

The Power Of Generosity

“Never worry about numbers. Help one person at a time and always start with the person nearest you.”

Mother Teresa [1910-1997] | missionary to Calcutta, Nobel Peace Prize winner

Is having a lot of money the key to everything? Does money bring happiness? Does money bring solutions to life’s problems? If you had a limitless amount of money and could buy anything you wanted, what would you buy? When would you stop buying, gathering, grasping and grabbing?

Our wealth does not come from what we grab in life, but from what we give in life. Some of the wealthiest men in the world gathered in 1923 at the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. This group of seven was worth more than the entire US Treasury in their time. These were great financial men with records of success who had achieved great prosperity. But this was not the end of their story. Within twenty-five years the president of the largest steel company had died penniless. A millionaire wheat speculator had also become poor. Another, who was the president of the New York Stock Exchange, had already spent many years in prison. Yet another of the wealthy seven who was a member of the president’s cabinet had spent time in prison, but was pardoned so that he could die at home. The fifth of the seven committed suicide and the sixth man, who headed one of the world’s largest companies, also had taken his life. The seventh, and last, of the world’s richest men took his life.

Calamity or Favor?

“There is no harm in possessing riches, so long as the riches do not possess you.”

Will your money become your blessing or your curse? Can money buy happiness? Can it buy contentment? How about peace of mind? Contrast the previous men of wealth with the founder of the Quaker Oats Company who gave 70 percent of his income to God. Or contrast the Chicago Seven to the

wealthy father of many nations. Abraham was a great man of faith, but also a very wealthy individual. Solomon was probably the richest man of his day. Barnabas, an early New Testament local church leader, was also very wealthy but used his money and affluence to extend the kingdom of God.

James 5:1-3 speaks to the wealthy who would use their money for personal gratification. He tells them that they will weep and howl because of all the misery that is coming upon them. He boldly says that their gold and silver is plagued and their precious metals will soon rust. James points out how foolish it is to value and esteem one's riches so highly and, in doing so, how corrupt one can become.

There is no harm in possessing riches, so long as the riches do not possess you.

There is no harm in possessing riches, so long as the riches do not possess you. Jesus recommended that we not stockpile our treasures in this life, at the expense of accumulating our treasures for the hereafter. In other words, if one is a long-term planner and visionary, it makes much more sense to accumulate wealth for the long haul in eternity. Time here on earth is the short haul, the temporary vapor of life. Life in eternity—life in heaven—is the long-term commitment.

Remember, you own nothing and God owns everything. Whatever you have, God allowed you to accumulate. When you die, you won't take your new BMW with you. You can't take diamond rings and precious jewelry with you. Neither can you take your house. You won't take any of the possessions you have managed to accumulate here on earth.

Capability To Success Is God-Given

Your heavenly Father allows you to possess certain things, but mere possession is not ownership. Those things that you possess can be taken from you in an instant. The scores of dishonest accounting firms and corrupt corporate CEO's of our day have seen to that.

“You can possess, but it is God who owns. You may earn a living, but God is the one who gives you the power to get wealth.”

Billions of honest dollars invested by millions of wage earners have disappeared. Wage earners have seen their retirement savings disappear in a matter of mere months.

You can possess, but it is God who owns. You may earn a living, but God is the one who gives you the power to get wealth.

Let's review what the Scripture says about just how much you really own:

But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth...

Deuteronomy 8:18 NIV

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it.

Psalm 24:1 NIV

For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine.

Psalm 50:10,11 NIV

Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

Psalm 100:3 NIV

For every living soul belongs to me.

Ezekiel 18:4 NIV

"The silver is mine and the gold is mine," declares the LORD Almighty.

Haggai 2:8 NIV

For in him we live and move and have our being.

Acts 17:28 NIV

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God

Romans 12:1 NIV

You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

I Corinthians 6:19-20 NIV

A Channel of God's Blessing

Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father...

James 1:16,17 NIV

One man gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. A liberal man will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.

Proverbs 11:24 RSV

When you understand who really owns everything, you won't always be trying to benefit yourself with possessions. You will begin to bless others.

When you collaborate with God, He will prosper you! When God becomes your source, then your well will never run dry. When we become Christians, we become children of God. And the Bible says that God wants to give good gifts to His children.

But God also wants to be sure that we are more interested in pleasing Him than pleasing ourselves. What is your motive for being in business? Is it so that you can accumulate a lot of money and possessions to hoard for yourself? Or are you in business to help bless others?

God is interested in your motives. Can you be trusted with prosperity? Jesus said in Matthew 6:33, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (KJV).

Our motives and priorities must summed up in “God first, me last.” Sometimes we get jealous of the success of others who are not Christians. They seem to be happy and rich, while enjoying a life of luxury. A musician and prophet in Old Testament times by the name of Asaph said, “I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked” (Psalm 73:3 KJV).

There are ungodly men and women who may achieve material prosperity apart from God. But they can never achieve the deep inner peace that comes from God. Riches gained without God are a snare and do not bring peace. But the prosperity that comes from God brings, not only an abundance of possessions, but also emotional peace, happiness and great joy.

Do you know why some very wicked people are rich today? The Bible gives us a very simple explanation. The wicked who are rich are simply holding the wealth that someday God will give to His children.

And the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the righteous.
Proverbs 13:22 ASV

God is Your Provider!

And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches.
Philippians 4:19 NKJ

Notice the Scripture does not say that the company that employs you will provide for your needs. Neither does it say the local banker or loan officer will supply your needs. Nor does it say that the welfare department of your government will supply your needs. It says that God, and no one else, will supply your needs.

God is your only Source! It's not your job that provides your income. It is God that provides for your needs being met.

This story has been told through many generations. It is about a Christian family that was going through some very tough times. They were so destitute that they didn't even have food for their next meal. The father and mother got down on their knees and cried out to God for food so their children would not go hungry. A man who was not a Christian was walking by their house and heard their prayer. Instead of feeling bad for them, he decided to play a trick on them.

He went down to the grocery store and bought a huge box of groceries, put it on their front porch and rang the doorbell. When the Christian parents saw the groceries on the porch, they immediately began to thank God for it. Just then the unbeliever walked up and said, "Why are you thanking God? I'm the one who placed the groceries there." The Christian father replied, "Oh no, it was God who answered our prayer and provided the groceries. But I do want to thank you for being His delivery boy and bringing them to us!"

"Nothing happens in the economy of God until you give something away."

Don't make the mistake of thinking that your job or your business is what provides your income. God is the source of your abundant supply. Jobs disappear; even large companies cease to exist. Your clients and your customers

in your business will always come and go. It is God who sees to it that your needs are being met.

Everyone and everything else is just His instrument for getting it accomplished. God uses many vehicles to get the job done, but in the end, it is not our own strength, but God's blessing upon our lives.

Generosity: Activation of Blessing & Provision

Giving is the trigger for God's financial miracles. When you give to the kingdom of God, it will be given back to you. But where will it come from? Who will give to you? Will God cause money to float down from heaven so that your needs will be met? No. The Bible says, "...shall men give into your(life)." This is how the cycle of blessing works. When you give to God, He in turn causes others to give to you. Perhaps it will be in the form of new customers to your business, new products to sell and so on. When God owns your business, He will bring success to it as you faithfully stand on the principles of His Word.

Give, and it shall be given unto you.
Luke 6:38 KJV

Nothing happens in the economy of God until you give something away. It is a universal law of God. Paul very appropriately reminds us:

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.
II Corinthians 9:6 NIV