

KENNETH COPELAND

PROSPERITY:

THE CHOICE IS YOURS



Prosperity: The Choice Is Yours

I

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A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kenneth Copeland". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Kenneth" is on the top line, and the last name "Copeland" is on the bottom line, with a large loop at the end of the "d".

Introduction

"Prosperity: The Choice Is Yours" is an extensive book on prosperity. I am excited because it has been birthed by a natural flow of revelation knowledge from my heart to yours. If you are experiencing financial trouble, this book is for **you**.

I desire with all my heart that you prosper and "be in health, even as your soul prospers." I pray that, as you read the following pages, you will be inspired to reach out beyond yourself in giving to the needs of others; and that you will receive revelation from the Holy Spirit—His wisdom and direction for your personal prosperity, in the Name of Jesus.

1

The Whole Gospel

In our effort to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, is there a portion that we have forgotten? Is there a part we left out? What is the whole gospel? Let's look at the Gospel of Luke and find out.

And he (Jesus) came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias (or, Isaiah). And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears (Luke 4:16-21).

I want you to notice that Jesus did not simply make the statement, *This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears*. It says, *He began to say unto them*. Verses 18 and 19 are a **summary** of what He said. I believe that they are a short outline of a sermon that he was about to preach. Verse 22 says, *And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*. Obviously, He continued to speak.

In the light of this scripture, **the gospel has never been preached to the poor.** I'm not talking about the new birth. I'm talking about each of the categories that Jesus mentioned in these scriptures.

He was anointed to **preach**. To the captives, He preached deliverance. To the brokenhearted, He preached healing. To the blind, He preached recovery of sight. He outlined here that the gospel covers many areas. We have preached healing, recovering of sight, deliverance and the new birth to the poor; but we have never preached **the gospel** to the poor.

The Gospel to the Poor

What is the gospel to the poor? **The gospel to the poor is that Jesus has come and they don't have to be poor anymore!** Not very many poverty-stricken people have ever heard the whole gospel. Most of them have heard that they are supposed to live a meager existence. That is what the missionaries who preached to them believed!

When I was in Africa, the Lord told me that He is holding the body of Christ in every nation responsible for winning their own lost. It takes money to finance a revival. How can they believe for any prosperity in Africa or India, where drought and famine have become a way of life? That is a major part of *my* calling.

I'm responsible for teaching the nations to observe to do all that Jesus commanded.

There are always some missionaries who will become upset about it. They'll argue, "You can preach abundance in the United States, but don't come to Africa and preach it." Or, they tell me,

"It won't work in El Salvador." "It won't work in Nicaragua," etc.

But **when you are preaching the Word of God, it works.**

God could care less whether anyone listening has a dime or not.

He didn't base His gospel on what government happens to be in power at the time. **All God is looking for is faith!** There is enough undiscovered wealth in the poorest nations of this world to turn their poverty into abundance if they would just believe the gospel. If there wasn't, God is more than able to put it there.

The Kingdom of God Produces "Things"

Abundance and prosperity are important to the kingdom of God because it is affected by them. Jesus said that if you **seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all these things will be added to you.** You can't tell me that the kingdom of God isn't affected by prosperity or it wouldn't produce **things.**

The Bible says, "Out of the mouth of two witnesses, let a thing be established." The second witness to this thought (that the gospel has not been preached to the poor) is Luke 7:20-22. *When the men were come unto him (Jesus), they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.* Jesus listed very specific categories. One of them was preaching the Good News to the poor man, thereby giving him hope and strength.

We need to stop allowing these poverty-stricken people to believe that by staying poor it will somehow make them more pious and more sanctified. If this were true, the people of today's starving Third World nations would be holy right now!

Poverty is an evil spirit. I remember one of my junior high school teachers telling my mother something that has marked my thinking all these years. He said, "I was raised in deep poverty. I fought my way through high school and through a college degree to get away from it. But," he said, "I don't care how hard I try and how hard I work, I still smell that poverty. I can't get away from it."

I remember thinking, "I wonder why he still smells poverty?"

