

Does the Gospel Produce Wealth?

<u>Proverbs 23:4-5</u>: (NASB) ⁴Do not weary yourself to gain wealth, cease from your consideration of it. ⁵When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For wealth certainly makes itself wings like an eagle that flies toward the heavens.

Lots of people buy lottery tickets, in hopes of striking it rich, in hopes of ending their financial worries for the rest of their days. So, here are some questions: Is the Gospel - the good news of Jesus Christ - synonymous with buying lottery tickets? Is one of the purposes of the Gospel to bless you by sending financial wealth your way? Should money be one of the centerpieces? Some believe so and others say absolutely not! Stay with us as we discuss money, the Gospel and you!

Does the Bible talk about money and faith?

Wealthy content word people, give so you can get, youtube.com

 Preacher: Not gonna mess this message up - we're gonna walk right down the middle of the road and we're gonna be word people, stay word people and be wealthy word people in the things of God, and when you're wealthy in God you're content all the time!

James 4:1-4: (NASB) ¹What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? ²You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. ⁴You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

These are hard sayings! James is telling us that we have to stay as far from the world as possible, and he focuses squarely on our *motivations*. We can ask God for all kinds of things, but why are we asking? What is our heart's desire? Are we selfish or self-less?

You're not giving the blessing anything to multiply, Creflo Dollar, RingoTV

• You're not giving the blessing anything to multiply - if you need money, it's gonna take the involvement of money so it can be multiplied. Everything else is a fantasy, God's not raining money out of heaven - it's not gonna happen! You're gonna have to get involved with your money!

James 4:5-10: ⁵Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us? ⁶But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. ⁷Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Aha! Exalt!



Exalt: (Greek/English Lexicon) #5312
1) to lift up on high, to exalt
2a) to raise to the very summit of opulence and prosperity
2b) to exalt, to raise to dignity, honor and happiness

<u>1 Peter 5:6</u>: Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may **exalt** <**5312**> you in due time:

<u>John 3:14</u>: And as Moses lifted up <5312> the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up <5312>.

Did Jesus feed the 5,000 to teach us about multiplying our finances?

(1))\$1,000 seed for triple favor, inspirationcampmeeting.com

Preacher: Put a \$1,000 seed into the work of God and God is going to give you triple favor. (I heard this) and something leaped inside of me - I dialed the number that was on the screen and I planted my \$1,000 seed on my credit card. I had no idea what was getting ready to happen - all I knew was I was obeying a divine moment of uncommon faith to believe God for triple favor.

Triple favor? That's quite a return. Here are some examples of Jesus' teaching on favor now. (We will come back to these later.)

<u>John 10:10</u>: (NASB) The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

<u>Luke 6:38</u>: (NASB) Give and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.

Mark 10:29-30: (NRSV) ²⁹ Jesus said, Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, ³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age and in the age to come eternal life.

Live abundantly! The measure given you will overflow! You will receive a hundredfold in this life! These are all very "accumulation oriented" sayings! But what do they mean?

Give the "not enough" to Jesus to bless, Creflo Dollar, RingoTV

• ...But all I have is \$2.50! What is that with all that I gotta do? Same as that two-piece fish dinner. You take the "not enough" and give it to Jesus - then he will bless it and the next time you see it, it will be in the "over and the above!"

Here is the account:

John 6:10-13: (NASB) ¹⁰Jesus said, Have the people sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. ¹¹Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, he distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted. ¹²When they were filled, he said to his disciples, Gather up the leftover fragments so that nothing will be lost. ¹³So they gathered them up and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.





Jesus takes the "not enough," blesses it, and it multiplies! What a great tool to increase his following! However, we don't believe this equates to the preacher's comparison of sending him a small amount of money to multiply. The little boy who gave the fish didn't get all the fish back and the crowd didn't walk away wealthy. Jesus was demonstrating his ability to care for humanity.

It is interesting that shortly after this, Jesus does just as much to discourage people to follow him. He taught people that it was all about following him, not personal gain.

