



The Gospel of Prosperity

II Cornithians 8:9 - “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.”

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Introduction

I must tell you that I do believe in the gospel of prosperity. As I researched for this topic, I found so many that opposed this teaching. I thought that every Christian would believe that God wants His children to be in good health and to prosper in this world. I couldn't imagine anyone not agreeing with this premise. However, many do for a lot of good reasons which I will get into shortly.

They, those that disagree, call it “The Gospel of Prosperity” and brand those that teach it as “Prosperity Preachers”. Well, the word, “Gospel” means good news so we are really talking about the good news of prosperity.

The Bible is full of “Good News” about a lot of things, such as, Life Eternal, Victory of Satan, Salvation, Finding Peace In The Midst of Confusion, being Born Again and so on. Prosperity and Good Health are also on this list.

I will agree that many have over stated this, “good news” and have used it to advance their own agendas. However, that does not negate the truth of the teaching. We should not run away from Biblical truth because some disagree.

Truth & Error

Let's look at some error and some truth. Come, let us reason together. First are the errors being taught in some of today's churches. These are misconceptions.

1. **Name It And Claim It...** Some folks believe that they can Name It & Claim It and God will give it to them. They negate the sovereignty of God and His will for their lives. This is no more than an attempt to fulfill fleshly desires at God's expense.

However, if God has spoken to you about a specific thing and revealed to your spirit that He will bring it to pass, we can, and only then, Name It And Claim It. A good example is Abraham. God told him that he would be the father of many nations and that Sarah, at age 90, would give birth to the promised son. The Bible tells us that Abraham believed God and did not waver in his faith. He Named It And Claimed It because God spoke it to him. When God speaks a word into our spirit, we are bound to it. We must Name It And Claim It because that is the essence of all faith. We believe by doing so.

2. **Man of God Authoritarianism** ...There is a movement that pushes the idea that the Pastor is the Man of God and thus the final authority concerning spiritual matters. Those who oppose the prosperity message site instances where believers have been abused by pastors and taken financially for the sake of the church and its ministry.

The error in this teaching is in not discerning the Lord's Body. The Bible tells us that the pastor is only one of many gifts given to the church for its edification and that every believer is also a member of the body with several gifts. The emphasis is always on money and that is not God's will. Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." **Matthew 6:33** Notice the emphasis is on seeking first the kingdom of God.

3. **Giving To Get...** Some say that you need to give in order to get. They teach that you give \$10 and will get \$1,000. Their emphasis is on a financial return. Whereas, Jesus said, "But love ye your enemies, and

do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil.” **Luke 6:35**

The error goes like this...when we give in order that we get, it centers our thoughts and actions on ourselves. If we need money for bills or just fun, we give to God, naming our seed, that it grows a harvest of far more than we gave. This sort of thinking is self-centered not God centered. The Holy Spirit should lead our giving. He indwells us and leads us in everything, including our finances. It's ok to expect a big harvest from our giving but not always does it come in the form of cold hard cash. When we claim the cash we hinder God from working on the total of our needs and life in Him. “Ye **ask**, and receive not, because ye **ask amiss**, that ye may consume it upon **your** lusts.” **James 4:3**

4. **Seeking God For The Wrong Reasons**...Some preachers teach their followers to seek God for the wrong reasons. They learn to call upon the Lord for their physical needs and often overlook God's will. The concept of pleasing God and living out His destiny for us is lost in the shuffle. Seeking wealth instead of God is not the way to success.

“Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” **Matthew 6:31-32** (*Note that the focus is on not worrying about material things because your Heavenly Father knows what you need.*)

5. **Prosperity Is Only About Money**... Another misconception I want to mention is that money itself is just plain wrong. It's not, and there's no reason to feel guilty when God causes it to come into our life. It's okay to have money, as long as we don't make acquiring it the top priority in life. “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:10).

Our reason to seek God is to worship Him, to praise Him, to have fellowship with Him, to hear His voice and follow His lead. He is Lord, not us.

Truth About Prosperity

Second are the truths being taught in other churches today. Because the above errors are true errors, doesn't mean the idea of Prosperity in the life of the believer is wrong. The idea is good. The current teaching by certain groups is wrong. Let's look at some Biblical truth concerning prosperity. It is my belief that God wants His children to be in good health and continually prospering.

