

— OUTLINE —

- I. It's important to have the right attitude about finances before you start focusing on God's desire to bring money your way.
 - A. Scripture says that if your eye is single, then your whole body will be flooded with light, but if your eye is evil, then your body is full of darkness (Matt. 6:22-23).
 - B. It also says that anyone who hastens to be rich has an evil eye (Prov. 28:22).
 - C. In other words, if your focus is divided between the things of God and getting rich, then your whole body will be full of darkness.
 - D. At first, you might think it is impossible to be totally committed to and focused upon God in everything you do, and if it took relying on human strength, I would agree.
 - E. But you don't live the Christian life in your own strength.
 - F. God has given you weapons so strong that they can bring every thought into obedience to Christ (2 Cor. 10:4-5).
 - G. You can work, raise a family, do all of the things you need to do in life, and still keep your attention 100 percent upon God.
 - H. *But you can't be focused on God when you think you are the one who is responsible for producing the financial blessing in your life!*
- II. The Apostle Paul said, "**This one thing I do**" (Phil. 3:13).
 - A. The reason he accomplished everything he did was because he did one thing: He sought first the kingdom of God.
 - B. The quickest way to destroy a man's vision is to give him two.
 - C. You can't accomplish your goals when your attention and resources are divided.
 - D. If you really want to prosper, then you need to forget everything else and press toward this one goal of putting the kingdom first.
 - E. It's true that you are supposed to work.
 - F. Scripture says that lazy people who don't work shouldn't expect to eat (2 Thess. 3:10), but God's plan for your financial freedom doesn't rely on the natural results of hard work.
- III. The Apostle Paul encouraged the Ephesians to think differently about the goal of work when he said,

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

- A. He was echoing Jesus' teaching that the most important use of money is not satisfying self's temporary needs.
- B. By satisfying *other* people's temporal needs, the Apostle Paul was saying, they could demonstrate the love of God and touch people's lives.
- C. Every dollar you get has the potential to influence a person's life for the better.
- D. God will take care of you, and He'll do a better job than you ever have.
- E. This is where you see that finances are a matter of faith.
- F. The Word teaches that when you put the kingdom of God first, then all of your financial needs will be taken care of.
- G. Prosperity is a *byproduct* of seeking God; it shouldn't be the goal.

IV. What I'm talking about here is a matter of the heart.

- A. You can't create some kind of formula from what I'm saying, where you put effort in on one end and prosperity comes out the other.
- B. When you work so you can have money to give, God takes care of you.
- C. It's a mindset and a heart condition, not a get-rich-quick scheme.
- D. God's kind of prosperity comes when you shift your focus from getting and maintaining stuff, to living to give.
- E. When you start helping the Good News to be shared, demonstrating the love of God in word and deed, there is a divine flow that takes place.
- F. God starts supernaturally supplying your needs.
- G. This is why Scripture says to give God the first fruits (Prov. 3:9)—not the leftover fruit.
- H. The first thing you should do when you get money is give back to God.

- V. The reason some Christians preach about financial prosperity and believe for it so hard is because they want the new houses, cars, and things they see people in the world enjoying.
 - A. Again, there's nothing wrong with being prosperous, but your heart attitude should be that prosperity isn't about you—it's really about how much is flowing through you.
 - B. God gave you two hands: one hand to receive and one hand to give.

C. If God can get the money *through* you to other people, then He will get it *to* you—and as the money flows *through*, there will be plenty left over for *you*.

D. It's the same attitude taught in Scripture:

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

E. The context of this scripture is money.

F. This is saying that the reason God makes all financial blessings abound toward you is so you'll have the resources to do good things for others.

G. God evaluates prosperity by how much of a blessing you are to others.

H. This is all easy to say, but it's a lot harder to live.

I. Once you understand this truth, you realize what an incredible blessing it is to be able to give.

J. It's the investment opportunity of a lifetime.

VI. My wife and I had virtually nothing when we started out in ministry.

A. Most of it was because of religious bondage and wrong doctrine I believed, keeping me from experiencing God's blessing—but we always put God first, and He has blessed us as a result.

B. We put our focus on seeking God and giving to others, and the side effect for us has been prosperity—that's how God's financial system works.

C. The carnal mind thinks *If I don't take care of myself, no one else will either*, and I guess that's true if you don't have faith in God.

