

God wants to prosper us

Written by Dr. John E. Russell Sr - Last Updated Wednesday, 15 February 2017 15:42

Why We Need to Prosper

Jesus said that it is the Father's will for us to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to be blessed materially:

So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give *the Holy Spirit*

[emphasis mine] to those who ask him!

Luke 11:9–13, NIV

Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give *good gifts* [emphasis mine] to those who ask him!

Matthew 7:9–11, NIV

The apostle Paul said that it is the Father's will that we profit in *all things*—now and throughout eternity:

For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto *all things* [emphasis mine], having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

1 Timothy 4:8, KJV

In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, {constantly} nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following. But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand,

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discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable *for all things* [emphasis mine], for it holds promise for the present life and {also} for the {life} to come.

1 Timothy 4:6–8, NASB

The apostle John said that it is the Father's will that we prosper spiritually, physically, and materially:

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 1:2, KJV

Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.

3 John 1:2, NASB

The Lord Jesus Christ states that God delights in giving his children more of his spirit and material gifts.

The apostle Paul says that serving God profits us both in this life and in the life to come. Christianity entails not just "pie in the sky, bye and bye," but also a slice of that pie in our hands *now*

!

The apostle John tells us that it is God's will that we prosper and experience divine health as our souls prosper.

Some have equated *piety* with *poverty*; however, the Bible does not condemn having material wealth. Covetousness and greed are immoral. Material things are amoral. Inanimate things have no moral nature and can be used to help or hurt by people who are moral beings.

Covetousness Is the Culprit

The tenth Commandment reads:

You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.
Exodus 20:17, NIV

"Money is the root of evil" is a misquotation of scripture. This is way it is written in the Bible:

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.
1 Timothy 6:10, NIV

Paul states that the *love* of money is "a root of all kinds of evil" (NIV). If a person loves money, he might yield to the temptation to steal, cheat, lie, become a prostitute, sell drugs, or even murder for money. Covetousness—breaking the tenth Commandment—is the *seed* sin that leads to other sins.

On the other hand, if a person loves God and mankind, he would use his wealth to help people and bring glory to God.

How are God's people going to fulfill the Great Commission if they are sick and broke? Missionaries need to be healthy and to have their financial needs met in order to fulfill their calling. Have you ever tried to board an aircraft without a ticket? Airlines don't let you fly on your good looks! (Some of us would not get airborne!) Have you ever tried to go through the Walmart checkout line without paying? (Don't try it!) Believers need to be healthy and able to earn money to live and to pay tithes and offerings. Jesus said:

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And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Matthew 28:18–20, NASB

The Father's heart's desire is to save lost humanity. He lost his children when Adam sinned, and he wants them back. He provided the sacrifice of his Son to redeem them. Now he wants the church to take the good news to all the world.

The church has stumbled, fallen, and failed to fulfill the great commission for 2,000 years! It is time that we awaken to the need and believe God for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for health and material wealth to fulfill the Great Commission! Jesus commanded the disciples to wait in Jerusalem to be endued with the power of the Holy Spirit. We don't have to wait on God now—He's waiting on us! To attempt to reach the lost without the empowering of the Holy Spirit is arrogance and presumption. Jesus said that we need to be empowered with His precious Holy Spirit. We also need divine health and God-given material prosperity—not for "the will to power," self-aggrandizement, or for the flesh but to obey Christ!

Prosperity and the Old Covenant

Let us examine the Old Covenant. God considered his people servants, generally. Continual animal sacrifices were offered which only temporarily covered sin. The Holy Spirit did not indwell believers as he does now. There was restoration upon repentance (Psalms 107:17–21). There were wonderful conditional blessings. Please read Deuteronomy 28:1–14.

And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

Deuteronomy 28:1-2, KJV

Moses writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and gives ancient Israel conditional promises in Deuteronomy 28:1–14. Some of these promises were:

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1. Financial Prosperity
2. Children
3. Leadership as a nation
4. Divine health
5. Long life

Who is the source of financial prosperity? Moses answers:

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.
Deuteronomy 8:18, KJV

Job was rich. After his faith was tried and purified, God *doubled* his wealth!

Abraham was rich. He placed God first in his life and believed God for the miraculous birth of Isaac. God blessed in all areas of his life:

Abraham was now old and well advanced in years, and the LORD had blessed him in every way.
Genesis 24:1, NIV

David was rich. He was a man with a heart like God's heart. He placed God first, and God made him wealthy.

