

OUTLINE – BIBLICAL STEWARDSHIP FOR TODAY

- 1) Biblical Stewardship Overview
- 2) Money – Making Money is Easy, Keeping it is the Hard Part
- 3) Debt – The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly
- 4) Tithing – The New Testament Way
- 5) Benevolence Giving – Do's and Don'ts
- 6) God's Wisdom on Money
- 7) God's Economy
- 8) Prosperity Preaching – Pros & Cons
- 9) Attitude is the Key for God to Bless
- 10) Biblical Investing vs Gambling
- 11) Retirement and Taxes



THE CONS OF PROSPERITY PREACHING

- Those in the prosperity preaching & faith healing forefront travel in private jets, have luxurious multi-million dollar homes, & stay in posh 5-star hotels
 - ♦ Even the Lord's disciples were told not to acquire gold, or silver, or copper for their income as they traversed the countryside with the command to heal every sick person, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons free of charge.....[Matthew 10:8-9](#)
- Prosperity Preachers gravitate to two main teaching concepts
 1. They teach we are still tied into the OT Land covenant, so they see the Church being an extension of Israel (i.e., Replacement Theology), and being open to the grandiose promises God has for Israel. E.g., [Ex 23:25](#) "But you shall serve the LORD your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst."
 - But such promises were solely for the Israelites while in their Land
 - And many of these promises are futuristic (Millennial reign of Christ)
 2. They also take many of the NT promises ultra-literally and often times, out of context, rather than as they were originally intended. E.g., [John 14:13-14](#) "Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do"
 - On the surface, it looks like this is an open-ended promise
 - But in context, it has a higher spiritual purpose see [John 16:25](#)
- More times than not, people who follow Prosperity Preachers and give to their ministries just end up deeper in debt
 - ♦ They encourage their listeners to sow their seed (give money to them), and watch God bless; but then they entice their listeners to buy their products (books, trinkets, CDs) so they can stay on the air.
 - ♦ Why don't these Preachers follow their own teachings?
- Jesus challenged the Pharisees – the prosperity preachers of the day, to stop convincing people of the need to give to God in lieu of supporting their family. This type of giving was labeled as "Corban" or gifts dedicated to God... "but you say, 'If a man says to his mom or dad, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is to say, given to God),' you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down;" [Mk 7:11-13a](#)
- In effect, Jesus squashed the notion that we cannot out give God. Theoretically, yes we can out give God in an unbiblical sense – if we give more than what God wants us to give.
- We are commanded to take care of family, or we stand to be called worse than a faithless, unbelieving "infidel" as noted in [1 Tim 5:8](#).
- Other passages that relate to wrongful sacrificial giving are [Proverbs 21:3](#) – "To do righteousness and justice is desired by the LORD more than sacrifice." and [1 Samuel 15:22](#) – "to obey is better than sacrifice."
- Basically, the financially-challenged, who are looking for get-rich-quick schemes, often need help to redefine their priorities. True, giving is a spiritual priority, but we need to assess where the needy are in their spiritual walk.
 - ♦ We do not get closer to God by making a commitment to tithe or to give proportionately, but a commitment to give proportionately is an indication that one HAS gotten closer to God [[2 Chronicles 31:1-7](#), [Psalm 50:23](#); [Acts 10](#)].
 - ♦ Prosperity preachers teach a get-rich-quick scheme, which only seems to work for them as they pilfer their constituents
 - ♦ We need to remember God's concept for increasing one's net worth is time plus diligence plus His grace
 - "Wealth hastily gotten will dwindle, but those who gather little by little will increase it" [Proverbs 13:11](#) [NRSV].
 - ♦ Positive thinking while wrongly giving to false prophets and false teachers will only deplete a donor's bank account.

Favorite Prosperity Verses
Ps 37:4 <i>Delight thyself in God; and he shall give you the desires of your heart.</i>
Isa 53:5 1Pet 2:24 <i>"...with his stripes we are healed"</i>
Malachi 3:6 <i>"I change not"</i>
John 10:10 <i>"...I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."</i>
John 14:12 <i>"...he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do."</i>
John 14:13-14 <i>Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.</i>
John 15:7 <i>If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.</i>
John 15:16 <i>You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.</i>
John 16:23 <i>In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you</i>
John 16:24 <i>Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.</i>
Heb 13:8 <i>"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever"</i>
1John 3:22 <i>"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight"</i>
1John 5:14 <i>"...if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us"</i>

- Note 1.** The passages in [John 14-16](#) are in a cohesive unit having a single purpose as Jesus taught His disciples during the "Last Supper." That purpose was to entice the apostles to see how their Lord wanted to use them and their prayers to continually expand the Kingdom of God throughout the entire church age. For us to inject creature comforts such as big bank accounts as part of the answers to these promises is outside of their intended purpose.
- Note 2.** [John 16:25](#) puts these passages into their proper context: "**These things I have spoken to you in figurative language**" – IOW, Jesus was trying to convey a higher spiritual purpose for these great promises; and they were not meant to be used as a magical formula for health & wealth.

THE PROS OF PROSPERITY PREACHING

- The one positive aspect of the Prosperity Gospel is the challenge it gives to the rest of us in the church body to be alert, watchful, and constantly in study of God's word so we can give astute answers, rebuttals, and defenses to the truth of the Gospel

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS / BENEFITS

- Just as assuredly as God wants to bless His creation with good things, to include health and prosperity, Satan, on the other hand, wants to deceive people by using the same means – health and prosperity, the most sought after elements in our lives.
 - ♦ We have to factor in such variables as we attempt to "prove all things" so we can discern what is true from what is misleading.
- Whenever you are confronted with Prosperity Preachers or Faith Healers, recall PETTA – Paul, Epaphraditus, Timothy, Trophimus and the Apostles
 - ♦ Paul couldn't get his own thorn in the flesh healed[2Cor 12:1-10](#)
 - ♦ Epaphraditus, a disciple, could not be healed[Phil 2:25-30](#)
 - ♦ Timothy, another disciple, could not be healed[1Tim 5:23](#)
 - ♦ Trophimus, another disciple, could not be healed[2Tim 4:20](#)
 - ♦ Apostles and early disciples were not noted for wealth[1Cor 4:11](#)
- God changes His ways of working the miraculous after Acts

NEXT WEEK: Attitude is Key to Receiving God's Blessings

