



Why do you believe what you believe?

CAN YOU EXPLAIN & DEFINE BIBLICALLY THE BELIEFS THAT YOU HOLD TO & LOCATE THEM IN THE BIBLE?

Date: _____

PROSPERITY & GENEROSITY

BEFORE WE CAN FULLY ADDRESS THESE TWO TOPICS THERE ARE A FEW KEY ELEMENTS WE NEED TO DISCUSS

THE WARNING!!!!

PROSPERITY THEOLOGY (PT)

Sometimes referred to as the **prosperity gospel**, the **health and wealth gospel**, the **gospel of success**, or **seed faith**) is a FALSE religious belief among some Protestant Christians that financial blessing and physical well-being are always the will of God for them, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one's material wealth. Prosperity theology views the Bible as a contract between God and humans: if humans have faith in God, he will deliver security and prosperity.

The doctrine emphasizes the importance of personal empowerment, proposing that it is God's will for his people to be blessed. The atonement VM(reconciliation with God) is interpreted to include the alleviation of sickness and, which are viewed as curses to be broken by faith. This is believed to be achieved through donations of money, visualization, and positive confession.

TRANSLATIONS MATTER DEFINITIONS MATTER & BOTH CAN SKEW OUR UNDERSTANDING

PROVERBS 21:21 (NIV) Whoever pursues righteousness and love finds life, *prosperity* and honor.

PROSPERITY AS ACCORDING TO THE DICTIONARY | a successful, flourishing, or thriving condition, especially in financial respects; good fortune.

SYNONYMS FOR *prosperity*

ACCOMPLISHMENT, BENEFIT, BOOM, EXPANSION, GROWTH, INFLATION, INTEREST, RICHES, SUCCESS, WEALTH, WELFARE, WELL-BING

1 Corinthians 16:2 ² On the first day of every week each one of you is to put something aside, in proportion to his prosperity, and save it so that no collections [will need to] be made when I come.

2137. euodoó

to help on the road, i.e. (passively) succeed in reaching; figuratively, to succeed in business affairs -- (have a) prosper(-ous journey).

PHILIPPIANS 4:12 ² I know how to get along and live humbly [in difficult times], and I also know how to enjoy abundance *and* live in prosperity. In any and every circumstance I have learned the secret [of facing life], whether well-fed or going hungry, whether having an abundance or being in need.

4052. perisseuó

Indicates abundance or surplus) – properly, exceed, go beyond the expected measure, i.e. above and beyond

PROVERBS 21:21 in nearly EVERY other translation

uses the word... **RIGHTEOUSNESS**
Whoever pursues righteousness and love finds life, **RIGHTEOUSNESS** and honor.

THE HEBREW WORD is *tsedaqah* . . . THIS IS HOW IT IS USED IN ORDER OF USAGE

- justice, righteousness
- righteousness (in government)
- of judge, ruler, king
- of law
- of Davidic king Messiah
- righteousness (of God's attribute)
- righteousness (in a case or cause)
- righteousness, truthfulness
- righteousness (as ethically right)
- righteousness (as vindicated), justification, salvation
- of God
- prosperity (of people)
- righteous acts

NOW THAT WE HAVE AN UNDERSTANDING OF PROSPERITY – WHAT ABOUT GENEROSITY?

GENEROSITY AS ACCORDING TO THE DICTIONARY

readiness or liberality in giving. freedom from meanness or smallness of mind or character. largeness or fullness; amplitude

SYNONYMS FOR *generosity*

GOODNESS, HOSPITALITY, KINDNESS,
LARGESSE, UNSELFISHNESS

ROMANS 12:8 ⁸ or he who encourages, in the act of encouragement; he who gives, with generosity; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy [in caring for others], with cheerfulness.

572. haplotés simplicity, sincerity, purity, graciousness. openness of heart manifesting itself by benefactions, liberality

**THE NEXT KEY ELEMENT IS:
PERSPECTIVE**

PROVERBS 22:2 The rich and poor have a common bond; The Lord is the Maker of them all.

WHETHER RICH OR POOR

1 COR 4:7 For who regards you as superior or what sets you apart as special? What do you have that you did not receive [from another]? And if in fact you received it [from God or someone else], why do you boast as if you had not received it [but had gained it by yourself]?

HE GIVES WEALTH

1 COR 10:26 For the [whole] earth is the Lord's, and everything that is in it.

HE OWNS EVERYTHING

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WITHOUT THE RIGHT CHARACTER... WE CAN MAKE GREVIOUS ERRORS

JAMES 5:3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. You have stored up your treasure in the last days [when it will do you no good].

