



TRUE PROSPERITY

The Doctrine of
Prosperity in the
Bible

INTRODUCTION

Last session we outlined the different sections to unpack the Prosperity Gospel series...

- Definitions
- **Doctrine**
- Dynamics
- Damage
- Defense
- DIY Gospel
- Debate



WHAT IS THE DOCTRINE OF PROSPERITY?

- In this session, we will now look at what the Bible actually teaches about blessings, wealth, happiness and well being.
- We touched on the definition of the Prosperity Gospel in the last session. Many asked what is the genuine from the fake doctrine on prosperity. We will look to unpacking this during the session.





THE GARDEN OF EDEN

- ⁸ And the LORD God ¹planted a garden (oasis) in the east, in Eden (delight, land of happiness); and He put the man whom He had formed (created) there. ⁹ And [in that garden] the LORD God caused to grow from the ground every tree that is desirable *and* pleasing to the sight and good (suitable, pleasant) for food
Genesis 2:8-9a

THE GARDEN OF ABUNDANCE

- 28 Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”
- 29 Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food.
Genesis 1:28-29





GARDEN OF BLESSINGS

- God created man and placed them inside an atmosphere of blessings, abundance, provision, protection and wellbeing.
 - It was the garden of paradise and everything that Man needed was available. This clearly states and indicates God's Will for man originally before the cancer of Sin entered the world.
 - The Bible is very clear about the condition of things in Eden. All the elements of prosperity are present in the Garden. So, one could say our God is a source of prosperity and wellbeing for man's spirit, soul and body.
- You will show me the path of life;
In Your presence is fullness of joy;
In Your right hand there are pleasures forevermore
Psalm 16:8*
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NEW HEAVEN, NEW EARTH

- Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband.
- ³ I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, “Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. ^[a] ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.”
- ⁵ And the one sitting on the throne said, “Look, I am making everything new!

Revelation 21

GOD'S WILL....

The Scriptures show God's design for our physical and material well-being and prosperity. He's grand plan is to see mankind prosper and flourish in His presence forever. This shapes the narrative of the Bible. He started a world which saw Adam and Eve placed in the abundance of Eden. Genesis chapters 1 & 2.

At the end of time, He will create a new heaven and earth for mankind that will flourish eternally following the final judgment of the wicked.

In between that Eden beginning and the end where a New Earth emerges, God provided material abundance and blessing through many of scripture's stories including Abraham (Genesis 12:1–3, 17:1-3), Jacob (Genesis 30:25–43), The Israelites (Exodus 16) King Solomon (1 Kings 3:1–15), and Job (Job 42:10–17).

THE DOCTRINE OF PROSPERITY

- Doctrine- God sovereignly and covenantally provides health, wealth, protection and miracles for His Children. God does this through His abundant Grace, Mercy, Love and also through the Believer's Faith in Him.
 - The Bible is replete with promises, stories and testimonies which paint a picture of a God of Love who cares deeply for His Children's physical, mental and spiritual needs.
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THE DOCTRINE OF PROSPERITY

- The crux of the matter is that God seeks a heartfelt eternal relationship with Man which comes with tremendous benefits. These wonderful blessings are not transactional but borne out of covenant Love and Grace.
 - God's special messengers (prophets in the Old Testament and the five fold Ministers in the New) are sent to remind and teach God's people about His Grace. They are not brokers or mediators of this Relationship (as falsely taught within the Prosperity Gospel movement) but strong signposts of God's Covenant with Man through Jesus Christ.
 - God's intention is a 'Return to Eden' for Man where humanity and divinity dance together in the Garden of Love and Glory. This is a state of completeness, redemption, wholeness provision, and eternal blessedness.
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COVENANT

¹¹ And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had while still* uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all those who believe, though they are uncircumcised, that righteousness might be imputed to them also, Romans 4:11

- The believer is the seed of Abraham and therefore an inheritor with him of the promise. Although we have a better covenant in Christ, God did not cancel the old covenant; rather, he made it available to the whole world through the death of Christ (Rom. 4.11–12; Gal. 3.16–17, 29).

Mark Sturge



SOWING & REAPING...