Solomon was exceedingly rich. He was probably a trillionaire! As a young inexperienced King, he asked God for wisdom to rule Israel. Because of Solomon's request, God gave him both great wisdom and great riches. (See <http://constative.com/history/top-10-richest-men-of-all-time-in>)

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Just as there were conditional blessings under the Mosaic Law, there was the curse of the Law for lawbreakers:

But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:

Deuteronomy 28:15, KJV

Moses then continues to enumerate the different kinds of curses that Israel will bring on itself if it turns to wickedness. It is probably not a direct affliction by God, but both a natural consequence of sin and the work of Satan. The Book of Job and the teaching of the New Testament back up this interpretation. The curse of the Law can be summarized as:

1. Poverty.
2. Sickness.
3. Death.

Prosperity and the New Covenant

The new covenant is better than the old covenant:

But now hath he [Jesus] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

Hebrews 8:6, KJV

But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.

Hebrews 8:6, NASB

The key word of the book of Hebrews is *better*. The writer of Hebrews states that the new

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covenant is better than the old covenant.

The Old Testament sacrificial system was a type of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God (Jesus). Sacrificing animals taught that sin was serious and needed to be paid for and it was continuous. However, when Jesus died on the cross, he paid for our sins once and for all:

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

John 19:30, KJV

"It is finished" is one word in the Greek text, the verb *tetelestai*, the perfect passive indicative, third person singular form of "

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(a debt): - accomplish, make an end, expire, fill up, finish, go over, pay, perform" (Strong J 1890

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"). The perfect tense in

Koinē

Greek denotes an action in the past which continues throughout time and never has to be

repeated.

Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the Law by dying as our substitute on the cross. Jesus not only paid for our sins, he removed the penalty of sin, which was the curse of the law.

We still have to die physically, unless we are alive when Jesus comes.

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On the other hand, we are no longer spiritually dead. We have been born again—our spirits have been born again by the Holy Spirit:

NOW THERE was a certain man among the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler (a leader, an authority) among the Jews, Who came to Jesus at night and said to Him, Rabbi, we know {and} are certain that You have come from God [as] a Teacher; for no one can do these signs (these wonderworks, these miracles--and produce the proofs) that You do unless God is with him. Jesus answered him, I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, that unless a person is born again (anew, from above), he cannot ever see (know, be acquainted with, and experience) the kingdom of God

Nicodemus said to Him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter his mother's womb again and be born? Jesus answered, I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, unless a man is born of water and [even] the Spirit, he cannot [ever] enter the kingdom of God

. What is born of [from] the flesh is flesh [of the physical is physical]; and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not [do not be surprised, astonished] at My telling you, You must all be born anew (from above). The wind blows (breathes) where it wills; and though you hear its sound, yet you neither know where it comes from nor where it is going. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.

John 3:1-8, AMP

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Galatians 3:13–14, KJV

Jesus' death on the cross also provided for us the blessings of Abraham, which include:

1. Spiritual blessings. The Holy Spirit gives us the new birth, which is the recreation of the human spirit. We can be Baptized in the Holy Spirit.

2. Psychological blessings. Jesus healed those who were mentally ill, those who had strokes

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and those who were mentally oppressed by the devil.

3. Physical blessings. Jesus healed those who were physically ill.

4. Financial blessings. Jesus gives Christians the ability to gain wealth. He also grants believers favor with their employers and business associates. Two Old Testament examples are Joseph and Daniel.

Is a covenant with no healing and no prosperity a better covenant? The answer is obvious. The Old Testament had both and the New Testament also does. Some New Testament scriptures that promise financial prosperity are:

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.

2 Corinthians 8:9, KJV

And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Matthew 8:20, KJV

You cannot be a slave of two masters; you will hate one and love the other; you will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money. This is why I tell you: do not be worried about the food and drink you need in order to stay alive, or about clothes for your body. After all, isn't life worth more than food? And isn't the body worth more than clothes? Look at the birds: they do not plant seeds, gather a harvest and put it in barns; yet your Father in heaven takes care of them! Aren't you worth much more than birds? Can any of you live a bit longer by worrying about it? And why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow: they do not work or make clothes for themselves. But I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. It is God who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today and gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won't he be all the more sure to clothe you? What little faith you have! So do not start worrying: "Where will my food come from? or my drink? or my clothes?" (These are the things the pagans are always concerned about.) Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you,

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and he will provide you with all these other things. So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings.

Matthew 6:24–34, GNB

Note: the King James reads: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). Place

God first in your life, and all these material things will be

added

to you,

not taken away

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Missionary Aaron Kolb notes that in Latin America, poor people who accept Christ are blessed with more cattle. Relative to their society, they are rich!

When one accepts Christ, one's energy is redirected to positive pursuits. Instead of drinking, smoking, taking drugs, and promiscuous living, one works and produces useful products and services. It is a win-win situation. Others are blessed, and the believer is financially rewarded. The believer tithes and gives offerings, which help win others to Christ who in turn are blessed and who also become blessings.

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19, KJV

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

Luke 6:38, KJV

We Are to Rule in This Life, Right Now!

