

**The New Wine of Prosperity (Part 3)**  
**(Learn to Be Comfortable and Sensitive When You Prosper)**

February 21, 2021

**I. The Need to Be Comfortable When You Prosper**

**Introductory Statement:** Once upon a time, in my life, I struggled with prosperity. I named these feelings “**prosperity guilt.**” Preaching and prospering seemed to be in many people’s mind a contradiction. In response to this I found ways to give away my advantage. It took me years to settle in and embrace my own success differently. The Bible is right, there should be no condemnation to those who are in Christ. The Bible promises in Proverbs that diligence would lead to blessings.

**Proverbs 13:4** The soul of a lazy man desires and has nothing; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich. (The New King James)

I was diligent but emotionally unprepared for the advantages and opportunities prosperity would bring into my life. This sermon is about the importance of becoming comfortable with the decision to be diligent and prosperous. In order to excel in life, we must be intentional and unafraid of success.

**Four Questions to Think About**

1. What are your intentional plans to improve your financial life?
2. Have you ever felt uncomfortable because of your success?
3. What standards have you lowered to get along with those around you who have less ambition?
4. Do you still have a cartoonish view of building wealth? Are you standing in a field declaring you will grow apples with no seeds in your hands like a cartoon character with magical powers?

**II. The Need to Be Sensitive When You Prosper**  
(Financial Advice to Israel)

**1. Be Sensitive to the Dangers of Long-term Debt (Deuteronomy 15:1-3)**

- 1 Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts. 2 And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbor, not exacting it of a neighbor who is a member of the community, because the Lord’s remission has been proclaimed. 3 Of a foreigner you may exact it, but you must remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you. (New Revised Standard Version)

**2. Be Sensitive To The Needs of The Poor**

- 4 There will, however, be no one in need among you (*NIV, v4 However, there need be no poor people among you*) because the Lord is sure to bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, 5 if only you will obey the Lord your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today.

**3. Be Sensitive to The God Who Blessed You**

- 6 When the Lord your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

**4. Be Sensitive and Aware of The True Reality of Prospering (It is Not What It Looks Like Up Close)**

- A. Hard working prosperous people have less than you think up close
- B. Hard working prosperous people often are disappointed by their success (cp. Proverbs 13:12, Hope deferred...)
- C. Hard working prosperous people have to adjust to the reality of their dream

**Interesting Historical Fact:**

- Traditionally Greeks used the term “the poor” to describe the working poor (penētes) as opposed to the rich (ploūsioi) but distinguished them from the destitute beggars (ptōchoi). *According to Aristophanes’s play Ploutos, “it is the beggar’s life to live possessed of nothing, but the poor man’s life to live frugally and by applying himself to work, with nothing to spare indeed, but not really in want.”*

**Source:** Loving the Poor, Saving the Rich: Wealth, Poverty, and Early Christian Formation (p19)

**Aristophanes paraphrased:** “Beggars have nothing, poor men live carefully with nothing to spare, while the rich have abundance.”

**Closing Big Point:** Some of you work hard and still do not have anything. The question is how do you turn this around? I say develop a family plan to change your future.

**Next Time: Teach Your Family to Set a Financial Destination Strategy**

**Big Question:** What is your long-term family or business plan?