

Prosperity & the Kingdom of God, pt.3

The Phases of Prosperity

2 Cor.9.6–15

Introduction

1. Review – the diff betw riches & prosperity; it's God's will to prosper His people; poverty is a curse; God uses the business community to eradicate this curse; be a giver – generosity is a prosperity magnet, it draws the favor of God.
2. Read Text & context (9.6–8)
3. God wants to prosper His children. You don't have to convince Him of this like a reluctant father being dragged to the pool by his kids
4. Prosperity of soul testimony

The Foundation – God is the source – 9.10

- There must be a recognition that everything we have is from God. He is both the source of the seed and the prosperity.
- “God's Pies” video
- God wants to bless His children. He is good & is in a good mood.

Phase 1 – Planting of seeds (Sowing)

- You have to sow the seeds first – 9.6
 - This is basic farming 101. You can't get a harvest w/o first planting. Don't wait until you have enough to plant, b/c you never will. You start with your current level
 - Address young people to begin giving now
 - Ex of kernel of corn producing three ears on a stalk of corn
 - If you keep the seeds you will never enter into prosperity; you'll keep looking for the day that you'll have enough left over.
 - Gen.8.22; Mak.4.26–29

- Quit waiting for the big deal to come through; all the debt to be paid; until you make more than minimum wage; pay off school loans, etc. plant the seeds now.
- You decide the level of return – 9.6
 - This isn't about our motivation for giving, "the more I give the more I get", but about freeing us from the fear, "will I have enough to cover my needs?"
 - Luke 6.38. If you're generous with your giving, forgiving, encouraging, loving, trusting, blessing, etc. you'll receive it abundantly in return.
 - Like begets like. This isn't a get rich quick scheme, but rather a law of life. It's true in nature & true with finances.
- You determine the amount & attitude – 9.7
 - All of this is a heart issue...in the natural your heart does things grudgingly. You must ask God to turn you into a cheerful giver.
 - Robert Morris story in the Blessed Life, p.164f. He turned from a grudging giver into a cheerful one.
 - God is full of joy & He loves to give...ask for His heart.
 - What helps me is seeing the difference my gifts make in the lives of others. I hold the check & I see the lives that have been changed through the ministry of this church. Our giving isn't about paying the bills. It's about giving to God's Kingdom to see it advance in lives of others and through the community.

Phase 2 – Plenty for you (Harvesting)

- Law of the harvest – you receive a whole lot more than you plant. Consider farmers & planting. One ear of corn will potentially create over 1000 – 1600 ears of corn.
- V.8 – If you give generously and lavishly, God promises not only to meet your needs but to increase what you have so you can give more.

- Reviewing our giving in our checkbook. I give more to receive more, so I can give more. It don't want to meet my needs only, but the needs of others also.
- There is always the hesitancy to give generously, b/c we wonder if we'll have enough to pay the bills, etc. Our focus becomes whether we have sufficient enough money, but we must remember that God is our sufficiency, not the money. It's idolatry to trust in money
 - Elijah & the ravens & the angel (1 Kings 17.6 & 19.5-6, 8)
- Obedience leads to God's favor - John 14.21, 23. Through your obedience in the area of giving, Jesus promises to reveal himself to you & his Father make His home among you! That sounds like prosperity to me!

Phase 3 - Petitions & praise (Blessings)

- V.11b-15: Others are benefited...their lives are enriched; they bless God for you; they have come to know God better b/c of your gifts;
- V.14 - they will pray for you with deep affection b/c of you.
 - Ex of Kristi Edwards & PHC ministries.
 - They are thanking God for our seed & we are thanking God that he allowed us to sow.
- How many have been members at Willow for 25 years or more? We are blessed by God b/c of your faithfulness over the years. Our lives are not the same b/c of you. We know God better and have a strong relationship b/c of you; we are your spiritual offspring & we bless you in Jesus' name.
- This is a living of example of what Paul is saying in these verses.

Conclusion

- Summarize