

Lesson 8
Prosperity and Giving

I. God's Views on Prosperity

- A. God wants you to prosper in all things and to be in health but the key is your soul. You prosper to the degree that your soul is prospering. Once again, your soul is the key! (3 John 2; Rom. 12:1-2)
- B. God delights in the prosperity of His servants. (Psalm 35:27)
- C. Prosperity is a part of the atonement. Grace is literally God's ability and it always comes on an unearned basis. It is through the grace of God that your prosperity has been provided. The "Great Exchange" that took place on the cross: Jesus became the sacrifice for sin so that we could be made the righteousness of God,... Jesus became poor so that through His poverty we could be made rich. 2 Cor. 8:9 (A true understanding of the purpose of prosperity and the proper motives for prosperity and giving are necessary in order to truly understand this verse.)

II. The Purpose of Prosperity

- A. Blessed to be a blessing – Gen. 12:1-3
- B. Blessed to be a partner in establishing God's covenant (Jesus) in the earth. – Deut. 8:18; Rom. 10:15; Luke 8:1-3
- C. Blessed to give unto every good work – 2 Cor. 9:8
- True prosperity is having enough of God's provision to not only meet your needs, but to have an abundance for every good work. If you have an abundance in your personal life, but you aren't able to abound unto every good work, you aren't prosperous according to the Bible's viewpoint on prosperity. You may need to make adjustments!

III. Arguments Against Prosperity

- A. Jesus told the rich young ruler to sell everything he has and give it to the poor in order to be saved. (Mark 10:17-22; Luke 19:1-10) It is not a prerequisite that you have to sell everything and give it away. (Luke 14:33, Luke 5:27-29; Mt. 6:19-21)
- B. Money is evil. 1 Tim. 6:10 – It is the "Love of Money", which plagued the rich young ruler, that is the root of all evil. Pursuing money and not God brings great sorrow, etc. (Prov. 10:22)

IV. Proper Giving Demonstrates Proper Understanding of Prosperity

A. Sowing and reaping (giving and receiving) are still in effect in the New Covenant. (Gal. 6:6-10; 2 Cor. 9:6; Lk. 6:38; Phil. 4:15-19; Jn. 12:23-24)
- When you give in faith in God's grace with the proper motives, you should expect increase!

- Some teach that in the New Covenant, sowing and reaping is done away with due to God's grace. (Mt. 6:26 – Jesus is speaking against worry, not sowing and reaping in this passage. Once again, the heart is the issue.)

B. Motives are an absolute key to prosperity and giving. Proper motives in giving (faith) appropriates God's prosperity (grace) in our lives. God's kind of love is an absolute must in the area of giving. (1 Cor. 13:3; 1 Jn. 4:18; James 4:2)

C. Is Tithing still in effect? Not by the Law, but by Grace. Abraham gave a tenth of the spoils by his heart's desire (God never gave the command.) But since God wants our hearts and since finances take up so much space in our hearts, if we're not careful we can become very self-centered in the area of finances. Tithing is a good idea to keep looking to and trusting God as our source. If there is fear involved in your tithing, then your motive is wrong and it is profiting you nothing. **God didn't save us to collect taxes!**

The widow's mite is the perfect example of why the tithe is important. God deals in percentages, not Rand amounts. It evens the playing field in our hearts. (Mark 12:41-44)

D. Study 2 Cor. 8 and 9 for an awesome New Covenant perspective and understanding on giving and receiving. Let's look at:

- 2 Cor. 8:12-15 – once again this demonstrates that God desires for everyone of us to be involved with giving and receiving.

- 2 Cor. 9:5-8 – God doesn't want us to give as an obligation and that includes the tithe. You can't pay your tithes under the new covenant, you must always give it freely and with a cheerful heart motivated by God's kind of love or it will profit you nothing. (Heb. 7:1-2,4,5,9)

- 2 Cor. 9:10-11 – God doesn't give seed to the well-wisher but to the sower. If you only give when you believe that everything in your life is financially stable, then you won't be believing God in the area in way God wants you to. (Eccl. 11:4; 2 Cor. 8:1-7; 1 Kings 17:8-16)