



## Why Aren't You a Wealthy Christian?

**Genesis 26:12-13:** (NASB) <sup>12</sup>Now Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. And the LORD blessed him, <sup>13</sup>and the man became rich, and continued to grow richer until he became very wealthy.



God blessed Isaac and he became a wealthy man. God, through Elisha, blessed the woman whose husband died with enough to pay her debts and then some. God told Malachi to test His grace by bringing in the tithes so that God could open the windows of heaven and pour out a blessing. God is giving His people blessing and abundance! God seems to like giving them abundance! So, what's wrong with us? Why aren't we wealthy children of God? Why haven't we been made rich like Isaac? What's wrong with this picture? Plenty! Stay with us for some biblical balancing...

First, a human and basically godless (but based in legitimacy) approach to wealth:



**Gives you everything you want, "The Secret" movie (2006)**

- *Do you know this secret gives you everything you want - happiness, health and wealth. You can have, do or be anything you want.*
- *We can have whatever it is that we choose. I don't care how big it is. What kind of house do you want to live in?*
- *Do you want to be a millionaire?*
- *What kind of business do you want to have?*
- *Do you want more success?*
- *What do you really want?*
- *I've seen many miracles take place in people's lives. Financial miracles, miracles of physical healing, mental healing, healing of relationships.*
- *All of this happened because of knowing how to apply the secret.*
- *This is the great secret of life.*

There are great similarities between this "Secret" and what is called the Prosperity Gospel. Over the last 2,000 years since Jesus, there have been many "great train robberies" against Christianity as it was originally delivered to his followers. **These "train robberies" started almost at the beginning:** Jude 1:3-4: (NASB) <sup>3</sup>Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith **which was once for all handed down to the saints.** <sup>4</sup>For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Already by around AD 60 there was a feeling of entitlement and self-gain creeping into the body of Christ, stealing away the true understanding originally given by our Lord Jesus.

Today we will focus on one of these great heists: the stealing away of the true purpose of Christianity in exchange for worldly belief about riches, wealth and abundance. We will look at several Scriptures that are misused and how we should properly understand them. It is time to put the "Christian" back into our faith! A lot of brands of Christianity have fallen under the spell that God wants you to be healthy, happy, abundant and wealthy. Why would God *not* want this? Because if you are a Christian, your calling is for something different. Are we saying that if someone is wealthy, they must be a bad Christian? Unequivocally not. But to seek wealth through the guise of Christianity is seeking something unchristian.

*(Audio clip about Genesis 26 and eliminating poverty and financial lack.)* He is talking about a sound principle - it would be good to focus on making sure you are not destitute, but *how* do you do that? The Christian's focus is to grow the fruit of the Spirit. **Here are the parts of the text referred to in the audio clip:** Genesis 26:1,12-14: So, in the midst of famine, there can be great abundance. This is a scriptural fact and that is what happened to Isaac. But here is how the text begins to be twisted:

*(Audio clip regarding the promise in Genesis 26)* **Here is the actual instruction from God to Isaac:** Genesis 26:2-5: God told Isaac to stay where he was, because this was the land God promised him.



**Observations about God's blessing of Isaac:** Verse 2: It was about a specific parcel of land, the land given to Abraham. Verse 3: It was about the promise God made to Abraham. Verses 4-5: It was about the blessing of all the families of the earth because Abraham was faithful.

With Isaac, God was working on what He already established with Abraham to eventually bless all the families of the earth and give them the land through inheritance.



**Seeds of business, Genesis 26:12, Jerry Dirmann, Supernatural Increase**

- *And so he sows his seed into the ground and he reaps in the same year a hundred fold. That's a super-duper miracle! Hundred fold. Now, listen. Some people would just relate this sowing to tithing and offerings, and of course it relates to that, but how many of you know this is talking about business? This is talking about our livelihoods. This is talking about investments or things that the Lord wants us to do in our lives and some people have one kind of business and other people have another kind of business. I believe that the Lord is going to open our eyes, and I am talking about specifically the people that are listening to this message in this series. The Lord is going to open our eyes to businesses that other people can't see.*

**Business?** This is a "train robbery" deluding Christians into following the idea that God will plant some miraculous business opportunity into your head that no one else will see and you will become wealthy because of it. The Genesis account talked about the wealth of the land.

**What Christian "land" do we inherit?** John 14:1-2: This is the "land" we should be focused on. **The Christian's promise:** Romans 8:12-14: We are to rise above the flesh and live according to God's Spirit. We are to give up our own will to follow His will. Every day we fight against our own selfishness. This great train robbery of the Prosperity Gospel says we do not have to fight those things anymore - God wants you to have the things *you* want. That is a devious misleading of the teachings of Christ. **The Christian's role:** Romans 8:17: (NASB) *and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.* We are to *suffer* with Christ! That sure does not sound *physically* prosperous! Remember any good lie is based in truth. This applies to the "Secret," as well. The Secret is the Law of Attraction. Is it legitimate? The Bible indicates it is!

