

The Prosperous Soul

3 John 1:1-14 Not too long ago there was a lot of prosperity teaching. One of the examples given to try to prove God wanted to bless our giving was the promise of the hundredfold return for the gifts we give to God. Some of these evangelists preaching such a return on gifts were expecting the gifts of money to be given to them. They wanted the hundredfold return, and often were manipulating people by putting guilt trips on them to give monies to their ministry. These evangelists never told the whole truth about the hundredfold return. We are only promised the hundredfold return if we forsake certain things. Listen to what the Bible actually says about the hundredfold return. “Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life” (Mark 10:29-30, KJV).

Did you see anything in the promise of the hundredfold return about money? God wants us to prosper financially, spiritually and every way. Jesus said, “I came to give you life and life more abundantly.” When we hear this verse, our minds immediately think, *Show me the money*. Because we live in such a materialistic society, we think prosperity means more money. The abundance Jesus promises has very little to do with money. The hundredfold return speaks of the return we will experience in the true treasures of life—people. Whenever we forsake anything for the gospel’s sake, God’s promise is to return to us hundredfold for our loss, and He promises this in this life, not just the world to come in eternity.

The prosperity that will always be ours here on earth and also in heaven is the prosperity of the soul and the souls we have touched for the Lord. John writes, “Beloved, I pray that you

may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers" (3 John 1:2).

Whenever we put the Lord first in our lives, we invest in His storehouse of souls. Our own souls are strengthened, and we receive much more than worldly riches. We receive peace, joy and righteousness. We also receive the joy of knowing we will live eternally with those people with whom we have shared the gospel. Our soul truly prospers when we think of the possibility of seeing hundreds in heaven who will say, "I'm here because you cared enough to share God's truth of the gospel with me." Doesn't this make you want to invest today into God's storehouse? His storehouse is filled with souls who are now prospering because Jesus has given them abundant life.

**READ: Hosea 6:1-9:17; 3 John 1:1-14; Psalm 126:1-6; Proverbs
29:12-14**