Word Origin And History of Prosper

I do need to qualify the concept of prospering. Here's what the dictionary says.... .v. mid-14c., from Old French prosperer (14c.) and directly from Latin prosperare "cause to succeed, render happy," from prosperus "favorable, fortunate, prosperous," perhaps literally "agreeable to one's wishes," from Old Latin pro spere "according to expectation," from pro "for" + ablative of spes "hope," from PIE root *spe- "to flourish, succeed, thrive, prosper"

How do we measure prosperity? Is it by Gross National Product (GNP), Unemployment, Personal Wealth or what? A family in a 3rd world country with a tin roof over their home can be looked at as prosperous when the rest of the community has grass roofs. The idea of prosperity is relative to ones life situation. It's not all money and financial wealth. It could be as simple as being blessed by God.

Now lets look at Biblical truth. I want you to look for a partnership between God and Man as we discuss theses scriptures.

My Version of The Laws of Prosperity

1. **God Blesses Those Who Bless The Poor.**

- One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and "one who waters will himself be watered. **Proverbs 11:24-25**

- He who gives to the poor will never want, but he who shuts his eyes will have many curses. **Proverbs 28:27**

Can You See The Partnership? God's blessings are meant to go beyond you to the blessing of others. When we give to bless others we are also blessed.

2. The Size of Your Harvest Is Dependant Upon The Amount of Seed You Plant.

- Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.. **II Corinthians 9:6-7**
- Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. **Galatians 6:7**

Can You See The Partnership? When we sow (Plant/Give) without resentment ...out of a pure heart, He causes our harvest to grow beyond measure. We decide the size of our harvest by what we sow.

As you give, God will begin to pour His blessing upon you. As you use your talents, under His direction, and allow your resources time to grow, His blessing will multiply beyond anything you can now imagine.

3. The Abundance Is For The Needs of Others.

- And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything; you may have an abundance for every good deed. **II Corinthians 9:8**

Can You See The Relationship? God causes His grace to abound so we can benefit from all the blessings. The abundance is to be shared with others. This is our part of the relationship.

4. **God Is The Source of Our Prosperity.**

- And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. **Philippians 4:19**
- Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. **Matthew 6:31-32**

Can You See The Partnership? God is actively at work on our behalf to bless us and provide all our needs. Our part is to not worry about things and trust Him to provide our every need.

5. **Obedience Brings An Abundance of Prosperity.**

- And you shall again obey the Lord, and observe all His commandments, which I command you today. “Then the Lord your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; if you obey the Lord your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. **Deuteronomy 30: 8-10**
- “Keep therefore the words of this covenant, and do them, that ye may prosper in all that ye do.” **Deut. 29:9**
- Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that *there shall not be room enough to receive it*. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. **Malachi 3:10-11**

Can You See The Partnership? We are to seek the Lord with all our hearts and to keep His commandments. This is the key to success and blessings. He asks and we obey...a great partnership, because it is to our benefit.

6. God Wants Us To Prosper And Be Healthy.

- Beloved, I wish above all things that thou may prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospers. **3 John 2:4**
- Let them shout for joy and be glad, who favor my righteous cause. And let them say continually, Let the LORD be magnified, Who has pleasure in the prosperity of His servant” **Psalm 35:27**

Can You See The Partnership? God is for us, not against us. It is His will that we stay healthy and prosper in all that we do. **Note:** God’s will is for the soul, (Mind, Will and Emotions) to prosper. That goes beyond money. It covers physical, mental and spiritual life.

Some have said, “to be wealthy is evil” However, if it was evil, John would not have said what he said. When the Apostle wishes that we prosper and be in good health, you got to believe it is of God.

7. True Prosperity Is Hidden In The Word of God.

- But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. **Matthew 4:4**

Can You See The Partnership? We are given the Word of God to live by. Our part is to digest it and walk in it and live by it. If we do this, we will prosper.

8. Prosperity And Spiritual Growth Dance Together.

- “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” **Matthew 6:33**
- The blessing of the LORD makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it. **Proverbs 10:12**

Can You See The Relationship? Jesus told His followers to seek. As they did, they grew spiritually. You cannot seek the Lord and His righteousness without growing up in Him. God promises to add to our quest for life, all the other things that the world seeks to attain. By seeking Him first, we maintain a clear perspective and remain true to our calling.