LIKE HOARDING

1 TIM 6:9-10 But those who [are not financially ethical and] crave to get rich [with a compulsive, greedy longing for wealth] fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction [leading to personal misery]. ¹⁰ For the love of money [that is, the greedy desire for it and the willingness to gain it unethically] is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves [through and through] with many sorrows.

OR BECOMING GREEDY

At What Cost?

1 TIM 6:17 As for the rich in this present world, instruct them not to be conceited *and* arrogant, nor to set their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly and ceaselessly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

A FALSE SENSE OF TRUST

REV 3:17 Because you say, "I am rich, and have prospered and grown wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked [without hope and in great need],

THE SIN OF PRIDE

ULTIMATELY REJECTING GOD

MATTHEW 19:16-22 And someone came to Him and said, "Teacher, what [essentially] good thing shall I do to obtain eternal life [that is, eternal salvation in the Messiah's kingdom]?" ¹⁷ Jesus answered, "Why are you asking Me about what is [essentially] good? There is *only* One who is [essentially] good; but if you wish to enter into *eternal* life, keep the commandments." ¹⁸ He said to Jesus, "Which commandments?" And Jesus answered, "You shall not commit murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not give false testimony; ¹⁹ Honor your father and mother; and love your neighbor as yourself" [that is, unselfishly seek the best or higher good for others]. ²⁰ The young man said to Him, "I have kept all these things [from my youth]; what do I still lack?" ²¹ Jesus answered him, "If you wish to be perfect [that is, have the spiritual maturity that accompanies godly character with no moral or ethical deficiencies], go and sell what you have and give [the money] to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me [becoming My disciple, believing and trusting in Me and walking the same path of life that I walk]." ²² **But when the young man heard**

this, he left grieving and distressed, for he owned much property and had many possessions [which he treasured more than his relationship with God].

THERE IS A POSITIVE SIDE OF RICHES

ACTS 4:34-37 There was not a needy person among them, because those who were owners of land or houses were selling them, and bringing the proceeds of the sales³⁵ and placing the money down at the apostles’ feet. Then it was distributed to each as anyone had need.³⁶ Now Joseph, a Levite and native of Cyprus, who was surnamed Barnabas by the apostles (which translated means Son of Encouragement),³⁷ sold a field belonging to him and brought the money and set it at the apostles’ feet.

WE CAN HELP THE POOR

IN 1 SAMUEL 25:2-35 We read about a very rich man in Carmel who as very harsh & evil in his dealings. He owned thousands of sheep & goats. He was truly blessed to have his wife Abigail, she was intelligent and beautiful.

There came a time that King David sought this man’s favor – asking only that he would “let my young men find favor in your sight [and be well-treated], for we have come on a good (festive) day. Please, give whatever you find at hand to your servants and to your son David.” But, Nabal responded out of his arrogance & King David was literally going to slaughter them... until

¹⁴ But one of *Nabal's* young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, "Listen, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to bless (greet) our master, and he shouted at them [in contempt]. ¹⁵ But *David's* men were very good to us, and we were not harmed or treated badly, nor did we miss anything as long as we were with them, when we were in the fields. ¹⁶ They were a wall [of protection] to us both night and day, all the time that we were with them tending the sheep. ¹⁷ Now then, know this and consider what you should do, for evil is [already] planned against our master and against all his household; but he is such a worthless *and* wicked man that one cannot speak [reasonably] to him."

Abigail in her wisdom rushes to meet David. . .

So Abigail knelt at his feet, pleaded her cause & came bearing gifts. . . .³² David said to

Abigail, **"Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me this**

day. ³³ **And blessed be your discretion and discernment, and blessed be you, who has kept me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself by my own hand.** ³⁴ Nevertheless, as the Lord the

God of Israel lives, who has prevented me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, most certainly by the morning light there would not have been left to Nabal so much as one male." ³⁵ **So David accepted**

what she had brought to him and said to her, "Go up to your house in peace. See, I have listened to you and have granted your request."

IT CAN BRING PEACE

**BUT, WHAT DOES GOD
COMMAND ABOUT WEALTH?**

1 CHR 29:12 Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all. In Your hand is power and might; and it is in Your hands to make great and to give strength to everyone.

**WE ARE TO...
ACKNOWLEDGE THAT GOD IS THE
SOURCE OF ALL THINGS**

1 TIM 6:18 *Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, willing to share [with others].*

**TO RECOGNIZE THAT IT'S TO BE USED
IN GOD'S SERVICE**

EPH 4:28 The thief [who has become a believer] must no longer steal, but instead he must work hard [making an honest living], producing that which is good with his own hands, so that he will have something to share with those in need.

USE IT TO HELP THOSE IN NEED

MATT 6:19-21 “Do not store up for yourselves [material] treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.²⁰ But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do

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not break in and steal; ²¹ for where your treasure is, there your heart [your wishes, your desires; that on which your life centers] will be also.