D. But when you trust God and begin honoring Him with your first fruits, then God will make your **“barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine”** (Prov. 3:10).

E. God's promise is this:

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

MATTHEW 6:33

F. In context, Jesus was talking about where you sleep, what you eat, and the clothes you wear.

G. In other words, when your first priority is seeking God, then He assumes the responsibility of taking care of you.

- VII. In the Old Testament, Elijah prophesied to King Ahab that a drought was coming, and then Elijah fled into the desert to hide.
- A. Initially, God sent ravens to feed him at a brook.
 - B. When the brook dried up, God told Elijah to go to the city of Zarephath where He had commanded a widow woman to sustain him.
 - C. The first thing Elijah said to her was, “Go get me some water, and while you’re at it, bring me something to eat.”
 - D. The widow turned to him and said,

As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.
1 KINGS 17:12
 - E. Water is obviously a precious commodity during a drought, yet the widow was still willing to go get Elijah some water.
 - F. But she drew the line when he asked for food.
 - G. She and her son were going to die of starvation after they ate this last meal because they had absolutely nothing left.
 - H. Elijah told her to go make his meal first and bring it to him—*then*, he said, she could go cook for herself and her son.
 - I. Then he gave her a prophecy:

For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.
1 KINGS 17:14
 - J. The widow believed what Elijah told her, so she made his meal first.
 - K. Can you imagine what bystanders would have thought if they had heard Elijah telling a widow to give him her last meal?
 - L. They would have accused him of stealing from her.
 - M. But Elijah wasn’t taking from the widow—he was giving to her.
 - N. If the widow hadn’t given him that meal, then the Lord wouldn’t have supernaturally multiplied the food.
 - O. The step of faith she took by feeding God’s prophet first, before taking care of herself, resulted in a supply that supported her and her son for three years.

P. Later on, Elijah also raised her son from the dead, which wouldn't have happened if she hadn't formed a relationship with Elijah through feeding him.

Q. So, her giving of the little bit she had was the way to multiple miracles in her life.

VIII. I remember ministering on these same passages years ago at a church in Texas.

A. At the end of the service, a woman came up to me, asking for prayer.

B. She told me how I had prayed for her the year before and how, at the time, she had been in a mental institution and wanted God to restore her mind.

C. I had prayed for her, and she had been completely healed—praise God!

D. Now she needed a new job and a new place to live.

E. So, I told the woman that she needed to give.

F. She emptied her coin pouch into my hand.

G. She said she wouldn't have any money until she got paid again, and she hadn't even bought groceries yet.

H. But I took all of her money and gave it to the pastor of the church, and then I prayed for her financial miracle.

I. The Monday after I prayed for her, someone gave her a car.

J. A day or two after that, the woman's mother called, who had been embarrassed by her mental condition and had severed all relations with her when she entered the mental institution.

K. The mother asked forgiveness for the way she had treated her and asked her to move back home.

L. Someone who didn't have faith in God might have thought I was being cruel to ask for that woman's last penny, but I was giving her an opportunity to activate God's supernatural flow, and her step of faith got her a car, a place to live, a restored relationship with her mother, and a new job that paid twice what her old job did!

M. God wants us to prosper in every way: physically, emotionally, financially, and in our relationships.

N. When we put the kingdom of God first, He takes care of our needs supernaturally.

O. So, if we want God to assume all of our financial liabilities, then we need to put the kingdom of God first in our finances.

P. It might seem like a radical concept, but it works.

- Q. It has worked in my life, and I've seen it work in the lives of hundreds of others.
- R. We are going to wind up frustrated if we think that work is all about getting money so we can pay our bills.
- S. It's discouraging to get up every morning and go to work just so we can make our house payments and buy food and clothes.
- T. There is a better way to live!

IX. Matthew 6:19-33 reveals God's plan for your earthly provision.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal.

MATTHEW 6:19

- A. It would be a mistake to interpret this verse to mean that you can't ever have any money.
- B. Other scriptures say you should leave an inheritance for your children's children (Prov. 13:22), and you need to save up quite a bit of money to do that.
- C. I think what Jesus is getting at here is your motives.
- D. It's wrong to build up savings out of fear, or so you can sit back and say to yourself, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for I have goods laid up for many days ahead" (Luke 12:19).
- E. But it's good to build up savings so you always have resources to abound unto every good work and to leave an inheritance to your grandchildren.
- F. That's using money to bless others.
- G. When Jesus said these things, He knew people would be asking "How do you seek first the kingdom of God and build up an inheritance at the same time?" so, He said,

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

MATTHEW 6:24-25

- H. This clearly says that you can't serve God and money, but that doesn't mean you'll never have money when you serve God.
- I. It's obvious that you should choose to serve God, so Jesus goes on to explain how God takes care of your needs.

