# **Spiritual Prosperity**

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**INTRODUCTION**

A. As far as I can recall, I’ve never heard of anyone going in to the boss and asking, “I really need a pay cut. Can you decrease my wages?”

1. Instead, most people recognize that their personal prosperity is a good thing, when used properly.

2. 3 John 2

B. But how does your soul prosper?

1. Is it the same as physical prosperity?

a. Are there spiritual coins to be placed in a spiritual pocket?

b. Do we trade in a spiritual marketplace and stockpile righteousness like money in the bank?

2. Not exactly. You can’t count spiritual assets like so many nickels and dimes in the palm of your hand.

a. And they aren’t transferable … I can’t beg, borrow, or steal your spiritual assets and put them in my heavenly bank account.

b. Note what Jesus said, Matthew 6:19-20

c. “Lay up for yourselves…” — Yes, spiritual prosperity requires personal spiritual accounting, and when realized it is 100% secure.

C. But there are some similarities between physical prosperity and spiritual prosperity.

1. In the physical world, good and moral prosperity is the result of certain disciplines practiced consistently and according to economic laws established by God.

2. Likewise, spiritual prosperity is also the result of consistently molding your life to match divinely ordained laws.

D. So if you were making a list, what would you say would be the most important ideas that promote spiritual prosperity?

1. Many might come up with different ideas about that.

2. Let me suggest to you 8 key concepts — 8 stepping stones — that will help lead you to spiritual prosperity.

**DISCUSSION**

A. ACCURATE THINKING

1. The first step toward spiritual maturity is accurate thinking.

a. And the most important kind of accurate thinking involves a realistic analysis of SELF.

b. This means we have to look in the mirror and be completely honest. No more blame games, no more self-congratulation for mediocrity or self-delusion about where we are on the spiritual totem pole.

c. James 1:22-25

2. If a person wants to be truly spiritual, they must first recognize the utter impossibility of becoming a spiritually mature person by pulling himself or herself up by their own bootstraps. In other words, you/we need help.

a. Let me emphasize this point. When you really begin thinking accurately about your spiritual state, you will realize there is nothing you can do of your own design and plan to fix what is spiritually broken.

b. None of us has that within ourselves — we can’t do it by ourselves

c. The world tells you that all the answers are inside you. As long as a person believes that lie, they will continue to tread water and it’s only a matter of time before they sink into an abyss of human misery and destruction.

d. But the good news is this, God loves you so much that He has given you everything you need to get the problem fixed — He has given you a road map to help you get past the impossible.

e. 2 Peter 1:3

3. Accurate thinking begins with SELF-analysis, but it also extends to every other discipline.

a. You MUST adopt the mental disposition that good enough isn’t good enough. Perfect is good enough, but we can’t be perfected without the Almighty

b. You MUST be fascinated with truth — not just casually interested as long as some version of “truth” confirms what you’re already comfortable with… John 8:31-32

c. Without accurate thinking — precision thinking — especially about SELF, and every other spiritual topic, you can’t even begin to take the first step toward spiritual prosperity.

B. GET E-MOTIVATED

1. Even if we are willing to engage in accurate thinking about SELF and come away from that exercise realizing just how bad off we are — nothing, I repeat, NOTHING will change unless we let that realization sink in and motivate us to CHANGE the direction of our life.

2. But what is motivation? The root of that word forms the basis of another familiar word emotion.

a. And what are emotions? They are intense feelings that compel us to do something.

b. Are emotions good? Yes, absolutely. God created them to help us get up off the couch and into the game of life.

c. However, they must be educated with spiritual perspective.

d. Proverbs 14:12

3. The first part of that perspective has already occurred in step one (accurate thinking), or as I like to call it, living in “Realsville”

a. Accurate thinking should stimulate intense emotional feelings — sometimes painful feelings — that energize us to do something about the sorry state in which we find ourselves.

b. That real, emotional state should provide the energy needed to help us get to the next step.

C. SAY “NO” TO SELF

1. While emotions are great for motivating us to take action, especially when they are the product of us seeing our true spiritual state, feelings must give way to discipline.

2. If you can’t say “no” to self, putting the brakes on when needed … or if you can’t kick yourself in the back side to get going when necessary, then your emotional energy will be wasted and bound to cause more damage than good — emotion without action can lead anger, foul moods, depression, etc.

a. Galatians 2:20

b. Say no to self and yes to Christ

3. Here’s a tip. Saying “no” to self is probably the most difficult part … especially when we live in a world that makes it easy to avoid immediate negative consequences for the bad decisions we make.

4. But if you can harness your emotions and use them to get you headed in the right direction spiritually, then it’s time to feed an addiction.

D. GET SPIRITUALLY ADDICTED

1. Addiction for many people is a bad word, it brings to mind those who are enslaved often to a chemical dependency of some sort.

a. However, there is an addiction that is perfectly acceptable, and here it is.

b. Getting addicted to reading, studying, applying, and teaching God’s word.

c. 2 Timothy 2:15

d. 1 Timothy 4:13

e. Psalm 119:97

2. I know a fellow who once told me, “I really don’t like reading the Bible.”

a. That makes me sad.

b. Because that person is not addicted to the one thing that provides the ONLY source of true spiritual development.

c. Matthew 5:6

3. When you analyze self and realize you are spiritually broke…

a. When you get motivated to do something about it — to make real and meaningful changes…

b. When you say no to the thoughts of your own head and look for real answers in God’s word, and then begin searching the scriptures relentlessly for wisdom and direction in your life,

c. When you become physically and psychologically dependent on God’s word, and when there is no plausible substitute

4. Then and only then will your spiritual progress greatly improve

5. But be careful there is a pitfall to avoid. And it’s the basis of the next step.

6. But before we move on, let’s quickly recap the first four steps.

a. Accurate Thinking — We must MUST demand of ourselves accurate thinking in all spiritual matters … especially when it comes to self-evaluation.

b. E-motivated — We must be emotionally affected by the truth. Rocks are unemotional; so are tree stumps. We are humans, not stumps. We must fuel the emotional fires that will help us move in the direction of spiritual maturity.

c. Say “No” to self — Emotional energy must not run amok. Our emotions must be directed with self-discipline. We channel emotional energy to work for us rather than against us.

d. Get Spiritually Addicted — With so many diversions and distractions, we will never grow as we should until we pursue righteousness as if it were the most important thing in our lives.

7. This next step is critical because it addresses a big problem that has the potential to destroy even the godliest person. In order to continue to progress along a path toward spiritual maturity, we must develop…

**CONCLUSION**

A. These 8 steps that lead toward spiritual prosperity are not merely steps they ARE spiritual prosperity.

B. In this case the journey really is the reward.

1. When you successfully incorporate these principles, ALL of them in your life, you will be a spiritually prosperous person — something to think about.

2. And ultimately these attitudes will lead you to the ultimate spiritual reward in heaven with your God.

C. Finally, I didn’t make up these steps. They are not my own creation. So I don’t take credit for some kind of super spiritual insight. I have merely brought these ideas to you as something that can really help you like they have helped me.

D. Where did I get these ideas? Read Matthew 5:3-13

\*This sermon was developed from an article written by Jason Jackson