

The Prosperity Gospel is a Lie

If Jesus can feed a massive crowd with nothing more than a handful of loaves and fish (Mark 6:34-44), then there is nothing He can't provide, right?

Then why doesn't He?

And Jesus wants us to trust Him to provide all we need. He invites us to be bold and bring those requests to Him. (Matt. 6:11).

Then why doesn't He always provide when I ask?



Let's be clear: God does provide what we need, but we often confuse what we want with what we need. I have a

couple of friends who, every time Apple releases a new iPhone, they have to have it. They *need* it. No, they don't. The week before, life was just fine with the phones they had, but the allure of a new phone with more bells and whistles transformed what they wanted into a mistaken need.

In the miracle of feeding five thousand people with a meal that didn't look like it would satisfy a teenage boy, Jesus provided what they needed: sustenance. Sure, He could've given them steaks (or my preference: a good chimichanga), but that wasn't necessary. He took what was given Him and used it to meet their need.

This doesn't mean God doesn't want us to have nice things. Heaven is not going to resemble a run-down motel with 1970s shag carpet and an eternally noisy ice machine! God will provide us the absolute best when we are in heaven with Him.

"What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived"—the things God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

This brings me to the prosperity gospel—which is no gospel at all. It's a lie straight from Satan. This lie purports that God wants us to be healthy and be financially blessed.

David W. Jones outlines five errors of prosperity gospel teaching:



Creflo Dollar teaches that God will bless you financially when you give, and he wants his congregation to give so he can buy a \$65 million jet.

1. The Abrahamic covenant is a means to material entitlement.
2. Jesus's atonement extends to the "sin" of material poverty.
3. Christians give in order to gain material compensation from God.
4. Faith is a self-generated spiritual force that leads to prosperity.
5. Prayer is a tool to force God to grant prosperity.

They twist a few Scripture to arrive at that notion, while ignoring a whole lot of other Scriptures.

- Little wealth was seen among the New Testament believers.
- Paul spoke of being content whether he had much or had little (Phil. 4:11-13). How could he be content with little if it was God's will for him to be financially prosperous? [Check out "Let's Stop Misquoting Philippians 4:13."]
- Paul also said, *"Everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted"* (2 Tim. 3:12). Where's the prosperity in that?
- And then there's Jesus, who said, *"Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head"* (Luke 9:58). The One whose will is supposedly to bless us with all sorts of health and prosperity doesn't sound too prosperous Himself.

If God has blessed you with wealth and you never get sick, good for you. But that is no sign of deeper spirituality or that Jesus loves you more than the rest of us. I'll go a step further. Those who trust Jesus to provide what they need for that day—and nothing more—may have a far better handle on their trust and walk with Christ.

Jesus provides—and He *always* provides what we need. Are we willing to be satisfied with what He provides?