

The Prosperity Gospel Exposed

Is prosperity biblical?

This question has been asked for decades, and in light of recent footage and Benny Hinn's admission of making mistakes in regards to prosperity, it's come back to the surface of what it looks like from a biblical position.

In an interview with Stephen Strang on the Strang Report podcast, Dr. Mark Rutland tackled this topic and how Christians can see prosperity in light of the gospel.

"God is a God of blessing," Rutland says. "The error comes where people say, 'if you're not blessed, you're doing something wrong. If you're not blessed, you're not a Christian.'"

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Rutland says it's this thinking that turns the purity of the message of Christ and turns it into a "gospel of greed." Using John Wesley's example, Rutland believes the purpose of blessing is not for us take in, but to give to others.

"The result of prosperity, the outcome of it should not be to accrue but to give," Rutland says.

He also says it is the job of church leadership to pray for blessing over their congregants' lives.

"Any pastor who's not praying for His people to be blessed, you should pray for your people to be blessed."

Rutland points out that in the same way ministries can abuse prosperity for their own sake, those who are donating can also misuse the principle of giving as well.

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“The problem is not just on those who exploit others from prosperity. It’s donors who exploit ministries for prosperity. They turn ministries into the kind of biblical slot machine...so sometimes they spread their giving out over ministries to see which one will give them the return. That’s also greed. So, it can be greed from the ministries, [or] it can be greed from the givers,” Rutland says.

Rutland says one of the ways we can fall trap to prosperity gospel schemes and thinking because of a warped view of God as our heavenly Father.

“I think we take some of our most unworthy attributes and impose those on God, that God says, ‘okay, [give] \$100 or withhold the blessing.’ That’s not God and it’s not characteristic of God.”

Just as God looks at our hearts and sees what’s truly there, a distorted view of God’s attributes is what leads many to become involved in prosperity gospel actions.

“The goodness of God is what’s in question here,” Rutland says. “We ought to concentrate on the joy of giving.”

We cannot give with the attempt to gain some type of supernatural favor or blessing; striving in our own works will never prove to be truly fruitful. How much and with what God decides to bless us with has absolutely nothing to do with our own abilities, but has everything to do with His limitless grace and mercy. Giving is meant to draw us closer in relationship to God, not to gain worldly things, but to know Him more intimately.

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