

PERSONAL FROM



Universal Prosperity: Is It Possible?

CAN YOU imagine a world where all poverty is banished? Well, I have news for you. Yes, good news. You're going to see it, and in your lifetime, but not the way that men think.

Does a world of universal prosperity sound fantastic? Why should it? All material wealth comes out of the ground, and there's enough in this earth to provide plenty, even luxury for everyone. Stop and think a moment. Why is today's world filled with so much poverty, hunger and want? Why do the few live in comparative wealth and the many in dire need?

One idea in circulation today is that God Almighty created this world to be poor; that God hates the rich and loves the poor. We hear a lot about "God's poor." Does God hate the successful and the prosperous? Is prosperity a sin?

Listen to what God himself has said in his inspired revelation to mankind, the Holy Bible. Through John, God says, "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health. . . ."

In the first Psalm you read this: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly . . . but his delight is in the law of the Lord. . . . Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (verses 1-3). The man who walks God's way, who delights in God's law and is obedient in whatsoever he does, God says shall prosper. That's a promise from God Almighty.

Notice Genesis 39:2-3: "And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man. . . . The Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." Joseph served God (verse 4).

Psalm 84 says: ". . . no good thing will [God] withhold from them that walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee" (verses 11-12). Blessings are promised. Do you know that God set before his people blessings on the one hand and cursings on the other? And he said to man, "Choose." Man has chosen curses and death, when God Almighty intended that man should choose happiness and blessings, prosperity and eternal life.

But God warns through David against setting our hearts even on the prosperity that he gives. That's what's wrong with this world.

The way to happiness and prosperity revolves around the true gospel of Jesus Christ. He preached the kingdom of God, which means the government of God—God's government over our lives and over society as a whole; over all of this earth.

The laws of God's government are the ways of love; of giving rather than of receiving; of serving, not getting the best of others. It is a matter of doing, not of inactive hearing. It's a matter of diligence—applying God's way, not the way of laziness. The Ten Commandments summarize that entire law. The Ten Commandments are the way into prosperity and financial success, if you understand the real meaning and spirit back of the Ten Commandments; their purpose according to the spirit of the law rather than just the letter.

The basic law of God's government is the only way to peace, to true happiness and to lasting prosperity. But this world doesn't believe it, and this world has not found prosperity. All the world's ills, all suffering, all inequality and injustice, yes, and even all poverty have come from transgressing the spiritual law—the Ten Commandments.

Sin is the transgression of that law (I John 3:4). The apostle Paul said that that law is spiritual, holy, just and good. Many people don't believe that today, and that's why there's so much poverty in this world.

To transgress the ways that lead to prosperity, to health, to peace, to happiness and joy—is sin, and the way of sin is not good for *(Continued on page 6)*

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us. It brings penalties, and one of the penalties that we are reaping in this world is poverty. God Almighty never intended it. Sin, then, is the cause of poverty, of suffering, of unhappiness and even of death.

If all men would put their lives under the government of God—if they would live by God's laws—all soon would be prosperous.

But this world has transgressed the laws of God. In the professing

Christian world people have been brought up to believe that "the law is done away"—that we mustn't obey that law today or we'll be under a curse. That's what many in the professing Christian world believe. Is it any wonder we have inequality, suffering and poverty? If only this world will turn to God Almighty and to God's ways and live God's ways. You'd just be dumbfounded at the result.

Jesus put the matter in its true relationship when he commanded us to seek first the kingdom of

God. That is, to submit our lives to the government of God (the kingdom of God is the government of God), to obey God's commandments, to live the life that God directs in his Word, to really seek after God and his ways, rather than setting our whole heart and mind on seeking after money. Jesus Christ promised that when we have done that first, material prosperity shall then be added.

But you'll need to find the spiritual riches first because they're the more valuable. □