

# CHRISTIAN FINANCE SERIES

## RIGHTEOUSNESS PROFITS

Today we are going to talk about the law of righteousness and how it connects to the law of prosperity. Lets turn to Matt.6: 25 The Lord Jesus Christ is speaking to us about the needs in our lives. That implies prosperity in our lives too. Matthew 6: 25-34 *Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink or about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more important than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

We all know Matt. 6: 33 very well. If you examine the passage, all these things include your food, clothing and daily needs for your body. Jesus said all your needs for your body. I believe that will include shelter too. Anything that your body needs God will take care of it. But there is a pre-requisite that God demands. Matt. 6:33 is surrounded by much exhortation by the Lord Jesus Christ not to worry. Worry is the opposite of exercising faith. Look at how many times He tells

us not to worry in this passage. Starting from verse 25, *Do not worry about your life.* Verse 27 *which of you by worrying can add one cubit to its stature.* Verse 28 the third time, *So why do you worry.* Verse 31 the fourth time, *Therefore do not worry.* Jesus tells us not to worry. He emphasized it four times. You cannot have Matt.6: 33 while you worry. Worry has to be removed because its in the whole context. Even after he mentioned verse 33 about seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, the very next verse tells you, *Therefore do not worry.* Matt.6: 33 is sandwiched by Matt.6:31,32 and 34. Five times our Lord tells us don't worry. So to those of you who are champion worriers, you have to do something about worry. Today sometimes we clothe it with different word. We say, "I am not worrying. I am just anxious." That is just an excuse. Sometimes parents are worried about their children. They say, "I am not worried. I am just concerned." Lets check and examine our hearts and we will find that the attitude of worrying brings forth anxiety. There is a genuine care we can have for each other and our loved ones. But when the care passes the limit and occupies our time, it becomes worry and fear. The root cause of worry is fear.

Why does a person worry about tomorrow? They are afraid that they will not have enough to eat, not have something to wear, not have a roof over their head or have their needs met. The basis of worry is because we are not sure of the supply that is going to come. It is not possible to trust and believe in God and at the same time worry. Worry is the opposite of trust. Jesus emphasized that we are to believe in the heavenly Father who loves us. He who takes care of the birds, who takes care of the fields, will surely take care of all these things. If you trust in the heavenly Father with all of your heart, surely you cannot worry. Every time you look to the future you remember His goodness, you remember His faithfulness, you remember what He can do for you. In fact you won't be worrying. What you will be doing will be rejoicing. The bible is against worrying. But the bible also supports rejoicing. If you believe what is coming you will be rejoicing. Exercise faith in that area. You are rejoicing before God because you know He is going to meet your needs.

Matt.6: 33 says, *"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness."* Our minds and our thoughts are at work when we worry. Modern translation put it, *why take ye thought to the things of this life.* And everywhere where the word *worry* is, it says *take thought.* Worry is the occupation of our thoughts on fearful things. And Jesus

recommends to you and say instead of thinking about your life, instead of thinking about what you are going to eat or what you are going to wear and your supply in the future, set your thoughts on the kingdom of God. If you want prosperity to work in your life, it has to touch the realm of your soul. What happens in your soul will determine what happens in your body. If your soul is filled with fear I doubt that you will be blessed with prosperity. 3 John 2 says, "*Beloved I wish above all things that you prosper as your soul prospers.*" You will not receive physical prosperity without receiving soul prosperity. He says that I desire you prosper as your soul prospers. And in that context he talks about the supply of all that he needs in the body realm. The pre-requisite to that is that he will prosper in his soul. As your soul prospers so shall your body prosper. And if you want prosperity you have to deal not only with your circumstances. You have to deal with your thought life, where your thoughts meditate and contemplate upon. Your thought life is a vital factor to the law of prosperity working upon your life. Your thought life is to be controlled and subjected to the Word of God, the kingdom of God and His righteousness. In other words I see Jesus saying in Matt.6: 33 that our thought be thoughts concerning about His kingdom, rather than to be concerned about our needs.

