

Prosperity Has Been Perverted, Here's How God Sees It

The American Dream—family, home in the suburbs, two cars, a good job—requires money and lots of it. Secretly we all hope when the Bible tells us we will prosper and be in good health even as our soul prospers (3 John 1:2), it means we are going to be rich. Truth is, America is one of the wealthiest nations, but are we really prosperous?

What is Prosperity?

What is prosperity? Does it just mean financial success and wealth? What does it mean for my soul to prosper? I know God's says that He has plans for me to prosper and not come to disaster (Jer. 29:11). So, does that include money and if it does, am I ready for it? Are you?

The standard dictionary definition of prosperity would lead me to believe it only means being successful financially. In the Hebrew and Greek, prosperous means to have success, more generally as in all areas of my life. In the Aramaic it means to advance.

To be successful in God's kingdom, I must be perpetually advancing in every way, not just collecting a lot of money and sitting on it or squandering it. Money can be used for worthy purposes, but only if I have the rest of my life in order first. Otherwise, it will mean sure disaster.

Prosperous Soul

To be prosperous, I must advance in every area—body, soul and spirit. If my soul, which is my mind, will and emotions, is continuing to advance along with my spirit, I will then

advance in other areas, namely a healthy body.

Healthy in mind means having a healthy thought life. Healthy in emotions means not allowing emotions to control me, but understanding their purpose. Healthy in will means to have my primary goal in mind and always asserting my will to be in line with that goal.

The way things are supposed to work is my thoughts control my emotions, which then control my behaviors. Many times, especially when I was battling sugar addiction and my weight was climbing skyward, I found my emotions dictated my thoughts, which then resulted in my behaviors acting totally contrary to my primary desire to be healthy.

The good I wanted to do, I didn't do and the things I didn't want to do, I did (Rom. 7:19). Even when I understood this, it was hard to bring my emotions in line. When I was able to somewhat control my emotions, then my thoughts would run helter-skelter and throw me off course once again.

Keys to Soul Health

During this conundrum, I learned several key things. 1. I don't have to follow every suggestion my mind throws at me. 2. Emotions have deep roots in my past, which I can with God's help understand and process. 3. I need to guide my will by keeping what I really want to happen at the forefront of my mind.

When I understand these things, my soul will advance and will continue to come into line with what God wants for me. I won't stay stuck in the muck and mire of my past. Through forgiveness of various past scenarios and hurts, I can move forward to the well-being, success and destiny God has planned for me.

Kingdom Success

Another big key, though, is understanding how God measures success. To Him success is when I totally surrender to Him and deny myself (Luke 9:23), which means to focus on Him and not on my fleshly wants and desires.

“Blessed are you when men revile you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be very glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in this manner they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Matt. 5:11-12, MEV).

This is true Kingdom success. This is the way I advance in the Kingdom. It's total submission to what God wants for me, trusting Him for the ultimate success. If that is finances, then I need to learn how to submit totally to Him and advance in every other area so that I will be able to correctly handle such an assignment.

Spirit Health

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or imagine, according to the power that works in us” (Eph. 3:20, MEV)

My spirit's health is directly related to how much I allow the Holy Spirit to do His deep work within me. If I am listening to Him, if I am following Him intently, every area of my life will exude His prosperity.

My success in His kingdom is totally related to how well I truly do only the good works He has planned in advance for me to do. Those might be as simple as hanging clothes out on the line, home-schooling my kids or being involved in their education in some way, cooking a healthy dinner for my family, really taking time to love and appreciate my husband, teaching children's church for 3-year-olds, or taking time to encourage a friend.

These can be some of the good works He has called me to do.

When I do even what seem like the simple things, I am His masterpiece, His handiwork, His work of art, His poetry, His workmanship (Eph. 2:10).

Nothing would provide true prosperity for me more than that.

Emotions sometimes feel like a bondage, a weight we drag everywhere with us. They dictate what we will and won't do. In my new book *Sweet Freedom, Losing Weight and Keeping It Off With God's Help*, I talk about how to work through these strongholds which keep us bound in addictive patterns. It only happens with His help. *Sweet Freedom* and *Sweet Freedom Study Guide* are available on Amazon. Simply click on the titles to take you there.

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