

Keys to Prospering

Introduction: Psalm 1:1-6

Psalm one contains a wonderful promise in verse three. The verse promises that the believer who obeys the commands in the first two verses of the chapter will experience good success at whatever he does. No doubt everyone would like to prosper in all that he does!

It should be obvious the Bible can guide us into real prosperity and true success. In fact, the Bible will protect us from the spirit of the world. We need to be very careful lest we adopt the world's perspective on prosperity.

I. The Lord's Perspective on Prosperity

Matthew 16

In Matthew 16 the Lord Jesus says, *"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (16:24-26)

Note: True prosperity is first spiritual in nature. Having great riches without Christ is NOT success at all!

Proverbs 22

Proverbs 22:1 states that, *"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold."*

Note: Worldly success without godly character is not true prosperity.

Luke 12

In Luke 12 the Lord Jesus gives us the parable of the Rich Fool (12:13-21). The lesson to be learned is found in verse 21 which states, *"so is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."*

Note: *True prosperity is not the accumulation of wealth which is heaped upon oneself; rather it is the faithful stewardship of wealth in the sight of God.*

Unfaithful stewards are NOT rich toward God. Faithful stewardship focuses on using wealth to bless others. The reward for faithful stewardship is treasure in heaven (Matt. 6:19-21).

II. The Path to Real Prosperity

In order to live a successful, fruitful life in the sight of God we must meditate in the Word of God day and night (Psalm 1:2).

This is essential if we are to avoid the spirit of the world and prosper with the Lord's blessing and approval (Cf. Rev. 3:14-22).

The Word of God has the power to correct, guide, and lead us in the right way; consequently, we need to keep the Word of God foremost in our thinking.

With that in mind, here are several important truths found in Scripture which we must obey to experience a truly blessed life:

1. Walk in the fear of the Lord. (Psalm 2:11; 25:14; 31:19; 33:18; 34:8-10; 115:11-15; Proverbs 14:27; 15:16; 19:23; **22:4**)

Psalm 34:8-10:

8 O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.

9 O fear the LORD, ye his saints: for there is no want to them that fear him.

10 The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.

Proverbs 22:4:

By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches, and honour, and life.

2. Avoid sin! Delight greatly in His commandments! (Prov. 13:15; Psalm 119:24; Psalm 112:1-3)

Psalm 112:3:

1 Praise ye the LORD. Blessed is the man that feareth the LORD, that delighteth greatly in his commandments.

2 His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches shall be in his house: and his righteousness endureth for ever.

3. Separate from the ungodly. (Psalm 1:1; Psalm 119:63)

Psalm 119:63:

I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

4. Love the house of the Lord. (Psalm 92:13; 122:1)

Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing . . . I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

5. Seek first the kingdom of God. (Matt. 6:33)

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

6. Learn the secret of contentment. (1 Timothy 6:6-12)

But godliness with contentment is great gain.

7. Learn to be a giver. (Luke 6:38)

Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

8. Maintain a good work ethic. (Proverbs 10:4; 18:9; 19:24; 21:17, 25; 24:30-34; 1 Thess. 4:11; 2 Thess. 3:7-12; Titus 3:14) Make it your goal to improve yourself for the prospect of better employment.

Titus 3:14:

And let ours also learn to maintain good works (honest professions) for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

9. Another important part of our prosperity is self-control. We need self-control to manage our money well. Self-control is an important part of stewardship.

- Avoid debt.

- Avoid hasty decisions. Learn how to make wise decisions: pray; wait; weigh the consequences; seek godly counsel.

- Live within your means! Avoid personal debt; develop the discipline of saving for purchases and future needs.