Some people get over-spiritual and they think that Matt.6: 33 says, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be taken away from you.*" This is to keep you humble and holy. That is a false form of humility. That is from the enemy. Because Jesus said, "*Seek ye first the kingdom of God and all these things will be added onto you.*" It is not going to be taken away from you. Its strange the more we worry about the things that we need and we try to grasp for them, the more they seem to go faraway from us. But when you forget about them and began to dwell in the things of God, you become like a magnet and you attract those things to yourself. It is the law of God. See God is prosperity. His very existence speaks of His abundance. In fact His name means the All-sufficient One. His name itself is prosperity. The presence of God is in itself prosperous. There is no curse of the law in His presence. There is no curse of poverty in His presence. He not only has prosperity, He is prosperity itself. He produces it. He is the creator of the heaven and earth. He has the rightful ownership to this whole universe. And you have Him as your Father. So how can the Father be rich and the son be poor? That doesn't connect at all. Our Father is the great mighty Father. The only thing that we can point to is somehow the children of God have not grasped the whole of "Who God is" and all that He has for His children.

Jesus said seek ye first ..... and His righteousness. You become like a magnet. All the things that you need are just added unto you. It's a nice way to live. All you have to do is to take care of the things of God and God takes care of your things on this earth. And Jesus said all the Gentiles, meaning all the people of the world are seeking after these things, food, clothing and shelter. And they want to prosper and add more and more in that area. Jesus said the world is spending its time doing these things. And as the world spend all the time there, it gets lost in sin and darkness because the world neglect the weightier matters of the Word of God, which is the spiritual life. But as for us Jesus said, "You don't even have to worry. You don't even have to take a thought into your heart and worry about that area because I will take care of that. All you and I have to do is to take care of the things of God."

There have been many people in the bible whom we could draw on their experience of how when they took care of the things of God. God took care of their things. 2 Samuel chapter 6 and 7, David's kingdom have been established. He is now king over both Judah and Israel. And he was concerned to bring the ark to his city. The ark represents the presence of God. All the Old Testament rites and ceremonies relates to the ark of God. Here David wants to bring the ark into the city. The ark is the symbol of God's presence. All the whole national religious work is centered on the ark. 2 Sam. 6: 1-9 *Again David gathered all the choice men of Israel, thirty thousand. And David arose and went with all the people who were with him from Baale Judah to bring up from there the ark of God, whose name is called by the Name, the Lord of Hosts, who dwells between the cherubim. So they set the ark of God on a new cart, and brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, drove the new cart. And they brought it out of the house of Abinadab, which was on a hill, accompanying the ark of God; and Ahio went before the ark. Then David and all the house of Israel played music before the Lord on all kinds of instruments of fir wood, on harps, on stringed instruments, on tambourines, on sistrums, and on cymbals. When they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hands to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the Lord was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God. And David became angry because of the Lord's outbreak against Uzzah; and he called the name of the place Perez Uzzah to this day. David was afraid of the Lord that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the Lord come to me?"*

In verse 9 David was afraid of the Lord. He knew that the Lord was not a person you play around with. You obey Him. You don't tell Him to obey you. Now what was their sin at this time? God has ordained in Leviticus that the ark was to be carried by hand and not by oxen. The Lord has given explicit instructions in Leviticus. The law is still operating. God has even made the poles on the ark. And the priests were supposed to carry the ark. If you cross reference to 1 Chronicles when he tells about king David in the same incident, it mentioned that they realized that they had sinned. They were wrong in trying to improve God's method.

Let me tell you none of us can improve on God's method. God's method cannot be improved. He is perfect. There is nothing more that you do above what He tells you to do. And so David learned that seeking first the kingdom of God wanting to put the things of God above his natural things demands that he follows God's style and not his own style. If they had read Leviticus, there wouldn't be anyone dying that day.

Anyway David was afraid of the Lord and he knew that having good intentions is not enough. You have to have a good intention and do it God's way. You have to seek God's will and God's plan for your life. Seeking first the kingdom of God would demand that we not only seek what He wants to do, but seek how He wants to do it. And if you want God to prosper you in your life, you not only have to seek what God wants to do in your life, you have to seek how God wants to do it. And most of all if you examine what He says in the Word, you would have enough of the "How" to obey God. His Word tells you explicitly. Certainly seeking first the kingdom of God is no short cut. It is the consistent living in the law of God. So David found that seeking the kingdom of God he has to deal with the method too.