TO NOT STORE IT UP BUT TO SHOW WHERE OUR HEART REALLY IS

PSALM 62:10 Do not trust in oppression, And do not vainly hope in robbery; If riches increase, do not set your heart on them.

TO NOT TRUST IN RICHES

COL 3:5 So put to death *and* deprive of power the evil longings of your earthly body [with its sensual, self-centered instincts] immorality, impurity, *sinful* passion, evil desire, and greed, which is [a kind of] idolatry [because it replaces your devotion to God].

TO NOT BE GREEDY

MATT 6:24-25 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon [money, possessions, fame, status, or whatever is valued more than the Lord].

HE EXPLAINS THAT... WE CANNOT SERVE 2 MASTERS

RICHES ARE...

PROVERBS 27:24 For riches are not forever, Nor does a crown *endure* to all generations.

FLEETING

MATT 6:19 “Do not store up for yourselves [material] treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.

CORRUPTIBLE

1 PETER 1:18 For you know that you were not redeemed from your useless [spiritually unproductive] way of life inherited [by tradition] from your forefathers with perishable things like silver and gold,

PERISHABLE

1 TIM 6:17 As for the rich in this present world, instruct them not to be conceited and arrogant, nor to set their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly *and* ceaselessly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

UNCERTAIN

ECC 4:8 There was a certain man—without a dependent, having neither a child nor a brother, yet there was no end to all his labor. Indeed, his eyes were not satisfied with riches and he never asked, “For whom do I labor and deprive myself of pleasure?” This too is vanity (a wisp of smoke, self-conceit); yes, it is a painful effort *and* an unhappy task.

UNSATISFYING

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MATT 13:22 And the one on whom seed was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the worries and distractions of the world and the deceitfulness [the superficial pleasures and delight] of riches choke the word, and it yields no fruit.

DECEITFUL

HERE'S THE SAME STORY DIFFERENT ACCOUNT... SPIRITUALLY DANGEROUS

LUKE 18:18-25 A certain ruler asked Him, "Good Teacher [You who are essentially and morally good], what shall I do to inherit eternal life [that is, eternal salvation in the Messiah's kingdom]?" ¹⁹ Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is [essentially and morally] good except God alone. ²⁰ You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not testify falsely, Honor your father and your mother.'" ²¹ He replied, "I have kept all these things from my youth." ²² When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "You still lack one thing; sell everything that you have and distribute the money to the poor, and you will have [abundant] treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me [becoming My disciple, believing and trusting in Me and walking the same path of life that I walk]." ²³ But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. ²⁴ Jesus looked at him and said, "How difficult it is for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!" ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go

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through the eye of a needle than for a rich man [who places his faith in wealth or status] to enter the kingdom of God.”

TRUE RICHES ARE SPIRITUAL

**BECAUSE
JESUS IS WORTH EVERYTHING**

PHIP 3:7-8 But whatever *former* things were gains to me [as I thought then], these things [once regarded as advancements in merit] I have come to consider as loss [absolutely worthless] for the sake of Christ [and the purpose which He has given my life]. ⁸ But more than that, I count everything as loss compared to the priceless privilege and supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord [and of growing more deeply and thoroughly acquainted with Him—a joy unequalled]. For His sake I have lost everything, and I consider it all garbage, so that I may gain Christ,

**& HE
BRINGS TRUE WEALTH**

1 PETER 1:7 So that the genuineness of your faith, which is much more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested *and* purified by fire, may be found to result in [your] praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

**BECAUSE THROUGH HIM
ALL THINGS ARE OURS**

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1 CO 3:21-23 So let no one boast in men [about their wisdom, or of having this or that one as a leader]. For all things are yours, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas (Peter) or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things are yours, ²³ and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God.

OUR MISSION IS TO... BE RICH IN GOOD WORKS

1 TIM 6:18-19 *Instruct them* to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, willing to share [with others]. ¹⁹ In this way storing up for themselves the enduring riches of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.

HOW'S YOUR HEART?

⁶ Now [remember] this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows generously [that blessings may come to others] will also reap generously [and be blessed]. **2 COR 9:6**

HOW'S YOUR ATTITUDE?

⁸ And God is able to make all grace [every favor and earthly blessing] come in abundance to you, so that you may always [under all circumstances, regardless of the need] have complete sufficiency in everything [being completely self-sufficient in Him], and have an abundance for every good work *and* act of charity. **2 COR 9:8**

WHAT CAN YOU GIVE?

WHAT DOES “GOD FIRST” MEAN?

NOW, THERE IS AN EVEN DEEPER TRUTH THAT WE MUST COME TO...