He knew that they were looking for the wrong thing - just a free meal:

<u>John 6:57-60</u>: (NASB) ⁵⁷As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats me, he also will live because of me. ⁵⁸This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever. ⁵⁹These things he said in the synagogue as he taught in Capernaum. ⁶⁰Therefore many of his disciples, when they heard this said, This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?

<u>John 6:66</u>: (NASB) As a result of this many of his disciples withdrew and were not walking with him anymore.





Is giving our money away for the purpose of getting multiples back?

(1)) Fed Ex and my monthly checks, inspirationcampmeeting.com

• In 24 hours the heavens opened up on my life. God connected me to a person, a second, a third, a fourth person - I now have a fifth person in my life who is showing me favor - one decided to be good to me and send me monthly checks via FedEx. Each month a woman would come to my door and hand me an envelope. Each month I would receive a sizable check - month after month after month!

A caller shared the following:

God blessed Solomon with riches even though he did not ask for them. (1 Kings 3:13)

In contrast, the prayer of Jabez asked for his borders to be enlarged and God gave him territory. (1 Chronicles 4:9-11)

Jesus had no place to lay his head. (Matthew 8:20)

The exhortation to the Christian in following Jesus is to "seek ye first the kingdom of God." (Matthew 6:33)

Romans 16:17-19: (NASB) ¹⁷Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting. ¹⁹For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

We have been warned that the Gospel can be used as a tool of deceit.

Some preachers steal your money, Creflo Dollar, RingoTV

• Check out what the Devil has been doing: We are so afraid to sow because we are convinced that every preacher is trying to take your money. And when any preacher does steal and misuse money, you automatically think that all preachers are exactly like that ol' scum that did what he did - not everybody is stealing money!

Remember this text from our last segment?

Mark 10:29-30: (NRSV) ²⁹ Jesus said, Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, ³⁰ who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age and in the age to come eternal life.

Well, we should probably read the context...

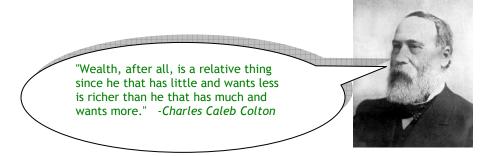
Mark 10:17-23,28-30: (NRSV) ¹⁷As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? ¹⁸Jesus said to him, Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. ¹⁹You know the commandments: You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother. ²⁰He said to him, Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth. ²¹Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me. ²²When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions. ²³Then Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, How hard it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!



If this isn't a warning about what is important in a Christian's life, then we don't know what is!

²⁸Peter began to say to him, Look, we have left everything and followed you. ²⁹Jesus said, Truly I tell you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields, for my sake and for the sake of the good news, ³⁰who will not receive a hundredfold now in this age...—and in the age to come eternal life.

So, in context the "gain" here expressed clearly is NOT a gain of wealth, rather it is a gain of God's favor and grace and peace! The Apostles all died without wealth. We need to focus on the right kind of wealth without an expectation of becoming materially rich for being a Christian.



Is Satan deceiving us into thinking we can't be wealthy?

(1)) call in my first billion/give so you can get, youtube.com

• (The preacher is holding a picture of a pile of money) You understand what I'm saying? You obey the prophet and you will receive a prophet's reward and my prophet is rich!! And I'm gonna be rich too! I call in the money - I found me a picture - this is my first billion and I speak to it - do y'all hear what I'm saying? I call it in!!

Does anyone know of any Biblical prophets who were wealthy? For the most part, no. Besides that, what were these prophets called upon to do...fun stuff?! No, they generally had very uncomfortable lives.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7: (NASB) ⁶Now this I say, he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷Each one must do just as he has purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

What is the reward here for cheerful giving? Gaining riches? Earthly abundance? No, just God's love! The question is: Are you disappointed?

Are you a "giver" now whether you have abundance or not? Money is just a small part of what we can give.

Afraid to sow is from Satan, Creflo Dollar, RingoTV

• We gotta get rid of the fear - afraid to sow because the word might not do what it said. And that's Satan giving you the number one fear of all - the fear that what God says in His word might not come to pass. You're never gonna know this if you don't apply what I've preached to you...



