

Are we chosen of God for financial wealth and prosperity?

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Wednesday, 26 June 2019 12:18 - Last Updated Wednesday, 26 June 2019 12:21

First world countries, such as America, are truly blessed with an abundance of wealth. This unfortunately conditions our society to allow problematic ideas to be perpetuated under the name of the gospel. First, God never promised financial wealth as part of the Christian experience. On the contrary, Jesus did tell his disciples that they would be hated, experience tribulation, and endure persecution (John 15:18-23, 16:33).

Second, many, if not the majority of believers throughout Christian history have been persecuted and impoverished. This would make modern-day prosperity the exception, not the rule by experience. If secular wealth was what true believers experience then this would also mean that God must love modern-day Christians much more than he has the majority of past believers.

Third, outside of our gated lives and communities, Christians throughout the world don't live with the kind of prosperity that we enjoy. This is not to condemn wealth. Money is not intrinsically bad, the love of money is evil. But we must never confuse the gospel with physical prosperity. That would be to demean believers not as prosperous as ourselves and to blaspheme the gospel of Jesus Christ. As hard as it is to hear, God's word commands us to withdraw ourselves from them that teach that "gain is godliness" (1 Timothy 6:3-6).

For what reason are we then chosen? We are chosen to holiness (Ephesians 1:4). We are chosen to bring forth fruit (John 15:16). We are chosen to be a peculiar, sanctified people (1 Peter 2:9, John 17:17-21). We are chosen and predestined to be finally glorified in the end (Roman's 8:28-30).

When Paul wrote that he could do all things through Christ which strengthened him, he was speaking of enduring both poverty and wealth in holiness through the "peace of God, which passeth all understanding" (Philippians 4:6-13). Whatever transpires in our life, whether prosperity or affliction, our hope is in Christ, not in this world. Regardless of the present tribulation, Christ has already overcome it on the cross and we will one day be fully delivered from all affliction. The believer's best life is yet to come. This is what sustains Christians in holiness. We are prosperous in Christ with all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3).