[in] Christ

We Have Been
SET FREE TO GIVE

DOES ANY OF THE FOLLWING SOUND FAMILIAR?

MALACHI 3:10 ¹⁰ Bring all the tithes (the tenth) into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the Lord of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you [so great] a blessing until there is no more room to receive it.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND FROM A NEW TESTAMENT BELIEVER’S PERSPECTIVE WHY THIS IS WRONG?

IT SAYS IN MALACHI 3:8-9 ⁸ “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings [you have withheld]. ⁹ You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, this whole nation!

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LET'S LOOK AT **Deuteronomy**
27:26 Amplified Bible (AMP)

²⁶ 'Cursed is he who does not confirm the words of this law by doing them [keeping them, taking them to heart as the rule of his life].' And all the people shall say, 'Amen.'

THE PROBLEM ISN'T "THAT IT'S NOT THE WORD OF GOD" BUT RATHER, "WHO IT IS APPLIED TO"

PAUL SAYS IN GALATIANS 3:19 ¹⁰ For all who depend on the Law [seeking justification and salvation by obedience to the Law and the observance of rituals] are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed (condemned to destruction) is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, so as to practice them."

Paul is fighting for Christian freedom. Knowing that to introduce the law at ANY stage is to put them under a curse. Why? Because the only "pass" under the law is 100%. If you can't keep them ALL – you break the law.

**CHRIST
SET FREE TO GIVE**

**IT MOVES FROM OBLIGATION TO
HEART LITIGATION**

2 CORINTHIANS 9:7 Let each one give [thoughtfully and with purpose] just as he has decided in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver [and delights in the one whose heart is in his gift].

**INCOME TIME TALENTS GIFTS ABILITIES
RETIREMENT FUNDS STOCKS BONDS
HOME CAR JEWELRY HAS THE *AMERICAN
DREAM* ROBBED GOD OF YOUR
OBEDIENCE?**

**IN THE BIBLE...
WAS RETIREMENT "FUN IN THE SUN"
OR WAS IT "DEATH"**

**WE LIVE IN A SOCIETY DRIVEN BY VISION
BOARDS**



**I'M ASKING...
DO WE NEED A PERSPECTIVE CHANGE?**

**THE NEW TESTAMENT HEART IS DRIVEN BY
GIVING**

WHAT IF... YOU CREATED A GIVING BOARD?

WHAT DOES EXTREME GENEROSITY LOOK LIKE FROM AN ACTS CHURCH VIEWPOINT?

ACTS 2:44-48 ⁴⁴ And all those who had believed [in Jesus as Savior] were together and had all things in common [considering their possessions to belong to the group as a whole]. ⁴⁵ And they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing the proceeds with all [the other believers], as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ Day after day they met in the temple [area] continuing with one mind, and breaking bread in various private homes. They were eating their meals together with joy and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God *continually*, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord kept adding to their number daily those who were being saved.

ACTS 4:32 ³² Now the company of believers was of one heart and soul, and not one [of them] claimed that anything belonging to him was [exclusively] his own, but everything was common property and for the use of all.

HEBREWS 13:2 Do not neglect to extend hospitality to strangers [especially among the family of believers—being friendly, cordial, and gracious, sharing the comforts of your home and doing your part generously,] for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.

CAN I MEET A FINANCIAL BURDEN? OR DO I NEED ONE MET?

Going Deeper

According to **Deuteronomy 28:11** in the NASB translation, how does God define prosperity? _____

Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-3

**They faced a great ordeal of affliction, but they had an abundance of joy
They were in deep poverty but overflowed in the wealth of their liberality
They gave according to and beyond their ability on their own accord.**

In your own words, how does this documentation line up with what you see modeled today in the western Church? Compare and contrast affliction & joy; poverty, wealth and liberality; according to vs beyond ability.

Have you ever stopped to ask the Holy Spirit what you should GIVE?

Or do you not give at all?

Or is it automatic / auto deposit?

Or, is just occasional when you think you can?

Can you see the freedom in being led by Him?

Or are you afraid of what He might lead you to give?

Now that you have completed this lesson:

- *Briefly give a definition of your Biblical stance for your belief.*
- *Write down 3 specific places in Scripture that clearly states your understanding.*

As defined by the Bible, Prosperity is _____

Scripture that supports this statement is:

As defined by the Bible, Generosity is _____

Scripture that supports this statement is:

NOTE: YOU MAY FIND THAT YOUR UNDERSTANDING WILL GO DEEPER AS YOU MOVE THROUGH THE FOLLOWING LESSONS. FEEL FREE TO REVAMP & ADD TO YOUR STATEMENTS AS YOU GROW SPIRITUALLY MATURE.