Anyway they were so frightened and David was so upset that they abandoned the project. They took the ark to the nearest house of Obed-Edom. The ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-Edom for 3 months. At that time nobody wanted the ark. Obed-Edom welcomed the ark into his life. Just by putting the ark in his house, a symbol of putting God first, for 3 months Obed-Edom was blessed. The bible does not describe how he was blessed. And I believe that his blessing would

cover natural blessings too. At first they may say, "Poor Obed-Edom - he may die like Uzzah." But they found out 3 months later it was rich Obed-Edom. I want to tell you, if you have been struggling hard for 3 years, for 30 years and if you have the ark of God in your life for 3 months, you would do more than you do in 30 years. Just the ark of God, the presence of God in your life, putting God first in your life would work immensely in your favor. The laws that may be working in trickle for you suddenly began to work by the waterfall.

*It says here in chapter 6 verse 11-12, The ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months. And the Lord blessed Obed-Edom and all his household. Now it was told to King David, saying, "The Lord has blessed the house of Obed-Edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God." And the news spread throughout the land. So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-Edom to the City of David with gladness.*

1 Chronicles 15: 27 says, *"David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as were all the Levites who bore the ark, the singers, and Chenaniah the music master with the singers. David also wore a linen ephod.* This time round he got it right, using God's methods of carrying the ark. It tells us how he got the priests all ready. He got the Levites. And the second round he got the priests to carry it. He obeyed God's law. And they went in with rejoicing and praising the Lord. And so the blessings of God came upon them.

So I want you to know that is the symbol of putting God first. You cannot put God first without obeying His laws. You cannot love Jesus without loving His Word. Jesus said if you were to abide in My Word, I will abide in you. Jesus said, "If you love Me keep my commandments." You don't confess you love Him without obeying Him, since obedience is part of our love towards Him.

This is not the first incident. There was an earlier incident in 1 Samuel just before Samuel functioned as a prophet over Israel. He was just beginning in his prophetic ministry. Eli was a priest. His children were all sinners. When they went into battle they were losing. And since they were losing, they decide to bring the ark. In

1 Sam.4: 1-2 *Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines, and encamped beside Ebenezer; and the Philistines encamped in Aphek. Then the Philistines put themselves in battle array against Israel. And when they joined battle, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men of the army in the field.* Israel was not living right with God. Israel was in sins. Even the priests were in sins. Eli was not living right with God His children were in sins. They had the religious system going on. But the religious system was not functioning the way God want. They had the outward form but they don't have the inward life. They had the outward form but they don't have the inward power. God was absent from their lives.

When they were defeated they had a bright idea. In verse 3, they said, *"Let us bring the ark of God from Shiloh to us. When it comes among us it may save us from the hands of the enemies."* So they brought the ark. And in verse 5 *When the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted so loudly that the earth shook.* They had a nice religious ceremony. Every one of them shouted and the shout was so loud that the earth shook. And the Philistine got afraid. What is happening here? They had the religious form but they were not obeying the commandments of God. They thought this was the short cut. Seeking God first is a life style. It's not a method. It is not something you do for a day or a week. Its something you have covenanted with God for the rest of your life. You don't seek God and then say it doesn't work. Then you give up and seek something else.

Here they want to put the ark of God before them. But they have not been living right with God. They are using a method not a life style. Guess what? The ark was taken. The Philistines were so afraid they say lets do the best we can. And they won. Question – was the presence of God in the ark? Yes. You read in chapter 5 God defended Himself when they put the ark before the false idols in the temple. All the idols were wiped out. Poor Dagon got his head chopped off. See the ark of God is the symbol of the presence of God. It's the symbol of putting God first. But it is not a method. It is something that we have adopted. Because you love God, your mind constantly seeks to extend the kingdom of God. You seek how to be a part of the extension of the kingdom of God. You seek to be a part of bringing the kingdom of God to those who have not heard of Jesus Christ. You seek to bring the kingdom of God to rule and reign over each heart, life, city and nation. It flows out from you. And if you do that all your needs will be met.

Let me show you a man who did that in 2 Sam.7. The ark of God was resting in the city of David nicely. David had done a certain extent in honoring the Lord and the ark. And here the ark of God was dwelling in a tent. 2 Sam.7: 1-2 *Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies all around, that the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains.* He was concerned. Why, because he loved the Lord. He wanted God to have the best. He wanted God to be blessed. He was concerned because when he looked at his blessings, he had a house made of nice pretty wood. But God was living in a tent. He doesn't want that. He wanted God to have the best. And the king said to Nathan, "I would like to build God a house." What is he saying? I want to seek first the kingdom of God. I want to put His house above my house. I want to build God a house. That was good. And Nathan said, "Go ahead." You see Nathan did not have a word from the Lord yet. And every time you don't have a word from the Lord, you do what is good in the eyes of God. You do the best you know how to obey the word of God, to do good things. God will instruct you. So Nathan said do what is good in your heart. He knows that was something good. But that night the Lord spoke to Nathan and said in verse 5, *"Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: would you build a house for Me to dwell in?'"* And the Lord began to tell several things. And in the end the Lord is saying that He is going to build a house for Himself through David's son, Solomon. But this is what the Lord said. He recounted all He had done for David. He remembered what He has done for David. How He has brought him from a shepherd to a king. 2 Sam 7 verses 11-12 *Since the time that I commanded judges to be over my people Israel, and have caused you to rest from all your enemies. Also the Lord tells you that He will make you a house. When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.*

