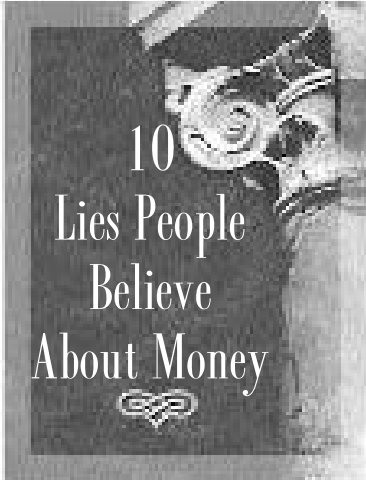


MONEY



Prosperity Is Simply Having Enough Of God's Provision To Complete His Instruction For Your Life.

One of the needs people write me about most is their financial problems. I know what it means to prosper and I also know what it means to be completely wiped out financially.

One of the tools satan uses to destroy incentive, goals and joy of accomplishment is financial difficulty. Read this chapter with an open mind toward God and how you can become a winner in the financial area of your life.

Lies are deadly. I thought of this when I read a recent account of an airplane crash. Chilling screams of terror tore into the cold night air. The explosion of metal. Helpless cries of torment and desperation. Families wiped out. Lifetime dreams shattered like glass upon concrete. Emotional scars forever engraved on the soul. Havoc. Destruction. Chaos. All in a matter of minutes.

Because somebody lied.

In the rush, the plane mechanics had failed to notice the tiny malfunction. Signaled that all was well, the pilot proceeded down the runway. *He accepted the opinion and judgment of others.*

It cost him his life.

Your happiness depends on something you are believing. Success or failure depends on your believing a lie or the truth. In marriage, in health, in spiritual matters and even in finances, what you believe makes *all* the difference. From Santa Claus to tooth fairies, all of us can remember moments we believed a lie. Sometimes harmless, sometimes devastating.

One of the greatest needs of life is *money*.

Sit with the minister counseling the young married couple—*money*.

Look at the youth in prison for stealing—*money*.

Listen to the missionary from Africa sharing the needs of his ministry—*money*.

Talk to the weary overworked husband—*money*.

Read the Holy Bible. The teachings of Jesus Christ include this power topic—*money*.

Thousands live unfulfilled and frustrated lives because they do not understand the truth about money.

LIE #1: *Money Is Unimportant.*

Recently, I sat in a coffee shop in the Dallas-Fort Worth airport. I listened as the waitress spoke of her long hours, small apartment and two children.

“Wouldn’t you like to be making *more* money?” I asked.

“No, I would not!” She replied indignantly. “That’s what is wrong with our world now: greed. I have enough for my bills and support for my two kids, and that’s all I want. People place too much emphasis on money. *Money is unimportant.*”

I could hardly believe my ears.

“Have you ever heard of Calcutta, India?”

“Yes,” she replied.

“Have you ever seen pictures of the starving children there?”

“Yes.”

“Have you ever sent them any money or food?”

“No.”

“Why not?” I asked.

“I haven’t had enough...” Her voice trailed off.

I could see in her eyes the truth had dawned. Money *does* count. Life hinges on it. *Money is the power part of our world.* With it we bargain, trade and exchange our way through life! Shelter, food, medical care, education, and even self-preservation involve money. Money is a basic method of communication between human beings. In war or peace, love or hate...*money talks.*

LIE #2: *Money Is Evil.*

Many people misquote the Bible verse when the Apostle Paul wrote Timothy: “For the love of money is the root of all evil...” (1 Timothy 6:10). It does not say that money is evil, but that the *love* of, or obsession for money is the root or beginning of evil. Why?

Because the love of money is *idolatry*. It is the worship of the creation instead of the Creator. *God is the owner of wealth*.

Haggai 2:8 says: “The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine, saith the Lord of hosts.”

God is the Giver of wealth. Deuteronomy 8:18: “But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth...”

When God gives you a gift, it must have value, importance and purpose for your life: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father...” (James 1:17).

God would never give evil gifts to His children.

It is the *misuse* and *abuse* of money that can be destructive. Not money itself. For example, *fire* destroys homes, beautiful forests and kills human beings. Yet, properly controlled, it is a tremendous tool for cooking food, warming houses and running automobile engines. *Flood waters* have drowned many human lives. Yet, water is necessary for human life. Cleanliness and even nature depend on it. So it is with *money*. It can be used for *good*!

As one humorist has said, “Money is not cold, hard cash, but warm, soft blessings!” “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 1:2).

LIE #3: *Money Never Hurt Anyone*.

This truth is undeniable: *Money will affect you*.

Why? What is behind the mysterious magnetism of gold? Men have killed for money. Men have deserted children and wife in search of gold. You see, the basic craving of man is a *sense of worth*, a sense of importance. Money represents *power*, influence, achievements and security. That is why money can be deceptive. Jesus referred to this as the “*deceitfulness of riches*” which arrested spiritual development (see Matthew 13:22). It is a false sense of security.