**This next text is after the Flood and shows the significance of man's power in the earth:** Genesis 11:1-8: *...nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do* - The people were visualizing - attracting in their own minds, and they were able to accomplish it in a context of pride and evil. The Scriptures do verify the great power of our own minds.

Why was God so displeased with these efforts? They took the marvelous tool of the human mind and bent it towards a self-aggrandizing agenda and therefore away from a God-honoring life.

*(Audio clip teaching "thoughts become things")* "Thoughts become things." This is a very powerful statement and there is truth in it, but there is great deception in its application within Christianity. This concept can be applied in ways never taught by Jesus. Philippians 4:8: Why are we instructed to think on those things? Because when we do, those things manifest themselves much more readily in our lives. Thoughts *do* become things. Our minds are powerful tools for good or evil - any good can be misapplied or over applied to that which is evil - the internet is a great example of this. It is an incredibly great tool but used to promote evil.

*(Audio clip regarding 2 Kings 4)* Actually, that wasn't a "mentality" of the woman - that was a fact - it was literally all she had. **Is this next account truly an example of God giving abundance to Christians?** 2 Kings 4:1-7: This was truly a tragic event befalling the family of a very faithful Jew. (Some commentaries say her husband was Obadiah the prophet.) There was almost no means for survival. Elisha (a known worker of great miracles) used what already existed coupled with acts of faith based on strict instructions on the part of the widow. The widow is spared! But this does not tell us God will suddenly pour out monetary gain for us. She lived a life of faithfulness and was blessed as a result in a very specific way.

*(Audio clip about the need for positive thinking for the Law of Attraction to work properly)* When we focus on something with all of our intention, it tends to come our way because we change what we do to make it come our way. If you always put yourself down and expect bad things to happen, generally you get bad things. You set yourself for failure. But if you



encourage yourself and set up for success, you open the door to have the ability for you to change your own actions and be more successful. If you want not to be financially destitute, get a job. If you have one and it isn't enough, get a second job. Look harder. It comes down to self-application.

The last example was about a widow. What is the Christian instruction regarding widows? Are we supposed to tell the widows among us they should just tell God their checking account needs more zeros? 1 Timothy 5:3-5: Care for widows for they can be the most helpless of our number (especially in biblical times); yet care for them in appropriate ways based upon their true needs, not their wants. James 1:27: We are to put ourselves out and take care of them, not pray for and demand their prosperity. Work is the real secret!

*(Audio clip about "overflow and financial miracles)* **The Scriptures support "overflow:"** Psalms 23:4-6 "Overflow" is about attitude and thanksgiving - not "stuff" and abundance: 1 Timothy 6:6-8: If back in the New Testament people did not have these things, was everyone supposed to pray over them for a financial miracle? No. The church got together and helped those less fortunate with a hand up (not a hand out) to get them back on their feet. THAT is the abundance of the New Testament.

We will spend more time talking about how this concept of the Law of Attraction idea fits hand in hand with the Prosperity Gospel. It misapplies some basic truths of living, creating false expectations and false ideas of what God really wants for us.

#### **Doesn't the New Testament tell us that our receiving is bigger than our giving?**

Give a little, get a little. Give a lot, get a lot. But what and to whom? 2 Corinthians 9:6-15: Some would have us believe that the whole point is for us to be magnified. **Where does the "sowing" in this text land? Is it in the hands of those running a church?** The "sowing" is living your life for Christ, not giving your dollars to the church coffers in hopes to become rich yourself. It is all about the poor and our support for those of our number in difficulty!

*(Audio clip about our feelings and how the "universe reacts)* Feelings are largely based on imperfect reactions and the probability of misinterpreting things in our lives. The Christian's reward is not money back, it is the provoking of faithfulness and fellowship in the body of Christ. That is the true abundance and prosperity of living a Christ-like life. **Here is an appropriate Christian attitude towards earthly gain:** James 4:13-17: It is great to have intentions to do things, but James is telling us unequivocally that rather than having a personal intention, we need to ask if the Lord wills such a thing. We are to look for God's guidance in all the things we do. **How did the "universe" react to the feelings and emotions of Jesus? Did the universe give him what he wanted?** Mark 14:33-36: Jesus' emotions were telling him this was too much. Emotionally he was overwhelmed and was asking for the experience to be removed. He was about to be called a blasphemer, which would be heartbreaking since everything he did was for God. The "universe" did not respond to his deep emotion. Our lives are open for a destiny based on our actions and in doing things in accordance with the will of God and not what we want. The abundance of God is in the development of our spiritual life. Our focus is to become more like Jesus.