Notice the last sentence in verse 11, *The Lord tells you that He will make you a house.* Did you see the response of God? David said, "I would like to build God a house. I love the Lord. I want to take care of God's things." And God responded by saying David you intended to take care of my house. He did not have the opportunity to do it. David right through the last few chapters of 1 Chronicles prepared the building of the house of God in great abundance. He prepared gold, silver, bronze, all the wood, everything. He even had a pattern for the house. He

could not build the house. But he will do his best to show his love. He loved God and he wanted to seek God's kingdom. But God said I will build you a house. If you build God's house, God will build your house. See all these things are added unto us if you take care of the things of God above yours. He will take care of your things if you will take care of God's house, of the kingdom of God, of the things of the kingdom of God. And God will build you a house. God will take care of all your needs. That is His covenant with us.

Notice Matt.6:33 *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and he adds, and his righteousness.* Now you understand why Jesus puts *and his righteousness.* Because the Word and His righteousness tell you that seeking first the kingdom of God involves a life style. It is not something that you do once in a while. When we talk about the righteousness of God we talk about obeying the commandments of God. Seeking first the kingdom of God does not mean do our own thing for the kingdom. A lot of people got bright ideas. But if the ideas are not from the Holy Spirit it is not going to work. Seeking first the kingdom of God is not doing the things of the kingdom of God in our own way. Seeking the kingdom of God is doing the things of God in the way He wants to do it. That is the righteousness part.

And when David sought after the Lord, God told him that he cannot build a house for Him. Your son will build the house. You know what David did? He obeyed the Lord. But he did his best. He prepared the wood, the gold, the silver and everything. See he was living in obedience to God. All of us to a certain extent want to seek the kingdom of God first. And in our own way we do our best. Let me tell you. You have to ask God how He wants to do it. Don't bring into the kingdom of God and in the church of God your own ideas. It is important to seek the kingdom of God first with His ideas not our way. Sometimes people who are successful in the world come into the kingdom of God into the church of God, and they began to have their own ideas. How to do the things of God? Its vitally important to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness in the way He wants to do it.

See prosperity is linked to righteousness, to right living with God. Seeking first the kingdom of God by refusing to worry about our own thing, the thoughts that you will use to worry about your own things. Take those thoughts away and begin to

be concerned for your soul. You see it is not possible to have an empty head. If I tell you don't think evil thoughts, some of you will be trying to get your mind blank. Evil thoughts come to you. You try to resist it and keep your head blank. That would not be possible. But we will have to say think good thoughts. When evil thoughts come to you, you refuse to think on that area. You think of the good thoughts. The moment you are thinking on good thoughts, the evil thoughts cannot come in. Jesus said *don't worry* five times. If we don't worry, we got to think of something else. We are all to a certain extent thinkers. And Jesus is saying, "Take your thinking life and think about the things of God, and God will add onto you."

2 Cor.9 talks about God supplying all our needs. Verse 10 *Now may he who supply seed to the sower and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruit of your righteousness.* You see how righteousness will produce prosperity. If you live a righteous life before God, prosperity will find its way to you. You may start off like Joseph who was not prosperous yet. Joseph was given a chance to commit adultery and fornication with Potiphar's wife but he refused to sin. He desired to live his life right with God. Potiphar's wife tried to get him to sin. But Joseph said I refuse. He decided to live righteously. At first he seemed to lose everything. He lost his position as a head servant. He lost all that he owned at that time. And he was reduced to nothing. He ended up in prison. He was put to shame because he was judged and imprisoned for a crime he did not do. He was not angry. He just abided in God. But God was with him. In Gen. 37 God was with him. If you live righteously God is with you. If God is with you, you have everything. But if you live as a sinner God will forsake you. If you have to choose between God and riches, choose God because He will produce more riches. Joseph chose God. When he had God, in prison he began to prosper. And if you are not living righteously with God in places, in business, in offices where you are working, there is no way you can prosper there. There is no way you can live unrighteous and prosper. If you live your life righteously for God, you choose God and you refuse sin in your life. God will prosper you in any circumstances. Don't blame your circumstances. Your circumstances did not cause your poverty. Your circumstances do not make it more difficult for God to bless you. Don't blame your family circumstances. Don't blame your work circumstances. Don't blame your environment. If you have the righteousness of God in your life, if you live righteously before God, if you seek the kingdom of God first - anywhere, any place, any time, you will prosper.

