had on my young life. I learned that if I give, God will see me through. I learned that giving will open my life to His miracles.

That is why to this day, giving has become a lifestyle.

Another Miracle

Last Sunday, my friend came up to me to donate one million pesos to build one Anawim home, our ministry for the abandoned elderly. It'll house 20 *lolos* and *lolas* that we'll pick up from the streets.

The very next day, on Monday, he texted me. He was shocked because in one of his income streams, he earned P1.5 million that day!

Talk about instant provision.

I believe miracles happen when we give.

Give and experience more miracles in your life.



Chapter 12

My Highest Award

May I share my awards with you?

This may sound like I'm bragging but I've got a point in all this.

But there's a reason why I want to show you these photos.

I'd like to show you the four greatest awards of my life.

My Award with a Golden Hammer

Recently, I received the very prestigious Golden Gavel Award, the highest recognition ever given by the Toastmasters to non-members who excel in public speaking. This is special to me because I've been speaking for 30 years. A big chunk of my life is spent holding a microphone in my hand. So being awarded for it is really sweet. And it's also the most intricate plaque I have in my collection. It just looks beautiful.



My Award Made of Exquisite Glass

Last year, I received the Serviam Award, the highest honor ever given by the Catholic Mass Media Awards (CMMA). No less than Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales handed it to me in a lovely red carpet ceremony. (Trivia: Today, I visited him in Arzobispado just to chat with him. I learned that everyone there, even the security guards, affectionately call him *Lolo* because he's 77 years old and has the kindest soul.)



My Award Made of a Tree

And in 2006, I received what is perhaps the most prestigious: The TOYM Award, for The Most Outstanding Young Men, given by no less than President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo in *Malacañang*. By the way, each wooden sculpture is an original art piece by national artist Napoleon Abueva. So cool.



My Little Car Award

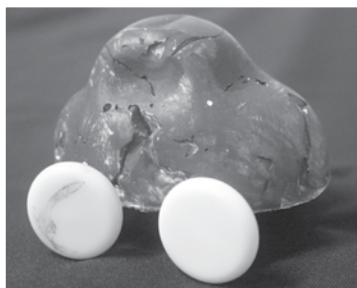
But let me share with you my highest award — ever.

If I were forced to throw all my awards away and keep only one — without batting an eyelash — I'd throw all the others as rubbish, so that I can keep this one forever.

It was Father's Day last Sunday.

There were only two distinguished judges in the panel: My four-year-old son named Francis and my nine-year-old son named Benedict. And this expert panel of judges unanimously voted to give me "The Best Daddy of the World" Award.

And because my two boys knew that I love old toy cars, they crafted my award out of some special clay. They put some plastic wheels and painted it with their own bare hands.



I now carry this little car with me wherever I go.

It's in my bag. I don't go anywhere without it.

Why? Because every time I look at it, I feel connected with my kids.

You see, when I'm far away from them, I miss them terribly.

Because whenever I'm at home, I play with them.

Nothing touches my play time with my boys.

One day, I asked them, “Do you feel loved?” And they smiled and answered, “Yes!” It was the greatest thing a father could ever hear. (In the past 30 years of helping people, I’ve noticed that those with a lot of emotional hang-ups, psychological trouble, and even addictions are people who didn’t feel loved when they were kids.)

So the little car reminds me of the most important things in life.

My Greatest Achievements in Life

Here’s what I’m sure of.

When I’m lying down on my deathbed, I’m sure I won’t be embracing my TOYM statuette, caressing it until I breathe my last breath. This won’t happen, believe me.

Instead, there’ll be a high chance that on my deathbed, I’ll be holding this little car. Holding it close to my heart.

Because it’s what I’m most proud of: That I am the best Daddy in the world according to my irrefutable Panel of Judges.

On my deathbed, I will cherish my greatest achievements in life.

Believe me, it won’t be the 15 books I’ve written.

Or the non-profit organizations I created.

Or the fact that I’ve gone to 30 plus countries because of ministry.

Here are my greatest achievements:

My first greatest achievement is that I love my wife.

They say that after many years of marriage, your love for your spouse wanes. It gets tired. And finally dies.

Not mine. I can say this to you with all the conviction in the world: I love my wife now more than I've ever loved her. My love for her has grown through the years. Why? Because I've worked on this love every day.

My second greatest achievement is that I love my kids.

And for them, love is spelled T-I-M-E. There are days when I get home extremely exhausted — as tired as a dog. And all I want to do is lie down. But when Francis sees me enter the door, he shouts, “Daddy, I'll ride on your shoulders.” It's not a request. It's a command. So from a dog, I become a horse. He hops on me and we run around the house shouting, screaming and laughing together. My exhaustion is swept away. I feel so alive. These are the moments that I'll treasure forever.