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much

better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

MATTHEW 6:26-27

- J. You've never read a headline about millions of birds dying of starvation and you never will—God feeds them.
- K. Think how much better care He will take of a person who has been made in His image!
- L. Jesus is encouraging you that you can have much more confidence in God to take care of you.
- M. Then Jesus said,

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.

MATTHEW 6:31-32

- N. In modern language, it could be said that those are things lost people seek after.
- O. There should be a difference between Christians and unbelievers—between people who have a covenant with God and people who are trying to do it all on their own.
- P. The world should be able to see a difference in every area of your life, including finances.
- Q. God is pleased when you prosper (Ps. 35:27)!
- R. The scriptural way to live is to seek first the kingdom of God—even with your finances.
- X. This is a truth you need to open up your heart to and allow the Holy Spirit to reveal.
 - A. I can explain it, but it's going to take a supernatural revelation to really get what I'm talking about here.
 - B. You can't just go through the motions of giving and think that God is going to return your giving one hundred times over.
 - C. You have to rely on God and trust that He is your source.
 - D. It has to be a heart-level revelation, not just a conclusion you arrive at mentally.
 - E. But once you grab a hold of this, it will revolutionize your life.
 - F. You will be completely transformed once you believe that by putting God first, He will begin to supernaturally take care of you.
 - G. It will bring you a tremendous amount of peace and confidence.

DISCIPLESHIP

QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important to have the right attitude about finances before you start focusing on God's desire to bring money your way?

2. Read Matthew 6:22-23. What has to be single in order for your whole body to be full of light?

3. Read Proverbs 28:22. Anyone who hastens to be rich has a what?

4. What's the quickest way to destroy a man's vision?

- A. Poke him in the eyes
- B. Give him the wrong prescription
- C. Give him two visions
- D. Don't help him with his vision
- E. Ridicule his vision

5. Every dollar you get has what potential?

6. When you start helping the Good News to be shared, demonstrating the love of God in word and deed, what is the divine flow that takes place?

7. What is the first thing you should do when you get money?

- A. Pay for your living expenses
- B. Give back to God
- C. Give a tenth of your tithe
- D. All of the above
- E. None of the above

8. If God can get the money_____ you to other people, then He will get it _____ you.

9. Read 2 Corinthians 9:8. Why does God makes all financial blessings abound toward you?

10. How is this statement true: “If I don’t take care of myself, no one else will either”?

11. According to Matthew 6:33, when does God assume the responsibility of taking care of you?

12. Why did Elijah ask the widow woman for her last meal?

13. It’s_____ to get up every morning and go to work just so you can make your house payment and buy food and clothes.

14. How can you know God’s plan for your earthly provision?

15. How do you seek first the kingdom of God and build up an inheritance at the same time?

16. Read Matthew 6:26. How do you know God will take care of you?

17. To seek after food, drink, and clothing is to be like who?

18. Read Psalm 35:27. True or false: God is pleased when you prosper.

19. What does it take to understand what Andrew is saying?

20. Why can't you just go through the motions of giving and think that God is going to return your giving one hundred times over?

—SCRIPTURES—

MATTHEW 6:19-25

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: [20] But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: [21] For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. [22] The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. [23] But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! [24] No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. [25] Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

MATTHEW 6:26-33

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? [27] Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? [28] And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: [29] And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. [30] Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? [31] Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? [32] (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. [33] But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

PROVERBS 28:22

He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:4-5

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) [5] Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

PHILIPPIANS 3:13

Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:10

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

EPHESIANS 4:28

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.

—SCRIPTURES—

PROVERBS 3:9-10

Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: [10] So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.

1 KINGS 17:12

And she said, As the LORD thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die.

1 KINGS 17:14

For thus saith the LORD God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD sendeth rain upon the earth.

PROVERBS 13:22

A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.

LUKE 12:19

And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.

1 PETER 5:7

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

PSALM 35:27

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.