

Staying Spiritually Healthy in a Place that is Financially Wealthy

LUKE 18:24-25

1. LUKE'S TALKING ABOUT THE MOST IMPORTANT SUBJECT IN THE WORLD AND IDENTIFYING A SPECIFIC OBSTACLE THAT MAKES IT HARD FOR A CERTAIN GROUP OF PEOPLE TO BE ABLE TO DO WHAT THEY NEED TO.



But when he heard these things,
he became very sad, *for he was
extremely rich.*

One of the main reasons prosperity creates so many spiritual problems is that it doesn't seem dangerous—it seems like the dream. It often creates a false confidence that makes easy to justify ourselves, even as it destroys us spiritually.

It's a point of high and holy wisdom to know how to honor God and be godly in a place where there is much prosperity.



SO WHAT DO WE DO TO STAY SPIRITUALLY HEALTHY IN A PLACE THAT'S FINANCIALLY WEALTHY:

1 make sure you actually do believe Jesus.

The rich ruler's sadness proved he did not actually believe Jesus .
Jesus offered him an "incredible trade": giving up "some stuff" for
eternal life and treasure in heaven,
The ruler's heart revealed he believed in money .

2 ask God for help on a regular basis.

We need help specifically to believe that God is telling the truth and
is as good as He says .
Jesus' hard teaching was motivated by love; He was trying to help
the rich ruler truly prosper .

3 prize humility.

Since wealth easily breeds pride, believers in prosperous
contexts must actively pursue and celebrate humility before
God and others.

4

reflect on what following Jesus requires.

Regularly remind yourself that discipleship means renouncing everything that competes with Christ, even good things that can quietly capture your heart.

5

be on your guard

Stay alert to prosperity's subtle dangers—comfort, pleasure, and worry—because feeling safe is not the same as being spiritually safe.

6

fight against becoming worried and anxious about earthly things.

Refuse to be anxious about the same things unbelievers obsess over, since worry exposes what we truly value and draws our hearts away from God.

7

think about how to use financial resources for other's spiritual good.

Remember that everything you have belongs to God, and show your faith by using your wealth for His purposes and for the eternal good of others.

It is possible by God's grace to turn the disadvantage of prosperity into an advantage, but doing so will require effort on your part. One important place to start is by evaluating your heart

The rich ruler became very sad because his extreme wealth was stopping him from doing what Jesus said he needed to do to live forever.

When I evaluate Jesus' "incredible trade" of selling earthly possessions for treasure in heaven, do my actions and feelings reveal that I actually believe Jesus, or, like the ruler, do I ultimately believe in money?

Prosperity often creates a false sense of security and confidence in people, leading them to think they are safe when they are not.

Do I feel spiritually lazy or "totally safe" simply because my life is comfortable, and if so, what specific actions am I taking to "prize humility", knowing that it is "really hard for prosperous people to truly feel" needy?

Jesus requires all followers to "renounce all that he has" (Luke 14:33), meaning we must cut the bond that binds us to our possessions so the stuff "doesn't have us".

Do possessions—such as a home or savings account—mean so much to me that I gain more security or pleasure from them than I do from Jesus, making them hard to give up?

Ask God for the wisdom and strength to live by faith in Jesus and pursue humility so that you can use prosperity as an opportunity to bring Him great glory for doing what only He can.