<u>2 Timothy 2:1-5</u>: (NASB) ¹You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ²The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. ³Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. ⁴No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. ⁵Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.

No fun and earthly increase here! There is only work, discipline, hardship, focus and honesty.

In <u>Revelation 3</u>, there are seven churches to whom are given very specific judgments and blessings. We see these seven in chronological order. Jesus speaks of his return growing ever closer until the seventh church where he is there - at the door. We see ourselves in this seventh church, or seventh timeframe.

Note the very specific problems of the church at this time:

Revelation 3:15-19: (NASB) ¹⁵I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot; I wish that you were cold or hot. ¹⁶So because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷Because you say, I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing, and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked, ¹⁸I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. ¹⁹Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

The warning is to stop focusing on the physical and start focusing on the spiritual!

Quick! Can you think of any Christians in the Bible who were rich?

Joseph of Arimathaea who bought the tomb for Jesus? We assume he became a Christian. How about Philemon? He had servants so he probably had some wealth. The Centurion whose servant was healed by Jesus? However, God took them in the state they were in when they became Christians. He didn't make any of them wealthy after the fact.

There are no examples of anyone in the New Testament becoming wealthy as a result of the Gospel!

(commercial) You need money, Pastor Brian Houston

• You'll learn why you need more money - money is a tool that can accomplish phenomenal things. It can bless, it can help, it can build, it can increase, it can bring vision...You'll learn how to get more money and how to have wealth without having a love for money!

<u>1 Timothy 6:3-5</u>: (NASB) ³If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, ⁴he is conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, ⁵and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.

We are to be content in whatever state we are. Stay away from those who say that wealth is to be gained from the Gospel.



(Can't get something for nothing, Creflo Dollar, RingoTV

 We blame God for our failure to receive...All of a sudden this message has gone from pep rally to an internship, where you're gonna have to do something everything is always exciting when we think we're gonna get something for free...Wooo!! Wooo!! Then I say, you gotta give some money.

<u>1 Timothy 6:6-10</u>: (NASB) ⁶But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment. ⁷For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. ⁸If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. ⁹But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

The Gospel is built upon being content with what God has given you. The evidence has become undeniable against seeking earthly gain under the umbrella of Christianity!

Undeniable that is, if we take the New Testament in its context:

<u>1 Timothy 6:11-12</u>: (NASB) ¹¹But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. ¹²Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

Speaking of context - remember this verse?

<u>Luke 6:38</u>: (NASB) Give and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.

<u>Luke 6:30-38</u>: (NASB) ³⁰Give to everyone who asks of you, and whoever takes away what is yours, do not demand it back. ³¹Treat others the same way you want them to treat you. ³²If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them... ³⁵But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. ³⁶Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful. ³⁷Do not judge, and you will not be judged; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned. ³⁸Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return. Bottom line: Think not of yourself as you give and grace will abound to you!

The gift we should be praying for is acquiescence to the will of God, regardless of our circumstances. That's the wealth that God wants us to have!

Does the Bible warn us of "crooks" within Christianity?

Remember this text?

<u>John 10:10</u>: (NRSV) The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.



Wait! Don't tell me! Read the context!

John 10:7-11: (NRSV) ⁷So again Jesus said to them, Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes





only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. ¹¹I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

It's about sheep, not money! It's about Jesus' deep and abiding care for his followers!

Poor say I am rich! Pastor Brian Houston (commercial)

Poor does not have to be permanent - why would the scripture say "let the
poor say I am rich!" If it wasn't the will of God to break the power of poverty
in people's lives...You will be challenged to live according to the principles of
God and see His blessing on your life as you become a money magnet!!

Is Christianity supposed to produce "money magnetism?" We didn't see one example of this! Time after time, the Scriptures put things into the proper perspective for us.