It was because the spirit of poverty was still with him. Many rich people are operating under this spirit. It drove them to become rich. If the spirit of poverty can compel a man to become wealthy, it will drive him to keep his wealth as well. You would think a person who was raised in poverty would be motivated to get others out of it. But they won't turn loose of what they have.

They are afraid they will lose it and end up poor again. That same spirit of poverty is still dominating them today, even though they are wealthy.

Three Things We Must Know

The body of Christ must know three things regarding the laws of prosperity. If you are ignorant of them, whether you're rich or poor, you are a problem going somewhere to happen.

1. You must know that it is God's will to prosper His people. God is not limited by what part of the world you live in or what government you live under. Believers all over the world have proven that fact. I've heard testimonies of God prospering people in the most devastated places like Africa, El Salvador, Nicaragua and South America. The laws that govern abundance work for anyone who will put them to work. They are **laws!**

People have the idea that spiritual things are separate from material things. That isn't true.

Spiritual laws govern material things. A Spirit created all matter. So, **the laws of prosperity will work for anyone who will meet the biblical requirements** to walk in them.

2. We need to know God's reason for prospering His people. The Word says, *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth* (Ephesians 4:28). **The whole purpose for gainful employment and prosperity is to take God's laws and prosper by them and then do something about the poverty in the rest of the world.**

Some rich people don't want to do anything but stay rich. But if I'm preaching the gospel to a born-again man from Mozambique, he has some hope for the first time in his life. He learns that God wants to prosper him and his people. **To the starving man that doesn't mean a Cadillac!** It means that God will show him how to get some rain on his scorched ground. God will do something about the poisons in his land, so that he can grow good crops and feed his family.

The gospel not only gives him hope in the kingdom to come, but through Jesus, through the message that God wants to prosper His people, it gives him hope in the here and now! **God intended for material creation to bless and prosper His people.**

3. The last thing we must know is God's way of prospering His people. God prospers by prospering the soul (3 John 2) and through the avenue of giving. We can't solve the world's problems with our natural, limited mind, but if we allow God to illuminate our human conscience with His way of thinking, nothing is impossible.

God wants to elevate our thinking to His level. He wants to prosper our souls with the answer. First, start by giving financially. Then, it will turn into a giving life. A giving attitude takes over. This should take over the entire body of Christ.

God is Shaking this World's Wealth

The wealth of the earth belongs to God. He said, *And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former* (Haggai 2:7-9).

God is shaking this world's system. The wealth that the world has accumulated is going to fall out of their hands. Into whose hands will it land? The Word says, *He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor* (Proverbs 28:8).

This is why God keeps telling the church to do something about the poor. We have let the government handle our responsibility. They have put patches on the problem instead of solving it. If the church of Jesus Christ would get involved through sharing the new birth and preaching the gospel to the poor, poverty could be broken instead of multiplied.

Forget your own needs. Get involved in the whole gospel.

Begin to meet the needs of others, spirit, soul and body, and watch how quickly God will move in your behalf. Remember what we read earlier from the words of Jesus, "Seek ye first the kingdom and all these things will be added to you." One of the great keys to this is to take your eyes off of your own life and put them on the lives and needs of others.

2

The Source of Prosperity

Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

3 John 2-4

The man who wrote these verses of scripture was no novice to spiritual things. He was a man who lived night and day with Jesus. He walked and talked with the Master. In his later years, he received from the Spirit of God insights into the future generations of the world and penned the Book of Revelation. His name was John, the apostle of love.

While reading these verses by this man who knew Jesus so well, I came across the words "I wish," or better translated, "I pray," and it caught my attention. I want to know anything that one of the apostles would pray. And if Jesus thought enough of John to place His own mother in his care, I want to know what this man has to say!

The apostle writes, *Beloved, I (pray) above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.*

*For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou **walkest in the truth.***

Here John connects "walking in the truth" (the Word) with the ability to prosper and be in health. Healing and prosperity then must be direct products of being filled with the Word and walking in the Word of God.