My third greatest achievement is that I cut the fingernails and toenails of my father. Before he passed away, I would do that little service for him because his eyesight was no longer good. I loved sitting beside him, cutting his toenails and fingernails. I loved doing it because I remember when I was small, he would do it for me. Now it was my turn to love him.

I loved it also when I brought him to the barbershop. I loved it because when I was small, I remember that he'd be the one driving me there. He'd lead me to the barber's chair and then sit behind me reading the newspaper. Now, it was my turn to lead him to the barber's chair. I also sat behind him and read the newspaper.

But I was not really reading the papers. It was a camouflage. I'm covering my face so people won't see that I'm crying. Tears flow down my cheeks because I'm thanking God for the opportunity to thank my father for the love he gave to me all his life.

My fourth greatest achievement is that I love the poor.

My fifth greatest achievement is that I love my friends.

My sixth, my seventh, my eighth.... You can be sure it's all about love.

When you really think about it, what else can one be proud of?



Epilogue:

A Simple Strategy

I read books to change my life.

As you can probably guess, I read a ton of them.

I have a secret strategy to make books change my life: Every time I read a book, I write a list. A very special list.

It's not a list of new insights, or a list of nice quotes, or a list of interesting facts from the book I just read. Instead, I write a list of *actions*. Sometimes, a book will give me two or three actions. Sometimes, 10 or 20. It really depends.

After writing that list, I get my calendar and plot out when I'll carry out those actions.

That's it. This simple strategy has made my book reading a great blessing to my life.

And that's why I have a bias for short books.

I apply the same principle in my preaching. My talks are what you call "one-point" talks. People complain that my talks are very short. "Why only 30 minutes?" they ask me. I answer, "Because if I say more, you'll get confused. In each talk, I want to focus on one thing that you need to do to bless your life."

After 30 years of preaching, I've come to realize that the less I say and the more focused I am, the more powerful my message becomes.

Same with my books. I've written 15 so far — and all of them are short, too.

Perhaps that's why they're all bestsellers. (Ahem.)

The powerful message of this book: *You have the power to turn thoughts into things — use this power to serve!*

If you didn't write a list of actions then read the book again.

Go over it and write down your special list.

When your life changes, email me.

I'll celebrate with you.

May your dreams come true,



Bo Sanchez

P.S. Get a mountain of spiritual nourishment for free at **www.KerygmaFamily.com** now! And join our borderless, international, non-physical community!

P.S.2. Download my free Ebook, *How to Know If Your Dreams Are God's Dreams*, at **www.BoSanchez.ph** now.

P.S.3. Do you want to gain financial abundance? Try for free two months exclusive membership in my *TrulyRich Club* and I'll send you monthly talks in audio CDs and DVDs, plus other loads of great stuff to help you reach financial abundance. For more information, log on to **www.TrulyRichClub.com** now.

P.S.4. Get a unique, inspiring, powerful, personalized message from God each day. It'll blow you away. Sign up at **www.GodWhispersClub.com** now!

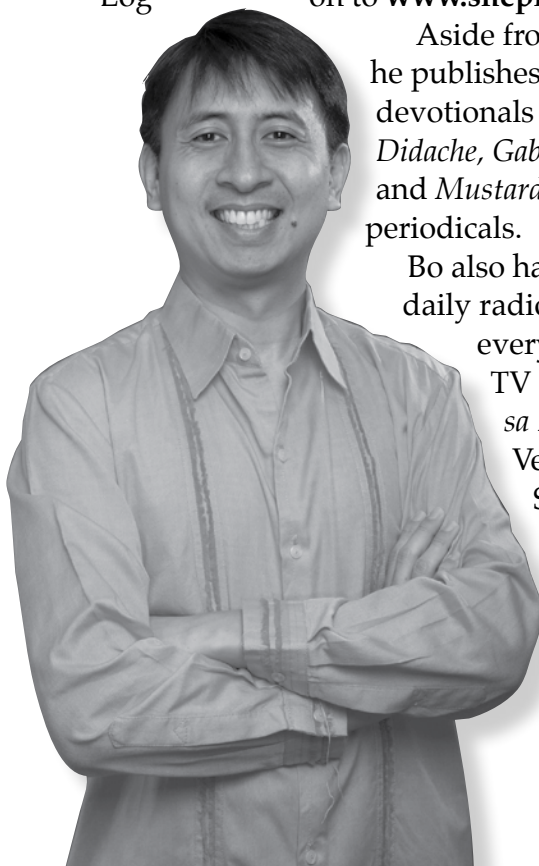
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bo Sanchez started preaching at the age of 13 and wrote his first book at the age of 20. He is the publisher and main writer of *Kerygma*, the number one inspirational magazine in the country. Today, he continues to preach to millions worldwide. And for years now, his inspirational books have not left the top 10 list of bestselling books of the country. His powerful books include *You Can Make Your Life Beautiful*, *How to Be Really, Really, Really Happy*, *You Have the Power to Create Love*, *Fill Your Life with Miracles*, *Simplify and Live the Good Life*, *Simplify and Create Abundance*, and *Your Past Does Not Define Your Future*. (They're also available through our online store. Log on to www.shepherdvoice.com.ph)