A wise and wealthy ruler advised, “For riches are not for ever...” and “...riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward Heaven” (Proverbs 27:24; Proverbs 23:5).

Money often produces pride. This is spiritually devastating (see Mark 10:25). Whatever consumes your time, whatever you think about most is really your “god” (see Matthew 6:24). God refuses to compete and guarantees that “he that trusteth in his riches shall fall...” (Proverbs 11:28). Yes, money can hurt you.

LIE #4: *Money Will Cure Your Problems And Guarantee Personal Happiness.*

Unfortunately, the opposite is true in many cases (see Ecclesiastes 5:12). The rich sometimes feel that their friendships are fragile and plastic, based on their possessions and not themselves. Bitter, frustrated and lonely, some have even committed suicide.

Think for a moment. Are you still content with your last salary increase? Probably not. Ecclesiastes 5:10 says: “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver.” “Neither is his eye satisfied with riches...” (Ecclesiastes 4:8).

It is having a *purpose* in life, not possessions, that is truly satisfying. And that purpose can only be realized in the person Jesus Christ. “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:12).

▶ Unbelievers often ignore the *problems of prosperity*.

▶ Believers often ignore the *purpose for prosperity*.

Whether it is the deterioration of a marriage, or the moral fiber of an entire nation, man’s basic problem is *spiritual*.

LIE #5: *Some Are Gifted For Wealth And Some Are Destined For Poverty.*

This ridiculous lie has destroyed initiative, drive and motivation in many would-be winners throughout the world. Many capable people have believed, “Whatever *is*, was *meant* to be.” *Nonsense!*

The truth is, through development of your God-given *talents* and the principles of *giving*, you determine the financial Harvest of your life.

“Hard work means prosperity; only a fool idles away his time...Work hard and become a leader; be lazy and never succeed” (Proverbs 12:11,24 TLB).

“Work brings profit; talk brings poverty!” (Proverbs 14:23 TLB).

Jesus said, “Give, and it shall be given unto you...” (Luke 6:38).

Solomon said, “There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself” (Proverbs 11:24,25).

God explained that financial curse or financial blessing depended on the *attitude of obedience*: “*Blessed* shalt thou be...” (read

Deuteronomy 28:1-14) or “cursed shalt thou be...” (read Deuteronomy 28:15-68). Malachi 3:8-11 reveals the reason many are not prosperous: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

LIE #6: *God Does Not Want You To Be Financially Prosperous.*

This is absurd! The *necessities* of our lives, and the *needs* of others demand financial blessings. Jesus assured us, “...your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things” (Matthew 6:32). The Apostle Paul denounced the man who would not provide for his family: “But if any provide not for his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” (1 Timothy 5:8).

God Is Your Source. “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good things to them that ask Him?” (Matthew 7:11).

God Gives Wealth. “But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth...” (Deuteronomy 8:18). He promised Solomon: “...I will give thee riches, and wealth...” (2 Chronicles 1:12). God “hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant” (Psalm 35:27).

Money is a tool. While money may become a *snare* for the unbeliever, it is the Christian’s *tool for evangelization*. There are two types of achievers in the Christian world...

1) Those who GO. “He said unto them, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

2) Those who SEND. “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!” (Romans 10:14,15).

Money in the hands of Christians is a threat to satan. As we

spread the gospel, the timing of the return of Christ is even affected.

Satan's period of power can be shortened when believers use prosperity as a tool for God's work! "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). Through our giving, missionaries are sent, Christian television and radio stations established, churches built, and Bibles printed. Prosperity is much more than Rolls Royce's and palaces. *Prosperity is having enough of God's supply to complete His instructions for your life—enough of His provisions to accomplish His commands.*

LIE #7: *There Is Nothing You Can Do About Your Financial Situation.*

While losers wait for some "magic moment of luck," the Winner works God's Principles of Prosperity.

Your financial circumstances depend on three factors:

Spending—following God's timing for *purchases*.

Saving—the discipline of planning ahead (see Proverbs 6:6).

Sharing—releasing offerings into ministries in the work of God for spreading the gospel (see 2 Corinthians 9:6).

LIE #8: *Regularity Of Giving And Amount Of Your Seed Does Not Really Matter To God.*

Wrong. Inconsistent, erratic giving does not produce a consistent Harvest. The successful farmer depends on the regularity of evolving seasons, not momentary feelings: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him..." (1 Corinthians 16:2). Whether weekly or monthly, establish the success *pattern* of consistent giving to your home church and various ministries that bless you.

Jesus noted the size of offerings (read Mark 12:42-44). He respected "sacrificial giving;" doing without temporal things temporarily, to secure the eternal benefits. The attitude is revealed by the amount we keep for ourselves, and that which is given back to God: "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).