The Word says that if you seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, things will be added unto you. In seeking first the kingdom of God you must **first** learn to walk in the Word, to seek the Word and get the Word inside of you. **Then** things will be added unto you. **If you walk daily in His Word and in His truth, you have a sure connection to health and prosperity.**

Take Hope

After giving his long life to the service of Jesus Christ, an aging apostle John "**rejoiced greatly**" when he heard that "my children walk in the Word." I, too, can take hope in this joy because I know, like John, that if we walk in the Word we can rejoice in the knowledge that God is greater than any situation anywhere, anytime.

It doesn't matter how high interest rates get. That's not going to defeat me, and it's not going to defeat the body of Christ. **We have hope.** We are going to be healthy. We are going to be somebody for the world to look up to. And when they ask,

"Where are you getting it?" we can look at them with a smile and say, "My God meets all my needs according to His riches in glory." Praise the Lord!

Psalm 35:27,28 says, *Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant. And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.*

Doesn't that thrill you? You can take hope in this scripture.

God has pleasure in your prosperity. He takes pleasure in your healing. God is pleased when you prosper in every area of your life.

The Word says, "Let them say it continually, Let the Lord be magnified...my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long!" This means continually, steadily walking in His Word. This means meditating on God and His promises "...all the day long." If you do this day after day, God's Word will eventually take root in your soul. When your soul starts to walk continually in His truth, God's blessings are not far off. You will prosper *even as* your soul prospers.

Joshua was a good example of a man who continually walked in the Word. He meditated and took hope in God's promise of a land that flowed with milk and honey. Joshua held to his promise and eventually became the leader of the Israelites after Moses died.

Moses was a tough act to follow, but in Joshua 1:5, God assured, *There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*

If I had my name written at the top of this verse and God said, *(Kenneth), there shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee.* I could take hope in that! That promise can be just as strong to me today, as it was to Joshua back then, **if I meditate in the Word night and day.**

God went on to tell Joshua in verses seven and eight, *Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe (understand) to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right or to the left, that thou mayest prosper withersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein **day and night.***

Some people say, "Well, I don't have that much time, Lord.

I've only got 15 minutes a day." If that's all the time you've got, that's all the results you will get! Jesus said, "The way you measure it, it will be measured back to you." Joshua was told to walk and meditate in the Word, and he would prosper everywhere he went. So, as you meditate in the Word continually, **you** will prosper. And if your soul has to prosper before you can be prosperous, **then meditating in the Word must prosper your soul.** Why is that so important?

God would rather reveal things to you that will cause your soul to prosper. **Because by doing so, He can reach in and work through you to change circumstances and bring about blessings.** A soul that prospers can hear the voice of God and be sensitive to His leading.

Jesus is the Teacher

Let's discover the source of our prosperity. Isaiah 48:17, *Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.* This scripture is talking about Jesus. **He is the One who prospers the soul.** No one else can do it. Jesus is the One who says, "I'll teach you how to profit!" He does it through the Word. Jesus **is** the Word.

A good example is the nation of Mozambique, one of the most devastated countries in Africa. You can't buy anything in that country. All the stores are closed. There is only one thing in that entire nation that is still alive and full of hope and faith—a strong Word—preaching church that walks in the laws of prosperity and health.

The government of that country came to the pastor of a local church which was teaching the Word and said, "Whatever you are doing, keep doing it. We don't care if you **do** preach Jesus.

You are the only thing that's giving our people hope."

This pastor testified, "I learned about the laws of prosperity.

God has taught me and prospered me all the way through this holocaust." His church is still flourishing today.

Jesus will teach **you** how to prosper. I don't care who you are, or where you are. He will teach you how to be well spirit, soul and body, regardless of your circumstances. He said, " I am the way, the truth and the life." Start to walk daily in **His way**. Begin to meditate daily in **His truth**. Then **His life**, health and prosperity will be yours.

Prosperity—More than Money

Through our traditional ideas, we have been led to believe that prosperity is ungodly. However, inspired by the Holy Spirit, John writes that we should prosper and be in health. Then he says in verse 11 of 3 John, *Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.* If prosperity is evil, why would He want us to prosper? You see, there is nothing wrong with prosperity in itself.