Aside from *Kerygma* magazine, he publishes six more magazines, devotionals and Bible reflection guides: *Didache*, *Gabay*, *Companion*, *Sabbath*, *Fish* and *Mustard*. All of them are top-selling periodicals.

Bo also has a weekly TV show and a daily radio program. *Kerygma TV* airs every Sunday, 6:00-7:00 a.m., on TV 5. His radio program, *Gabay sa Biblia sa Radyo*, is on Radyo Veritas, Monday through Saturday at 5:00-5:30 a.m. And on Sundays at 8:00-9:00 a.m.

He founded many organizations, such as *Anawim*, a special home for the abandoned elderly



(for more information, log on to **www.anawim.com.ph**), and Shepherd's Voice, a media ministry that publishes the most widely read Catholic literature in the country. He also founded Light of Jesus Community and the Light of Jesus Counseling Center. A firm believer in working with others, he has partnered with Gawad Kalinga and other groups that work for the poorest of the poor. He has also formed the KerygmaFamily — a borderless, international, non-physical community. All over the world, people are signing up as members of this virtual community — where they receive a mountain of great stuff for their spiritual and personal growth. (Log on to **www.kerygmfamily.com**.)

Privately, Bo is also a micro-entrepreneur. He engages in small businesses not only for his family's needs and for his various projects, but also from his firm belief that one of the most important solutions to his country's economic problems is to raise more micro-entrepreneurs among his countrymen. He frequently teaches and writes about financial literacy, believing that our poverty is hugely a product of people's very low financial I.Q. on subjects such as debt management, saving, investing and business.

In another endeavor he's very passionate about, Bo started the Catholic Filipino Academy to help parents who wish to teach their children at home. (Log on to **www.bosanchez.ph**)

But above all these, Bo believes that his first call from God is to be a loving husband to his wife, Marowe, and a devoted father to his sons Benedict and Francis. They live in Manila, Philippines.

Each month, Bo writes *The Bo Sanchez Soulfood Letter* and emails it to tens of thousands of people, inspiring them to live fantastic lives and connecting them to Bo's ministry. It is absolutely FREE. To subscribe, log on to **www.bosanchez.ph** or call up (+632) 725-9999 or 411-7874.

By Joining the Kerygma Family, You Receive a Mountain of Blessings for Your Spiritual Life

Here's what will happen to you when you join the Kerygma Family:

1. You'll receive daily Bible reflections for your spiritual growth.
2. Each month, you'll get to read an online copy of Kerygma, the #1 Catholic inspirational magazine in the Philippines.
3. You'll belong to a borderless, global, non-physical community spread all over the world connected through prayer and the desire for personal growth.
4. You shall have the special privilege of supporting this expansive work of the Lord (totally optional!), which includes Anawim, a ministry for the poorest of the poor, the abandoned elderly; Shepherd's Voice, a media ministry that uses TV, radio, print, and the Internet to broadcast God's love to spiritually hungry people worldwide.
5. You and your intentions shall be included in our intercession team's prayer.



To join the KerygmaFamily,
log on to **www.kerygmfamily.com**

Don't delay!

Do You Believe in Luck or Blessing?

Bestselling author Bo Sanchez has a conspiracy theory.

He believes that the entire physical and spiritual universe around us is conspiring, plotting and conniving to give us massive abundance.

One of the most difficult things to overcome in our lives is a scarcity mentality — that there's a limited amount of blessings in the world.

In this book, you'll be delivered from this mental prison. You'll again meet the God of abundance, not the God of scarcity.

And Bo doesn't believe in luck. He believes in blessing.

Luck is based on chance. But blessing is 100 percent sure.

What people define as luck, Bo defines as getting ready to be blessed.

His belief is simple: When the soul is ready, the blessing will appear.

He says, "Right now, you're swimming in an ocean of blessings. You don't see this ocean, but it's there all around you."

If you lack blessings, it simply means you lack the readiness to receive it. There's no shortage of blessings. There's only a shortage of your readiness.

The key? Get ready.

How? By planting seeds.

This is what Bo calls The Law of the Harvest, which is the operating system of the universe.

Read this book and you'll be very blessed.