<u>2 Peter 2:1-3</u>: (NASB) ¹But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. ²Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned; ³and in their greed they will exploit you with false words; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

Parable of the sower misapplied, Creflo Dollar, RingoTV

Begin to allow the blessing to multiply your material investments. In the book
of Mark, they sowed in three different grounds and did not get a harvest until
they sowed in good ground. If you're hooked up with some crook that's not
giving you some spiritual things - you have no right to expect offerings if
you're not giving spiritual things!

Acts 20:25-35: (NASB) ²⁵And now, behold, I know that all of you, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom, will no longer see my face. ²⁶Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. ²⁸Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which he purchased with his own blood.

Paul has set the stage to teach the teachers THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS!

²⁹I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹herefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

After stern warnings, Paul focuses next on the TRUE CHRISTIAN INHERITANCE!!

³²And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. ³⁴You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me. ³⁵In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

Is it wrong to make money? Not at all. Earning a living is good and appropriate. If we look to the Gospel to give us something materially, that is wrong. We want to gain contentment in whatever state we are in.



Does the Gospel produce wealth? For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions... Think about it...!

And now <u>even more</u> to think about... only in the Full Edition of CQ Rewind!

The Parable of the Sower put in its proper context:

Mark 4:13-20: (NASB) ¹³And he said to them, Do you not understand this parable? How will you understand all the parables? ¹⁴The sower sows the word. ¹⁵These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them. ¹⁶In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; ¹⁷and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away. ¹⁸And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, ¹⁹but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. ²⁰And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.

Jesus tells us what this means! The "seed" is the "Word of God." There is no scriptural authority anywhere to interpret it as being money or anything else having to do with earthly gain. This is a story about how God's word affects different types of hearers and not about whether you are giving your money to a "crook" or not!

Further Scriptures on the nature of our calling and inheritance being entirely built upon humility and spirituality:

Matthew 10:24-25: (NASB) ²⁴A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a slave above his master. ²⁵It is enough for the disciple that he become like his teacher, and the slave like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they malign the members of his household!

<u>Luke 9:57-62</u>: (NASB) ⁵⁷As they were going along the road, someone said to him, I will follow you wherever you go. ⁵⁸And Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. ⁵⁹And he said to another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father. ⁶⁰But he said to him, Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God. ⁶¹Another also said, I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home. ⁶²But Jesus said to him, No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

The inheritance of the true church is heavenly - it has nothing to do with earthly gain:

<u>1 Peter 1:3-7</u>: (NASB) ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, ⁷so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is



perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

Now, just a bit on tithing:

Jesus only ever mentioned tithing in regards to those under the Jewish law:

<u>Luke 18:10-14</u>: (NIV) ¹⁰Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: God, I thank you that I am not like other men--robbers, evildoers, adulterers--or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get ¹³But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner. ¹⁴I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Where were those tithes to go?

Numbers 18:20-21: (NASB) ²⁰Then the LORD said to Aaron, You shall have no inheritance in their land nor own any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the sons of Israel. ²¹To the sons of Levi, behold, I have given all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they perform, the service of the tent of meeting.

Tithes went to the Levitical Priesthood.

Jesus did NOT teach tithing for the Christian! Let's look at another New Testament text that confirms that Jesus could NOT have perpetuated such a ritual:

Hebrews 7:11-14: (NRSV) ¹¹Now if perfection had been attainable through the Levitical priesthood—for the people received the law under this priesthood—what further need would there have been to speak of another priest arising according to the order of Melchizedek, rather than one according to the order of Aaron? ¹²For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. ¹³Now the one of whom these things are spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar. ¹⁴For it is evident that our Lord was descended from Judah, and in connection with that tribe Moses said nothing about priests.

The inability of the Law and its priesthood (due to sin) to bring the people to God caused a change. Now there would be a new High Priest and a new priesthood, so the old Levitical format would therefore be done away with:

<u>1 Peter 2:9-10</u>: (NASB) ⁹But you are a chosen race, A royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Notice, all true followers of Christ are included in this new priesthood!

What kind of inheritance was this new priesthood given?

John 14:2-3: (NASB) ²In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself, that where I am, there you may be also.