Money is not the root of all evil. *The love of money is the root of all evil* (1 Timothy 6: 10), and there are people committing this sin who don't have a dime! I **want you to realize, however, that prosperity covers much more than finances.**

When John said we should prosper and be in health, he added the phrase, *even as thy soul prospereth*. Man is a spirit; he has a soul consisting of the mind, the will and the emotions; and he lives in a body. Thus, there is **spiritual** prosperity, **mental** prosperity and **physical** prosperity.

To prosper spiritually, you must be born again. When you accept Jesus as your Saviour and make Him the Lord of your life, your spirit is reborn and brought into fellowship with your heavenly Father. This puts you in the position to receive from Him all that is promised in His Word.

To prosper in your soul, you must be able to control your mind, your will and your emotions. Just because you have accumulated a large amount of knowledge does not mean that your mind is prosperous. Prosperity of the mind comes when you use the information that has been acquired—when you are controlling your mind instead of your mind controlling you.

Second Corinthians 10:5 says, we are to *cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God* (or against the Word of God), *bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*. The person who does this has control of his mind and is in position to prosper mentally. **You cannot control your mind completely without the Word of God being alive and operating inside you.** You must harness your will in the same way.

Controlling Your Will

Some people say, "Lord, help my will to crumble." God doesn't want a broken will that He can dominate. He wants your will whole and in submission to His so that the two of you can work together in unity.

When God made man, He gave him a will that has power.

It is actually a godlike will because man has the right to choose his own eternal destiny. Only a god has that kind of choice! Man was made in God's image and given the will to make up his own mind. You can go to hell if you want to and God will protect your right to go...you don't have to but you can. On the other hand, you can choose Jesus Christ and the Word of God and experience eternity with your heavenly Father. **What a privilege! The choice is yours!**

When a man's soul is prosperous, his will is in line with God's will. HOW can you get in line with God's will? You can't until you know what His Word says. **His Word and His will are the same!** An honest man can't will one thing and say another. **If you are in line with the Word of God, you are in line with His will.**

Governing the Emotions

Let's discuss our feelings as part of the soul. First of all, God made you an emotional being. You are created in His image; therefore, He must experience emotions as well. The Scriptures verify that Jesus wept (John 11:35) and that God laughs (Psalm 2:4). Expressing feelings is certainly not wrong. To remain prosperous in our soul, however, we should not be motivated by our feelings.

The Gospels reveal that Jesus was moved by compassion. He said that He only did what He saw His Father do; so compassion is a Person. It is the Father. Jesus expressed His feelings, but He was not moved by them. He maintained control at all times. He is our example. A prosperous soul **must** keep its emotions in line with the Word of God.

You will never be healthier or more prosperous than your soul. You can be born again, even filled with the Holy Spirit, and still not be prosperous in your soul. For instance, an old saint of God, living in poverty, can pray revival down on a church, get everybody in town saved and be lying in bed sick the whole time—if **she does not believe the Word of God for her own health!**

True Prosperity

The world's definition of **physical prosperity** (prosperity of the senses) includes gold, silver, financial power, political power and social favor. The world's definition of **mental prosperity** (prosperity of the soul) is "knowing it all." Put these two ideas together and you have a person who can use his mind to get financial and political power. This is the world's total concept of prosperity. You can easily see its drawbacks!

True prosperity is the ability to meet the needs of mankind in any realm of life. Wealth and power cannot answer every need.

Money makes a lousy god! It can't buy good health or prevent sickness and disease from taking over the human body. Yes, it can go toward buying it, but the world's system of healing just isn't good enough. In the mental realm, a person can have all the facts in his head and not have the ability to use that knowledge to obtain the money or the health that he needs.

What produces spiritual, mental and physical prosperity? What brings all these areas together? **The Word of God.** The Bible says in Hebrews 4:12 that the word is alive, powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword. It says that it divides the soul and the spirit, the joints and the marrow, and that it is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart. **When you are walking in the Word of God, you will prosper and be in health. It is His will for**

us to be made whole—spirit, soul and body—and to be kept that way until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

3

Prosperity—A Blessing or a Curse

Some people have the idea that to prosper financially is a curse. Others believe that if God were to bless them, He would do it by making them poor. I want us to determine from God's Word whether prosperity is a blessing or a curse. Once we do that, we can further establish the direction God wants us to take in the financial realm.

