

Blessings Are Responsibilities

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

A. Luke 12:42-48

1. We live in the most prosperous country in the history of the world.
 - a. Solomon in all his glory could not equal America today.
 - b. Rome changed the world, but did not enjoy our prosperity.
2. Therefore, we live in one of the most spiritually dangerous countries in the world.
 1. Our wealth enables us to indulge our desires for pleasure.
 2. Americans are notorious for partying and expensive tastes
 3. Americans love travel, costly homes, and the latest cars
3. Rather than being grateful to God, most Americans have developed an attitude of entitlement.
 1. Upon leaving home, many believe they should start out at the level their parents worked a lifetime to achieve
 2. Many who do not work believe they are entitled to be supported by those who do work.
 3. When Americans get sick, we feel entitled to health care even if we have no money. Even the wealthy in some countries can't buy the health care we give as an entitlement.
4. We are walking a well-worn path - Rom. 15:4; Deut. 8:11-20

B. Jesus taught that financial prosperity is not our purpose here

1. Matt. 19:20-26; Luke 12:21; Matt. 6:25-34
 - a. "Freedom from anxiety is characterized by three inner attitudes: 1) what we have we received is a gift, 2) what we have is to be cared for by us as a stewardship from God, and 3) what we have is available to help others." (Richard J. Foster)
2. Christians are distinguished from unbelievers by their trust in God.
3. Are we spiritual enough to pray that God will remove any blessing that interferes with our service to Him?
 - a. "Hoarding is both unnecessary and an affront to God, who is perfectly capable of providing abundantly for those who trust in him." (Richard B. Hays)

I. BLESSINGS CAN BECOME GREAT TEMPTATIONS

- A. It is one of the temptations Satan used against Jesus - Matt. 4:8-10
 1. Prov. 28:20; 1Tim. 6:6-10
- B. One who has faith in God will trust Him to provide and accept what He gives.

II. ALL BLESSINGS BRING RESPONSIBILITY

- A. Jesus consistently taught this principle
 1. The parable of the talents - Matt. 25:14-30
- B. As we have received, so we must give - Matt. 18:21-35
 1. Giving must be in proportion to receiving - Luke 12:47-48

C. Lessons from the scriptures:

1. God gives us material blessings so we can use them in His Kingdom
2. Greater financial capacity should lead not only to an increase in our standard of living but in our standard of giving, as well
3. God gives us material blessings so that our giving produces thanksgiving to God - 2Cor. 9:12
 - a. "It is our ability to put to use that which He deposited in us that matters; we are all blessed with different abilities. There is something in all of us that is useful to humanity." (Jide Adeniba)