God created Adam and gave him dominion over all the earth. Adam sinned and sold out to

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Satan. Satan then became the god of this world. Jesus reinstated believers and gave them dominion again:

For if, because of one man's trespass (lapse, offense) death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive [God's] overflowing grace (unmerited favor) and the free gift of righteousness (putting them into right standing with Himself) reign as kings in life through the One, Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One.

Romans 5:17, AMP

Jesus is our role model. He exercised dominion over nature and evil spirits. He healed the sick, cast out demons, fed the multitudes, raised the dead. Once he provided money for his and Peter's tax payment. He plainly stated that believers were to do the works that he did while on earth.

Contemporary Christians Who Became Wealthy

Demos Shakarian (1913–1993) became a wealthy dairyman. He used his wealth to start Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International. He reached many businessmen for Christ, who, in turn, used their wealth to help fulfill the Great Commission. See [Demos Shakarian](#) .

R. G. LeTourneau (1888–1969) became a wealthy inventor of heavy earth-moving equipment. The LORD inspired him to place an electric motor on each wheel. Some questioned the idea, but it worked! He began tithing 10 percent and eventually increased it to 90 percent, which helped to fulfill the Great Commission. See [R. G. LeTourneau](#) .

Henry Krause (?–1972) became a wealthy plow manufacturer. He said that the Lord gave him the design for an efficient plow that was eight times more efficient than other plows! He used his wealth to help fulfill the Great Commission. See [Henry Krause](#) and scroll down to page 6 to read about this amazing man!

J. C. Penny (1875–1971) was a wealthy Christian who gave to worthy causes. His store is a common household word. See [J. C. Penney](#)

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William Colgate (1783–1857) was a wealthy Christian who began tithing 10 percent and as the Lord prospered him eventually increased his tithe to 50 percent. See

[William Colgate](#)

Sam Walton (1918–1974) owned a small store in Arkansas, USA. Through the wisdom that God gave this Presbyterian Sunday school teacher, Walmart is internationally known. He helped establish churches and gave to charities. See [Sam Walton](#) .

God is no respecter of persons. Yield your life to God, ask for wisdom, and see what great things God has in store for you—not just in heaven, but in the here and now!;

Four Reasons Why Believers May Not Be Prospering

1. *It is a sin to be poor when poverty results from unbelief, laziness, or selfishness.* ☐ ☐

He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.
Proverb 10:4, KJV

He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.
Proverb 18:9, KJV

Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.
James 4:3, KJV

2. *It is a sin to be rich when we acquire wealth wrongfully:* ☐

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Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, {and} which has been withheld by you, cries out {against you;} and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. You have condemned and put to death the righteous {man;} he does not resist you.

James 5:1–6, NASB

3. *Covetousness is the culprit—covetousness is a sin!* One can be rich and be covetous. One can be poor and be covetous. Some covetous rich people are not in prison. Some poor covetous people are in prison. In other words, a greedy and selfish attitude is the sin:

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor [the tenth Commandment].

Exodus 20:17, NASB

For the love of money is a root of all evils; it is through this craving that some have been led astray {and} have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves through with many acute [mental] pangs.

1 Timothy 6:10, AMP

Paul teaches us that *covetousness is idolatry*, a very serious sin:

Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. Colossians 3:5-6, KJV

Greed is a violation of *The Tenth Commandment* and idolatry is a violation of *The Second Commandment*

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4. *Any continuing sin can break down the hedge around us and open the door for Satan to steal from us.*

5. *What about Job and sincere Christians who suffer?* Study chapters one and two of the Book of Job. Job was justified by faith and lived a sanctified life. Satan inspected Job and then accused him before God of serving God for wealth. The hedge about Job was down. God gave Satan *limited permission* to afflict Job.

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Satan to afflict Job. Satan killed his children, destroyed his animals, and made him sick. Job thought that

God

had done it. Later, God the hedge was put in place and Job was healed. Job's wealth was doubled. He had ten more children (Job 42:7-16). Since the first ten still existed—though physically dead—Job's children were doubled in number also. Why was the hedge down at the beginning the book? When you have time, carefully read the entire book of Job and pay special attention to Job 42:1-6.

Conclusion

1. Obey God—confess and forsake sin. Ask God for wisdom. Work smart. Obey the leading of the Holy Spirit. Receive God's Word:

Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.

Proverb 13:18, KJV

Poverty and shame come to him who refuses instruction {and} correction, but he who heeds reproof is honored.

Proverb 13:18, AMP

2. Receive God's material blessings. It is not a sin to have nice things.

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3. Give to others. Let us have a giving heart like our heavenly Father. Let us use the wealth God gives us to spread the gospel and help people.

In the future, God will destroy the earth by fire, and earthly wealth will be burned up. People who are won to Christ through our giving will meet us in heaven—there is no greater investment and reward. Be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit in giving.

This is an excerpt from my book, *How to Get Your Prayers Answered: The Biblical Way to Pray*.

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