Our scriptural basis is Deuteronomy 30:19,20, *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and that thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them,*

This promise applies to the New Testament believer because the covenant was made with Abraham **and** his **seed**. Galatians, chapter three tells us that if we are Christ's, we are Abraham's seed.

Notice that **we** are the ones who must choose. God will not make the decision for us. If we don't choose life, cursing will automatically come on us. It will be our fault, not God's.

The Curse of the Law

Since we must choose, we need to know if prosperity is a blessing or a curse. Deuteronomy 28:15 says, *It shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee.* He is about to list some **curses**, not **blessings**.

Cursed shall thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field. Cursed shall be thy basket and thy store. Your basket and store point directly to the area of finances, or lack of them.

Verse 18, *Cursed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.*

Fruit is born or brought into being. Fruit is increase. This verse is talking about family increase as well as material assets flourishing.

To curse the increase means that there will not be any increase. Note that the purpose of the cursed increase was not to teach a spiritual lesson—it was to destroy! This chapter says that the curse comes to destroy until you perish. That's certainly no blessing.

Notice the twentieth verse, *The Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke.* The verb tense in the original Hebrew indicates that God actually has nothing to do with sending these. These Hebrew verbs are permissive. God *will allow* these things to come. Once He has delegated authority, He can't do anything else but permit them. *Those who have dominion over the destruction and the curse are responsible for exercising that dominion.*

God is not protecting us from the devil. As far as He is concerned, Satan has been defeated and the body of Christ has been given authority over the evil one. This is true concerning finances as well. **Poverty is a curse and the Bible says that we have been redeemed from it.**

Let's continue with verse 31, *Thine ox shall be slain before thine eyes, and thou shalt not eat thereof: thine ass (or, in today's terms, "thy car") shall be violently taken away from before thy face, and shalt not be restored to thee: thy sheep shall be given unto thine enemies, and thou shalt have none to rescue them.* To lose everything—your job, your assets and your possessions without any way to get them back is a **curse**.

Verse 32, *Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, and thine eyes shall look, and fail with longing for them all the day long: and there shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land, and all thy*

labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed always. Our society is seeing glimpses of this. The news is flooded with reports of children who are kidnapped or reported missing. The parents are almost helpless to do anything about it, that is, if they don't know the power of God. The grief over the loss of children is in the same class as the loss of labor and income. **This is not a blessing; it's a curse.**

The Wealth of Solomon

The book of Proverbs says more about wealth and riches than any other book in the Bible. Why? Because no one has ever surpassed Solomon in real goods. He was the wealthiest man who ever lived.

Let's see what Solomon said concerning prosperity. Proverbs 6:6-11, Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.

Notice that Solomon used the ant as an example. Are ants poverty-stricken? No! They are hard workers. **The more you put into something, the more you will get out of it.**

Also, pay attention to how he refers to poverty as a traveling armed robber. Who does the Bible say goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour? **The devil.** That roar is his arm—his weapon.

In the past, Satan has made us back off from him because his roar convinced us that he could really bite. **But, that's not true.**

Jesus pulled his teeth! The Captain of our salvation disarmed the adversary through His substitutionary sacrifice at Calvary. Thank God, Jesus took his armor away from him and then armed the body of Christ from head to toe so that we could stop the devil.

Poverty destroys. It goes around like an armed robber. **God calls lack a curse and there is no way it could ever be a blessing.**

Jesus came to minister to the poor. Why? To make them more poor? Of course not. The Bible said that He became poor that we might become rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). He bore the curse of poverty in order to get us out of it, not to leave us in it.

The Blessing of Abraham

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (Galatians 3:13-14).

Remember, God has given us a choice. Let's go back to the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy and see what a blessing is so that we will know what to choose.

Verse one and two, And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee.

Look at verse four, Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep. Obviously, increase is a blessing.

*Verse eight, The Lord shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. **God wants to increase His people.** Psalm 35:27 says that He has pleasure in the prosperity of His servants.*

Why Does God Prosper Us?

Now that we have established the fact that prosperity is a blessing, we must know why God wants us to flourish in the financial realm.