Joseph prospered because he first prospered spiritually. He was an interpreter of dreams. He became the head prisoner. And God opened the door. And he became the No.2 man in Egypt. He became higher than Potiphar. At first it looks as if it didn't work. Let me tell you something. You have to keep principles and don't compromise. The world will come to you and coax you to tell a few lies and prosper. The world will come to you and tell you to compromise your principles and prosper. But the bible tells us in the book of Psalms and Proverbs that that kind of false prosperity, temporary prosperity has an evil end. Anything you get by compromising your principle or by compromising the Word of God, you will in the end not be able to keep, nor in the end will you be satisfied with it. Your conscience will trouble you. You cannot enjoy the blessings.

But when you receive anything by right living and right principles, you are satisfied and you can keep them. He added no sorrow to the prosperity of the righteous. The fruit of the righteous produce prosperity. 1 Tim. 4:8 *For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.* He is not talking about profitable in heaven alone. He says of the life that now is on this earth and of that which is to come. That means if you live godly, if you live righteously it profits down here on earth and it profits up there in heaven, *the life that now is and the life that is to come.* Godliness is profitable. Don't use the truth wrongly. A truth can be used wrongly.

Don't go around judging people by their prosperity whether they are righteous, since in the world today there are some people who get prosperity through wrong means. The wicked are prosperous temporarily but they will have an evil end. Don't look at a saint and say you cannot be righteous because you are not prosperous. They may be going through Joseph syndrome. They may have something done to them because they are living right with God. And you are looking at the sketch and not the final artwork. When an artist is painting the first few sketches, it looks like a horrible thing. But wait until the artist has finished. Then you will see the end is beautiful. So you may be looking at the scratch not the end of the painting. It is just like this.

You could go to an unbeliever and you say, "You are going to hell." You know

what is wrong. You used the truth wrongly. That is not the way it is supposed to be used. You are supposed to go to them and love them and share with them how to get eternal life. Don't use this truth and go around judging like the disciples. They discover a truth. They discovered that sin cause sickness. When they came across this blind man they said to Jesus, "Who sinned, this man or his father?" They are using the truth wrongly. They are using the truth to condemn people. Condemnation is not of the Spirit of God. Love is of the Spirit of God. Now you have this truth that righteousness profit and that righteousness produces prosperity. But if you look around for people to condemn, judging them from their outward means, you are using the truth twisted and wrongly. You are a condemner and God will have nothing to do with that. Rom.8: 1 *There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who walk after the Spirit of God.*

Proverbs 10: 3 *The Lord will not allow the righteous soul to famish.* If you are righteous you could be like Joseph. You could be thrown somewhere to starve. But the Lord will be with you. He will never allow the righteous to go hungry. That is why Jesus says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness," and He will take care of your food. Proverbs 10: 3 continues, *But He casts away the desire of the wicked.*

Prov.11: 28 *He who trust in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like foliage.* The righteous shall flourish wherever they are planted. Look at Joseph. He was planted in a place where nobody could have expected prosperity. Look at Daniel - he was taken as a captive as a young boy. Nobody would believe that a slave would prosper. He rose up to the right hand man in the kingdom. So the righteousness will cause you to flourish.

Prov. 13:21 *Evil pursue sinners, but to the righteous, good shall be repaid.* Remember the other passages in Proverbs that we have touched on earlier. *He who hides his own sin shall not prosper.* If you live righteous seeking His kingdom, the bible tells you in Prov.13: 21 *you will be repaid.* God will be paying you. You are on God's payroll.

Proverbs 13: 25 *The righteous eats to the satisfying of his soul, but the stomach of the*

*wicked shall be in want.* If you are righteous you shall eat and eat until you are satisfied. What does this talk about? Abundance. You have abundance. Jesus words are true.