LIE #9: *Money Is An Unspiritual Subject And Not To Be Discussed In Church.*

Ridiculous! The Bible is filled with warnings and promises regarding riches and wealth.

Money lovers must be *warned*.

The *giver* should be *encouraged*.

Money is a major part of our daily life. The minister is responsible for putting *balance* to its importance.

Offering time in churches is *worship time*.

Offering time is *investment time*.

Offering time is a period of *ministering* unto God and to our own future.

Offering time is a season of thanksgiving and appreciation.

A Personal Word To Ministers

Oh, my minister friend, take time to *inform* your people of the Principles of Blessing in God's Word! How else will they know? Do not let a cynical sinner or critical church member limit or dilute your revelation on financial blessing.

The Bible teaches it. God must assuredly value the *giving system*. Certainly offerings deserve more time than a three-minute "usher-rush" to the back of the church! Take time to *inform* your people. *Information breeds confidence*. And, they have a right to be a part of God's *reward-systems*.

LIE #10: *It Is Selfish And Wrong To Give Expecting To Receive More In Return.*

Though this lie makes little sense, thousands believe it. Wearing the mask of false humility, a man approached me recently with a proud, Pharisee strut. "I think it is selfish to want something in return. When I give, I expect nothing back from God," he snorted. His blatant ignorance and desire to advertise it appalled me! I had to ask him three questions.

"When you gave your *life* to Christ, did you expect *forgiveness* in return?"

"Uh, yes," he replied nervously.

"Aha! Selfish, were you?" I responded.

"When you are *sick*, do you expect *healing*?"

"Yes," his reply was a bit slow.

“I see. Selfish streak there. Then when you became a Christian, you gave God what *you* had, to get what *He* had for you? Peace of mind, inner joy?”

He began to grin sheepishly. “I see what you mean.”

Oh, my friend, listen to me today! *Your expectation is faith.* Nothing pleases your Father more. You see, the God-man relationship is based on *exchange*. Life itself is based on *exchange*.

God wants your heart. You want *His* peace.

God wants your will. You want *His* plan.

Deuteronomy 28 promises that your *obedience* will bring God's *blessing*. You give God what He wants, and in return He gives you the desires of your heart (read Deuteronomy 28:1,2).

If a father offers \$5 to his son to wash the car, he does it to *motivate*. *It is not wrong for the son to wash the car to receive \$5!* While the son acted in obedience to please his father, the money was the incentive.

Selfishness Versus Self-Care

Self-care is wanting something good for yourself. That is not evil. You want salvation. You want peace, success and victory for your life. *God* wants you to have it.

Selfishness is *depriving another to advantage yourself.* Selfish people willingly hurt others to get ahead. This is an abomination to God.

God placed a desire for *more* inside your heart. When it becomes distorted and magnified, it is destructive. When focused on God and His principles, it is the energy for your progress in life. Dare to reach up! Dare to grow! Dare to *expect* financial blessings as you share the gospel. *Jesus gave it for motivation* in 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...”

Your strongest desire should be to please your Father, *regardless* of the cost. The proof of your faith is in your *expectation* of *Harvest*. *Your release determines your increase.*

Giving is God's cure for greed.

It reveals your faith that He is your Provider.

It shows you care about others.

It is God's investment plan for His children.

And, it works!

Perhaps your greatest problem is not financial, but spiritual or physical. God's laws of giving and receiving are effective in all areas.

If you are lacking a relationship with God, *you must give in order to receive*. Give your heart, mind, soul and spirit! Let go of your past failures, sins and guilt. *Receive* Jesus as Lord, eternal life, healing for your disease, financial prosperity and forgiveness! Receive now the mentality of a victorious and successful *Winner!*

Your Credit Cage

Learn to break the bars of the credit cage. “The borrower is servant to the lender” (Proverbs 22:7). Impulse buying and pride-motivated purchasing can paralyze your chances for prosperity. Romans 13:8: “Owe no man anything, but to love one another...”

Determine to get debt-free.

Study the methods of others who have already achieved financial success.

100-Fold Return

Activate the principles of tithing and Seed-faith. Even the Pharisees were commended by Jesus for tithing (see Matthew 23:23). The best investment you can make is in God’s work. Mark 10:29,30 says: “And Jesus answered and said, 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.”

God guaranteed abundance in Malachi 3, as the resulting rewards for obedience for sowing our finances into His work. Start giving *regularly and liberally, with expectation!* The *amount and attitude* determine your Harvest.

“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).

“But this I say, he which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully” (2 Corinthians 9:6).

RECOMMENDED BOOKS AND TAPES ON THIS TOPIC

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| B-22 | Seeds Of Wisdom On Prosperity (32 pages/\$3) |
| B-99 | Secrets Of The Richest Man Who Ever Lived (179 pages/\$10) |
| TS-38 | 31 Reasons People Do Not Receive Their Financial Harvest (Six tapes/\$30) |



You Have No Right
To Anything
You Have Not Pursued.

-MIKE MURDOCK