- Sowing and reaping: The Old Testament agricultural enterprises provided the backdrop for demonstrating God's blessings, favour and providence. As types and equivalents, the New Testament understanding of the measure you sow is the measure you will reap (Luke 6.38; 2 Cor. 9.6; compare with 1 Cor. 9.14) remains intact.
 - Therefore, giving with a willing heart is a prerequisite for blessing, as God loves a cheerful giver (2 Cor. 9.7). This also includes the promise of a hundredfold blessing (Matt. 19.29; Mark 10.30). Mark Sturge
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HEAD OR TAIL?



- Being the head and not the tail: The believer is encouraged to see him or herself as the leader of the pack, victorious and successful.
 - This theme is amplified in areas such as being overcomers rather than the overcome (2 Peter 2.19) and being ‘more than conquerors’ (Rom. 8.37).
 - It would be a travesty for the people of God to constantly lack and evoke the ridicule, ‘Where is your God?’ (Ps. 42.3, 10; 79.10). Mark Sturge
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BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING...

- Blessing and cursing: An attribute of God is to confer blessings on the obedient and curses for those who violate and disregard his laws as depicted in Deuteronomy (11.26–27; 30.1, 9; 27.12–13) and through the prophets (Mal. 2.2).
- Therefore, there is a blessing available to the righteous and a curse for those who reject God's way (Prov. 10.6, 22, 29).
Mark Sturge.



WEALTH TRANSFER



- Divine wealth transfer: There is a belief that a just God will not ultimately allow the wicked to prosper and their ultimate end will be the demise of their temporary prosperity (Prov. 28.2).
- The eventual beneficiaries will be the righteous. The wealth of the wicked is therefore being stored up for the righteous (Prov. 13.22; Eccles. 2.26). Mark Sturge



ANOINTING & FAVOUR...

- To live out these principles, believers need the anointing of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), the revelation of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1.17), the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 3.1–8), and the divine favour and provision of the Lord in their lives (Acts 2.44–47).
 - God's favour is the basis for blessing, success in every area of life and the courage to pursue, against the odds, your purpose and destiny until you overcome and are victorious. God's blessing can extend from individuals (Ps. 1.1) to whole nations (Ps. 33.12).
- Mark Sturge
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THE GIFT OF GIVING...



- Alongside the gift of faith, the ‘gift of giving’ looms large for Pentecostals and Charismatics. The primary purpose of this spiritual gift is for ‘the common good’ – blessed to be a blessing (1 Cor. 12.7). Giving should exhibit a spirit of generosity (Rom. 12.3), cheerfulness, willingness and humility, not grudging, arrogant and boastful (2 Cor. 9.1–8).
 - The Old and New Testaments present us with believers and heathens using their wealth to support those who lacked – relatives (Lev. 25.35), tithes for the benefit of the priests, strangers, widows and orphans (Deut. 1.28–29); Cornelius (Acts 10.1–2), Dorcas (Acts 9.36–39) and Zacchaeus (Luke 19.8). Mark Sturge.
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FAITH AS A LIFESTYLE



- Those who possess the ‘gift of faith’ have a higher degree of confidence that God will defy or use the natural order of things to achieve his purposes.
 - This faith is a believing faith that turns impossibility into possibility because ‘faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen’ (Heb. 11.1);
 - We serve ‘the God ... who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist’ (Rom. 4.17).
Mark Sturge.
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IN SUMMARY...

- God's prosperity is wholesome and applies to the spirit, soul and body for the Believer.
 - The Gospel is primarily firstly spiritual with an overflow into the material, financial and emotional needs of man.
 - The blessings of God should never distract from the worship or focus on God.
 - The heart or intent is the crux whether money becomes mammon or not. We are called to Worship God and avoid idols of any kind.
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IN SUMMARY...

- In this session, we have differentiated between the Doctrine of Prosperity from the Prosperity Gospel.
- The Bible affirms Prosperity for the Believer within the context of God's Will and Sovereignty.
- It is okay and healthy to want success, to be the best, to flourish, to increase, be promoted etc as long as these do not diminish or undermine God in our lives.





IN SUMMARY...

- All material and financial blessings must be firmly placed within the context of our mission for God.
 - The car, the house, the marriage, children and career are fantastic blessings which should serve the agenda of God for our lives.
 - These prosperity benefits are not an end in themselves. They are good goals but not 'The Goal'.
 - Our hearts and intentions will ultimately be judged by our Lord and Maker. Did we live our lives for ourselves or FOR HIM?
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NEXT WEEK...THE DYNAMICS OF PROSPERITY TEACHING
