

“THE POOR RICH”

LUKE 18:24-25

THINK AGAIN!

We assume prosperity is usually an advantage, but is it?

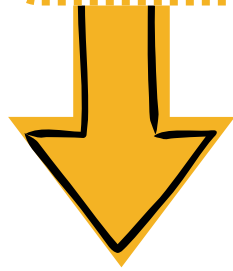
JESUS SAYS:

“How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

BUT!

Prosperity originally is a good gift from God.

So if the problem is not with wealth, what is the problem?



IT IS OUR FALLEN CONDITION THAT MAKES SOMETHING GOOD FOR THE BODY DANGEROUS FOR THE SOUL!

5 DANGERS OF PROSPERITY

1. IT FUELS PHYSICAL DESIRES

Prosperity multiplies natural bodily desires (for comfort, pleasure, security), but in our fallen state these easily slide into sinful desires that dominate the soul.

2. IT BREEDS PRIDE AND ANGER

Prosperity brings opportunities and advantages which often lead fallen people to claim the credit (pride) or lash out when expectations aren't met (anger) which makes it very difficult for them to move forward spiritually.

3. IT TEMPTS US TO NEGLECT RESPONSIBILITIES TO GOD

Prosperity is a gift from God, but the fallen heart responds to those gifts by feeling self-sufficient, which dulls gratitude, love, reverence, and obedience to God

4. IT HINDERS MEANS OF GRACE

Prosperity brings many legitimate cares and activities, but in our fallen condition these easily expand to fill our hearts and attention, so that the Word of God and the practices that nourish faith get crowded out and weakened.

5. IT MAKES SACRIFICE MORE PAINFUL

Prosperity results in us experiencing many good gifts and enjoyments, but our hearts often attach themselves so tightly to them that the sacrifices Jesus calls us to make feel heavier and harder to surrender.



**SO WILL YOU BELIEVE
JESUS?**

Do you recognize prosperity as a spiritual danger? *When you think about your financial status, do you intuitively see it as an automatic advantage or do you recognize it as a condition that can make it more "difficult" for you spiritually?*

Are your physical desires drowning out my spiritual focus? *What pleasures, comforts, or material possessions have you experienced that have created new, powerful desires in you? When listening to the Bible, are the "cares and riches and pleasures of life" actively choking the Word by taking up space in your mind and making spiritual things seem boring?*

Are you becoming proud or entitled? *When you experience frustration or a denial of a want, is your first reaction sinful anger or grumbling? Do you treat other people with a superior or contemptuous attitude, as if you are "more important" or a "king" who deserves special treatment?*

How has prosperity affected your thankfulness to God? *Do you find yourself taking credit for your wealth, saying in your heart, "I earned this. This belongs to me." Or do you honor God by sincerely giving thanks for every material blessing you have received?*

Is your lifestyle isolating you from accountability? *Does your pursuit of comfort make you more removed from other people? Do you have believers in your life who know you well enough to speak truth and correct you from the Bible?*