

Money

It is the single greatest factor in what we will or will not accomplish in life

- 500 verses on Prayer and Faith each – 2,000 on Money
- 16 of 38 Jesus' Parables about money and possessions

God Wants You Prosperous and Wealthy

Proverbs 11:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices; And when the wicked perish, *there is* jubilation. ¹¹ By the blessing of the upright the city is exalted, but it is overthrown by the mouth of the wicked.

- Blessing “*Prosperity*” or “*Liberal Pool*”

Malachi 3:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you *such* blessing that *there will not be room* enough to *receive it*.

The curse of mammon will lose its control once we understand how mammon works and surrender our first fruits to the Lord

The Principle of The First

Romans 11:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶For if the firstfruit *is* holy, the lump *is* also *holy*; and if the root *is* holy, so *are* the branches.

- The first portion has the power to redeem the rest
- The first portion carries the blessing

God Rewards Good Stewardship

Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

⁶But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

- God *rewards* faithful living according to His principles
- We must distinguish between belief and behavior
- Our belief determines where we will spend eternity
- Our behavior determines how
- God is going to reward us for our behavior or our good works

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV)

⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

God Wants to Bless Us with More

Genesis 12:2 (NKJV) Speaking to Abraham

² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

- God desired to bless Abraham so he could be a blessing to others
- The same is true for you and me today

2 Corinthians 9:8 (NKJV)

⁸ And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work.

- God wants to bless us, so we are ready to do every good work!
- Having an abundance is only possible when we are good stewards of the blessings God has given us

We must never allow reward to be our primary motive to give

- Yet, we cannot ignore the fact that God wants to reward us

When we allow God to work in our hearts, our primary motivation becomes giving for the sheer joy of giving

- Helping for the sheer satisfaction of helping
- When we live this way, we are imitating our Father God

Paul was about to send a couple of helpers to the Corinthians Church to collect a special offering for the suffering Macedonian Church

2 Corinthians 9 – *My paraphrase*

He says, “You said you wanted to give an offering. I’ve been bragging about your generosity, so don’t embarrass yourselves, and me, follow through!”

- Paul is commending them for their willingness to give, and takes the opportunity to teach on giving

2 Corinthians 9:6–8 (NKJV) The Cheerful Giver

⁶But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷So let each one *give* as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God *is* able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all *things*, may have an abundance for every good work.

- These people were already givers
- They were about to make a sacrificial offering
- Sow sparingly – reap sparingly
- Sow bountifully – reap bountifully

Luke 6:38 (NKJV)

³⁸ Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

- Again, our main motivation is not reward
- The Spirit of God wants to free us from the fear of giving, showing us that God is a rewarder
- God wants us to give as we purpose in our hearts
- When we give “in secret” He rewards “openly”
– Matthew 6

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV)

⁷ So let each one *give* as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.

- You are the only person who can decide your level of giving
- It’s between you and the Spirit of God

2 Corinthians 9:7 (NIV)

⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

God is not looking for tithes, offerings and gifts that are given
“reluctantly or under compulsion”

- The blessed life is an overflow of cheerful giving
- There is a “Joy” in giving!

The only way to become a cheerful giver is for God to do a work in your heart

- We need a reconciliation with God and our finances

It comes down to the heart

- Remember: God is *able* to make *all grace* abound
- How often? – Always!

When we give cheerfully God is able to make all grace abound towards us, so we always have abundance so that we never have need

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

- There is a difference between *wants* and *needs*
- God doesn't promise to meet every passing whim or fancy
- Money is never our sufficiency, God is!
- There is a level beyond sufficiency – Abundance!
- We will be tested at this level

It's one thing to have just enough to meet your needs, but the real heart test comes when we get a little extra

- When I get a little extra, do I pay down debt or buy a new rifle or set of golf clubs?
- We are tested with *need* as we trust God for our sufficiency
- We are tested with *greed* when we move into the area of abundance
- When we pass this test, we can now move into the highest use of money, *seed*

How do you view money?