Genesis 39:2,3 says that the Lord was with Joseph and that God made all he did to prosper. The New Testament application is Philippians 4:19. It says that the Father will meet our needs according to His riches in glory.

Why is God going to be with us and cause all that we do to prosper? Deuteronomy 8:18 has the answer. But *thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy "fathers, as it is this day.* **The power to get wealth comes from God.** He gives it in order to establish His covenant.

The purpose for abundance is to preach the gospel, feed the poor and meet the needs of others.

Proverbs 28:8 says, *He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor.* That's for us, the body of Christ! We should be able to get together and buy a load of grain and feed a multitude with it.

That's the reason for wealth and prosperity.

God increases us so that we may increase our production in the Word. That's what we are here for—to establish God's covenant.

God doesn't prosper us financially just so that we can be more comfortable. He doesn't heal us so that we can watch television without pain in our bodies.

Wealth is not to provide more conveniences and luxuries.

Without the Word directing our lives, that is exactly what will happen. This has been a major problem in the body of Christ as prosperity has been preached. A great number in the body use the increase of God just to become more comfortable. I've been guilty of it myself, but thank God I've repented. I believe the body of Christ is beginning to wake up. We're

beginning to use our increase to win the world instead of increasing our own goods. God wants you to prosper, not just to put food on your table but also to reach out and help provide food for someone else. **Prosperity enables you to be about your Father's business—meeting the needs of others, spirit, soul and body.**

If you give, it will be given to you. As you seek first the kingdom of God—to reach out to others as Jesus reached out—God will supernaturally meet your needs.

Change your image today. Begin to see yourself as the one giving to supply the needs of mankind. **A prosperous man is one who helps to establish God's covenant and understands that his needs will be taken care of.** He takes his eyes off of himself and puts them on others. His reason for working is to have so that he can give to those who are in need (Ephesians 4:28).

Prosperity is a blessing for the world. Walk in that revelation today! You are the giver. Choose life and blessing, and see the miraculous take place right in your own home!

4

The Fool's Dozen

Christians have avoided prosperity like the plague because they have been taught that it would defile them. But the end result of prosperity is destruction only to the one who seeks it without the fear of the Lord and without the wisdom of God.

Notice Proverbs 1:28-32, *'Then shall they call upon me (wisdom), but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and **the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.***

Psalm 73 tells us that the ungodly prosper in the world by increasing in riches. Whether financial success will destroy us or not has to do with whether we are thriving in the world or in the Word.

A man may accumulate a great deal of money and still not be prosperous. Wealth without a personal knowledge of God can cause him to have ulcers! The Scriptures promise that **if we will exalt the Word of God, its wisdom will promote us** (Proverbs 4:8). That is the difference between prospering in the world and prospering in the Word.

The Bible says that prosperity ruins the fool. Therefore, the spiritual laws of abundance warrant that we **avoid the things which are foolishness in God's sight.**

These things are what I call the "Fool's Dozen."

God's Definition of a Fool

1. A fool despises wisdom and instruction (Proverbs 1:7). He won't obey the Word; he despises godly wisdom.

2. A fool is right in his own eyes (Proverbs 12:15). He thinks that his way is always right. He cannot be corrected.

3. A fool makes a mockery of sin (Proverbs 14:9). This is the Christian who thinks it's alright to watch an R-rated or X-rated movie. He figures it really won't hurt him. Prosperity will eventually bring ruin because he will end up spending God's money on that trash. God is not mocked—this man will reap what he sows.

This is the person who feels he can serve Jesus and still drink

"just a tiny bit." "It won't hurt, it's only a little." He is making a mockery of sin. The human liver was not made to process alcohol. The wages of sin is death. This person is wasting money on something that is bringing destruction. Wealth will destroy him.

4. A fool hides hatred by lying and slander (Proverbs 10:18).

He talks ugly about people who have money, or he's angry with the government because he feels cheated.

No one has the right to slander the president or anyone else.

We have the privilege to vote, then to intercede for those who are in the offices of our government. These are all of the rights we have!