**The Prosperity Gospel focuses a lot on tithing:** Malachi 3:10: The Prosperity Gospel says: *Tithes into the storehouse* (giving money to their church as the "storehouse") EQUALS unlimited blessing to you! If we want to use these Malachi Scriptures to try and extend necessary tithing to Christians (and we shouldn't) then it is important to know who is being reprimanded and for what. (We do not believe Christians are called upon to tithe. Christians should give as they can but it is not required.) Malachi 1:6-10: So, the priesthood was manipulating the system for their personal gain! This makes you wonder - who is in charge anyway? It reminds us of the various Christian leaders we have been listening to in the audio clips, manipulating the system for their personal gain.

*(Audio clip about using the "universe" as your personal genie)* Who is in charge anyway?! We are, according to the Secret and according to the Prosperity Gospel! We have become "God" and God has become our genie! Is our wish really His command? (Yikes.)

**This happened way back in history to the detriment of all mankind!** Isaiah 14:12-14: This was speaking about Satan who wanted to replace the Almighty. He has usurped authority and not given unto God the reverence and honor God deserved.



By involving ourselves with this idea of money, wealth and earthly abundance, many of us who have called ourselves Christians have done the exact same thing - we have become the dictator making God the obedient miracle-giver.

This is in line with satanic thinking, meaning putting self above God. Be careful if you are involved in this kind of ministry! God is being mocked in that approach!

**Here is God's anger towards the priesthood (the ones in charge) in Malachi:** Malachi 2:1-4: So, their selfish arrogance has a ripple effect on the entire nation. They were the spiritual leaders given responsibility they did not live up to. They mocked God with their arrogance and as a result, things began to fall apart. The Gospel of Prosperity is a mockery of God because it is arrogant and unscriptural. Malachi 2:7-8: *The lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge* - remember when we started with the Scriptures in Jude...Jude 1:3-4: Certain people crept in and changed the original message. That message was also mentioned in Malachi, basically: You ought to be preserving the message that was originally delivered! Don't change it! I am God, I know, you don't. Interestingly, after the book of Malachi there was a 400-year silence from God before the Gospel begins. God was angry with the arrogance of the misuse of the Jewish Law. Should we not be angry with the misuse of Christian principles in the body of Christ?

**Who is doing the robbing in this next text?** Malachi 3:8-10: Prosperity Gospel teaches the *storehouse* is their church but the church is not a physical building. "The" church is the people, the flock, so we can become Christ-like. (Remember, too, that tithes in the Old Testament were never money.) **Where does the Bible say this? How does the Bible define the "church" in the New Testament?** Acts 20:28: So, if you want to take this Malachi text and "Christianize" it, it is the priesthood that is robbing God and the Christian storehouse is not some building, but is heaven! The basic principle of giving and receiving is good but that is as far as it goes. Deception takes something true and misapplies it to give a completely different end result.

**The "universe" is not our genie, but it is a generous source of darkness:** Ephesians 6:10-12: Rather than commanding the universe - let's be under the command of Jesus, our Captain!

If you are looking for an answer, the Secret would be very enticing - prosperity is right around the corner and it is in your own hands! Sometimes people fall on hard times, and in our society especially, there are programs to help them get back on their feet and move forward. You ask God for help, strength, patience, and discernment, but you don't ask God for a \$1,000 check. We should ask God for things that require *our* response, *our* actions. Let us place our unwavering faith in the righteousness of God!

**This DEBUNKS the "Secret:"** James 4:1-4: ...Whom do you serve? The Secret and Prosperity Gospel take our belief in Scripture and manipulates it to something based on what WE personally want, MY personal gain. Christianity has nothing to do with our personal gain.

James 4:6-10: *Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.* This is the antidote to all the misleadings we have been talking about on this program. You most likely will not be exalted right now. Was Jesus exalted on the earth? No, he was crucified for what he stood for. That is our lot in life.

We want to stress there are many of us who are going through hard times and difficulties, and we need an approach of humility. We need an accurate assessment of the situation and a willingness to fight the fight. We lean on the brotherhood and listen to their coaching of the scriptural principles they give us. We accept the charity we may need for a while in order to get to a point where we can get back on our feet and be a giver of that charity to others later. We need scriptural principle in our everyday lives. God's grace will win in the end, not our emotions or our attempts to "get!" The Gospel is about self-sacrifice and honoring God!

*So, why aren't you a wealthy Christian?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*