- Do you see it as something to meet your *need*?
- Do you see it as something to satisfy your *greed*?
- Or do you see it as God giving you *seed*?

I believe there is a “sweet spot” that God wants us all to live

Proverbs 30:8–9 (NKJV)

⁸ Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches— Feed me with the food allotted to me; ⁹ Lest I be full and deny *You*, and say, “Who *is* the LORD?” Or lest I be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God.

- Don't allow me to have need or to be tempted with greed, that's wisdom
- Can God meet your need without money?

Realize All I Have Comes from God

James 1:17 (NLT)

¹⁷ Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens.* He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.*

- God gave you your life
- He gave you talents and aptitudes
- He gave you learning capabilities
- He has opened educational and vocational doors for you throughout your life

We need to realize *“I didn’t get here on my own. Everything I have has come my way from the loving hand of God.”*

- You are not a self-made man or woman
- We are invited by God to steward the gifts he has given us in a way that supports His purposes in the earth

Live Joyfully Within God’s Current Provision for My Life

Hebrews 13:5 (NLT)

⁵ Don’t love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, “I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.” *

- Its human nature to look for greener pastures
- To wish for better circumstances, more affluence, an easier life
- If only I had a better job, a nicer house, a newer car, I would be happy

Recent Gallup Poll ranked the USA 33rd in the world on a happiness scale

Seven of the top ten countries were in Latin America which generally rank low on the typical economic indicators we might associate with happiness

Philippians 4:11–13 (NIV)

¹¹ I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

- When I am fully reconciled to God financially I can joyfully accept God's current level of provision for my life
- Throughout the course of life that provision can go up or down
- It is our responsibility to be able to make adjustments and be content in both

There are implications as to whether or not you are living joyfully in God's current provision

When God increases someone else's provision do you covet it?

- Do you get angry and ask, "Why them and not me?"
- Do you get jealous of what others have?
- Are you able to rejoice with others raises and promotions and truly mean it?

A second implication

- How are you managing debt?

By definition debt comes from wanting more than God's current provision for your life and arranging others means to get it

You will only know true financial peace when you learn to live joyfully beneath God's provision in every season of life

Philippians 4:11-13 paraphrase: *"I make adjustments as needed and live beneath God's provision level – whatever it may be. I build some margin between my spending and God's provision, and that margin leads to contentment, which leads to peace."*

God wants something better for us

- Simplifying your life means diligently working to free yourself from whatever debt you carry
- Make a decision today, regardless of your season in life

If you are hearing a voice saying, *"you're in to deep you'll never get out"* – that voice is not from God

- You can get out
- Just commit to God's principles concerning money and you'll become debt-free in less time than you can imagine

Live with an Open Heart Toward Heaven, Eager to Respond to God Concerning My Resources

2 Corinthians 9:7–10 (NLT)

⁷ You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully."* ⁸ And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. ⁹ As the Scriptures say, "They share freely and give generously to the poor. Their good deeds will be remembered forever."*

¹⁰ For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity* in you.

- When you are living "Joyfully" within God's provision level you can give generously and cheerfully
- Christianity is not a static creed or a bunch of rules
- Obedience leads to liberty which leads to joy and generosity
- You are listening and responding to God
- If there's a person or a cause that needs resources, you can respond

God has called us to live Righteous, Prosperous, Generous lives

Psalm 35:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ 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.”

- Our prosperity and generosity should point others in the direction of the righteous cause of Christ
- He takes pleasure in our prosperity
- God’s purposes are so much more than just about you
- Who is my life touching?
- Generous Tip and Prayer – Aaron

“We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.” – Winston Churchill

Isaiah 32:8 (NKJV)

⁸ But a generous man devises generous things, and by generosity he shall stand.

- Generosity is a lifestyle
- Always on the look out for opportunities to give
- Start where you are today
- Be generous with what you have in your hand