5. A fool does mischief for sport (Proverbs 10:23). He vandalizes other people's property as a joke.

When I started driving, my dad used to tell me, "Now, boy, you don't have to screech those rear tires every time you leave a signal light! One of these days you'll have to buy your own and you'll quit that!" He was right!

The first time I had to spend \$100.00 on a set of tires they almost had to peel the bills out of my hand. I had never even seen that much money in one place at one time and it was just like Dad said, it cured me. I stopped tearing things up just for sport when it started costing me.

6. A fool has a perverted mouth. *Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool* (Proverbs 19:1). This is manifested several ways. The obvious method is profanity, but there's even more to it than that.

Perverse lips can also mean disobedient speech—saying things that oppose the Word of God.

Another form is exaggeration. When a fool sees a little dog, he calls it a big one. When he sees a big dog, he says it's small. He's always exaggerating.

When he wants to act on Mark 11:23 and have what he says, he can't. He has already deceived himself. His heart doesn't know what he means and what he doesn't. Also, angels and devils don't care whether he's sincere or not. They just hear and respond to his words.

Don't misunderstand me; you shouldn't be in bondage to your words. I'm talking about those who are never serious. You can never get the right

answer out of them. They are always foolishly jesting.

Believers don't need those cute little things to sell themselves socially. We have the Spirit of God, faith and a godly personality that are all trying to come out. That's enough to put us over.

7. A fool trusts his own understanding (Proverbs 28:26). The Word of God tells us not to rely on our own insight, but to trust in the Lord with all of our heart. When we do, our **prosperity will not bring ruin because God is directing our paths** (Proverb 3:5-6, *Amplified Bible*).

8. A fool utters all of his mind (Proverbs 29:11). This is the person who says, "Bless God, I'm going to give them a piece of my mind." Nobody needs a share in that mess! It doesn't do any good, it only alienates.

This could also be the one who can't keep his mouth shut concerning spiritual things. Once the Holy Spirit begins to give him revelations and supernatural discerning, he blabs everything he knows. If God can't trust him with information, He can't trust him with wealth either.

9. A fool walks in darkness (Ecclesiastes 2:14). The Bible tells us to walk in the light. If we refuse to do it, we qualify as a fool and prosperity may destroy us. Walking in the dark, we may not know what to do with the abundance when it comes.

The next two are related.

10. A fool does not pay his vows and **11. God takes no pleasure in fools** (Ecclesiastes 5:4). You cannot imagine how many people have made faith promises to this ministry and have never followed through. **If the motive for making financial pledges is to put God in a corner and obligate Him to a hundredfold return on their giving, then they are out of line.**

That's foolish to begin with, but to make a pledge and then not pay it makes a person a fool in God's eyes.

If it were me and something came up that kept me from fulfilling my promise to a ministry, I'd at least give a portion of it. Then, I'd write and tell

them that I'll not give up, praise God.

I'll not quit, and when I have it, I'll send it. And then, I would encourage them with my faith and prayers. So many don't even do that, much less come up with what they have pledged.

12. God takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servants, but He receives no enjoyment from the foolish. The Book of Hebrews tells us that Jehovah was not pleased with the children of Israel because they failed in the wilderness. The same is true today. He is not pleased with us when we fail to keep our vows.

We don't receive offerings into this ministry just so that we can get something. It's so that fruit may abound to your account. You cannot give without receiving a return. Giving sets a law into motion. God uses your giving to bless you; that's why we receive gifts.

13. A fool is swallowed up by his own lips (Ecclesiastes 10:12). This is the man who is snared by his own words. He has no control over his mouth.

14. A fool says in his heart, "There is no God" (Psalm 14: 1). Someone might say, "Wait a minute, Brother Copeland, I've always believed in God. I'm born again and filled with the Holy Spirit." Though that same person might never speak it with his mouth, he may say it in his heart through his actions. He's like the one who thinks it's alright to watch an immoral movie or read a little pornographic trash. He is saying in his heart, "There is no God. " He doesn't think that he will reap what he SOWS.

This is when the devil is most insidious. Satan doesn't care whether we publicly proclaim to be an atheist or whether we are a fool as a believer, just so long as he can trap us.