9. Speaking The Word Will Bring Prosperity To Pass.

- “For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.” **Mark 11:23**
- But He answered and said, “It is written: ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.’”

Can You See The Partnership? God allows us to speak His word in faith. He has made his power available to us when we speak in faith. The Mountain is a metaphor of any given situation we might be in. It is the obstacle that hinders us from accomplishing God’s will. Remember, moving a mountain is a breakthrough. It is also an example of prospering. It’s not all about money.

10. Wealth And Prosperity Requires The Power of God.

- “But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.” **Deut. 8:18**
- Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God. **Psalm 62:11**

Can You See The Relationship? We do not have to beg God or become a Work-A-Haulic to prosper. He gives us the power to gain wealth. He is working with us to accomplish His destiny.

Let’s summarize so we have a clear understanding of what it means to prosper and how we can prosper, the Biblical way.

The Term, “Prosper”

We can prosper in many different ways. Prosperity is not limited to just money. It also involves other aspects of life. When we benefit from a situation or are blessed in some way, we prosper. This is God’s will for His children.

The Purpose of Prosperity

The purpose of prosperity is to be a blessing to the less fortunate. We have a responsibility to the poor and those that have fallen on hard times. It is our privilege to share our wealth with them. That’s why God’s blessings are in abundance, so we have plenty to meet our needs and the needs of others.

The Source of Prosperity

The source of our prosperity is our Heavenly Father. He knows our needs and the needs of others. He is the only one that can give us our daily bread without it tormenting us. He freely gives all that we need.

The Key To Prospering

The Word of God is the primary key to our success. He has provided the written word in these last days so we can know His will and all the many promises that are made available to His children. It is our job to search them out, digest them and live in the truth of each one.

The golden key to true prosperity is to refrain from all negatives and to focus the great energy on the positive, which is practicing the Presence of God. God knows how to prosper you. Your part is to discipline your thinking and speaking to only positive, prospering thoughts and words. Love the Source and love to think and speak prosperously, and your prosperity will grow in wonderful ways. - Lovingly, Rev. John Wolcott Adams

The Hindrances To Prosperity

Here are a few hindrances to prospering.

- 1.) A lack of faith.
- 2.) Unbelief.
- 3.) Disobedience.
- 4.) Laziness
- 5.) Ignorance of the truth.
- 6.) Worldliness

The Errors That Give The Prosperity Message A Bad Name

Name It And Claim It...The Man of God Authoritarianism
Giving To Get...Seeking God For The Wrong Reasons

Conclusion

Being prosperous not only means having wealth, but health, happiness, long life, and success. God promises these to us in His Word. When we remember to apply His scriptural lessons to our life, we open up the door to those promises.

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success” (Joshua 1:8).

God wants everyone to prosper and He has given us all the ability and the power to prosper! However, prosperity begins with understanding our role.

We are God’s stewards. Our lives, talents, abilities, and living in a world of unparalleled opportunity are all gifts from God. By meditating on His Word we can fulfill our destiny and please God in the doing so.

Jesus said, “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.” **Matthre 6:19-20**

It is obvious that wealth and prosperity on this earth is given to advance the kingdom of God and to bless others. The souls we touch and the blessings we administer in His name are the true treasures that will last an eternity.

There are so many wealthy folk in this world. Many of them are miserable and empty inside. They are lost in the darkness of sin. Their money can’t buy peace of mind or happiness.

Jesus Gives While The Devil Takes

However, we are children of God and joint heirs with Christ. We can believe God for the blessings of others and to prosper us in this life. I say this because Jesus said so. “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” **John 10:10**

Jesus came so we can have life in abundance. On one hand, the devil seeks to destroy, steal and kill. On the other hand, Jesus comes to give life. Jesus gives while the devil takes.

So, let God be God in your life and believe Him for all your needs and a healthy abundance for others around you that are in need.

One Other Thing...“Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.” **I Cor. 10:24** Here's what Paul said...“Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.” **I Cor. 10:33**

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper” (**Psalm 1:1-3**).

**May The Lord Bless You
As You Ponder All That Has Been Said**