Psalm 53:1 links it with corruption. *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they.* Destruction will be the result whether we believe it or not. These are laws and we can't cross them without a certain amount of financial decline being the result.

15. A fool is slow to believe in his heart (Luke 24:25). This last area spawns off the previous one. If a fellow hasn't given a part of his life to God, it is the same as saying in his heart that He doesn't exist. He is slow to believe and trust God with that aspect of his life. The Father can't afford to prosper this poor fellow because he will do more harm than good.

Spiritual and Physical Laws

We must understand that there are laws governing every single thing in existence. Nothing is by accident. There are laws of the world of the spirit, and there are laws of the world of the natural.

The laws of the natural realm govern our activities in this natural physical world. If the law of gravity were not in action, we would float. These are natural physical laws, and they govern this natural physical world.

We need to realize that the laws of the spiritual world are more powerful than the laws of the physical world. Spiritual law gave birth to physical law. The world and the physical forces governing it were created by the power of faith—a spiritual force. God, a spirit, created all matter, and He created it with the force of faith. Hebrews 11: 3 says, *..the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.* The law of gravity would be meaningless if gravity were not a real force. The force of gravity makes the law of gravity work. Faith is a spiritual force, a spiritual energy, a spiritual power. **The force of faith makes the laws of the spirit world function.**

Two Spiritual Laws

Romans 8:2 says, *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* There are two functional laws in the world of the spirit. One, **the law of sin and death**, was set in motion by Adam when he disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. The other, **the law of the Spirit of life**, was put into operation by Jesus Christ at His Resurrection. The law of the Spirit of life is the master law under which we operate as children of God. It supersedes the law of sin and death, and faith causes it to function. Salvation is available to every human being on the face of the earth, because the Word says that **anyone** who calls upon the

name of the Lord shall be saved (Joel 2:32; Romans 10:13). But this higher spiritual law of life will work only when it is put into action.

This same rule is true in prosperity. There are certain laws governing prosperity revealed in God's Word. Faith causes them to function. They will work when they are put to work, and they will stop when the force of faith is stopped.

The Bible says that God's Word is established forever and that it is law (1 Peter 1:25). When God speaks, His words become law in the world of the spirit. Jesus said, *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God* (Matthew 4:4).

Results

The success formulas in the Word of God produce results when used as directed. Mark 11:23 says, *...whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.* Here Jesus introduced a principle—a spiritual law—that works. It doesn't make sense to the natural mind that with faith you can have whatever you say, even though it may be contrary to what you can see with your physical eye; but Jesus said it, and by the eternal Almighty God, **it is so!** When you act on it, mix your faith with it and don't doubt in your heart, this spiritual law will work for you!

Take the following scriptures and **meditate** on them. Develop a true image of you and your family prospering based on what the Word of God says about you. **Believe** it in your heart.

Then **speak these scriptures out loud!** Put these spiritual laws to work. Claim them as your own. See yourself giving to the needs that are around you. Remember, **meeting the needs of others with God's power is what prosperity is all about.**

Let them shout for joy, and be glad, that favour my righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, which hath pleasure in the

prosperity of his servant. And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long (Psalm 35:27,28).

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 (Luke 6:38).

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:31-33).

Prayer for Salvation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Heavenly Father, I come to You in the Name of Jesus. Your Word says, "...whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Acts 2:21). I am calling on You. I pray and ask Jesus to come into my heart and be Lord over my life according to Romans 10:9-10. *"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."* I do that now. I confess that Jesus is Lord, and I believe in my heart that God raised Him from the dead.

I am now reborn! I am a Christian—a child of Almighty God! I am saved! You also said in Your Word, *"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: HOW MUCH MORE shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"* (Luke 11:13). I'm also asking You to fill me with the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit, rise up within me as I praise God. I fully expect to speak with other tongues as You give me the utterance (Acts 2:4).

(Begin to praise God for filling you with the Holy Spirit. Speak those words and syllables you receive—not in your own language, but the language

given to you by the Holy Spirit. You have to use your own voice. God will not force you to speak.) Now you are a Spirit-filled believer. Continue with the blessing God has given you and pray in tongues each day. You'll never be the same!

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