

The Prosperous Soul (Part I)

By Pastor Marvin R. Barham/Johnny R. Barham

When you came to Christ and then were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit you were given spiritual reproductive faculties. You were given the ability to reproduce what Christ has done in you. Now if there was no transformation then there may not be anything to reproduce. Even the scientist who clone must take from a healthy living cell to produce another. So, you must be alive in Christ and healthy to reproduce and if your not reproducing, it may be that your soul is not healthy.

We are a soul winning focused church. We want to win souls to Christ. We pray continually for the harvest, the Lord of the harvest, and the fruit of the harvest. God is not willing that even one single soul should perish. We want to win souls in every nation, of every creed and color, of every tribe and tongue, of every culture and background to Christ. This indeed is part of the great commission. It is part of the high calling of Christ. It is commanded of us by God and it is Father's heart. However, soul when is not the sole objective. It is not the end state of Father's intent. God's desire is that those souls, your soul, and my soul should prosper.

3 John 2-8 *Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.*

Motive and Intent

The first principle is to apply to your life must be the right motive and intent of God. For what are you seeking? Are you seeking a prosperity of hedonism. One of which God heaps great materialism upon you to appease your vain and discontented appetite? If so, this this scripture is not for you. That is called keeping up with the Jones or being spoiled. As I read this I do not think this is the motive and intent from which the writer speaks on Father's behalf. The prosperity health he speaks of is not foremost (although it will very well be a reward thereof) is not that of hedonistic motives but instead a healthy and increasingly abundant soul (mind, will, emotions) growing in the Spirit of Christ.

Revelation

The second principle we must ask ourselves is, when do I really start this process? John tells us that it is just that, "*a process*". As we resolve to start applying the precepts and principles of God's Word of truth to our lives we will see the change. Too many hear the Word of God and are moved with good intention but it begins and ends there. We have said that "revelation" is when you hear the word of God and do it. To get beyond your good intentions you have to seek out truth. Seek and you shall find; seek first the Kingdom of God. God says, if you seek you will find. You have to move beyond good intentions and get on a treasure hunt for truth. The more you hear the Word of God the more it begins to grow in you. Faith comes by hearing, hearing by the Word. The more you hear, the better your hearing gets. The better your hearing gets, the more you hear.

Truth that is in Thee

This brings us to the next principle. The truth must be in you. The prosperity of your soul is the result of the truth working in you and you walking in the truth. Unfortunately, in the church today there are a lot of things in God's people but very little truth. The Pharisees taught the law to the people. In the law was truth but they did not teach all of the truth of the law but only half which led them into error of the truth.

They taught that it was important to follow God's law to the letter but they failed to teach that following the law to the letter is not what redeemed you from sin and restored you to the grace of God's relationship. Therefore, the result was a legalistic and ritualistic religion void of relationship, intent and spirit of the law. Great harm can come from error in truth. A half truth is not a truth at all, it is a lie. What you fail to teach is as dangerous as teaching in error. This is why if we bring people into the Kingdom of God and teach them grace with no responsibility or accountability we are unjust and teach a half truth. As such, if we teach them accountability and responsibility and fail to teach them that it is not of their own merit by which they are made Holy but by the grace of God again, we teach a half truth.

Walk in Truth

1. to walk [Peripateo (per-ee-pat-eh'-o); Word Origin: Greek, Verb]

- a. to make one's way, progress; to make due use of opportunities
- b. Hebrew for, to live
 1. to regulate one's life
 2. to conduct one's self
 - a. to pass or give one's life to

John 16:13 *Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.* “Man can guide you to a truth, but it is only the Holy Spirit who can guide you into a truth.” (Spurgeon) We must be a people who not only know truth in our heads but embrace it with our hearts and live it with our lives. Again, Spurgeon states, “A Christian should do with truth as a snail does with his shell; live inside it as well as carry it on his back and perpetually have it with him.” Truth is not something you simply carry to flaunt or use to esteem yourself above another. The truth of God's Word must be what others see of you. It must be what defines you. Truth must be where you find your shelter in the times of trouble. Truth must not be something you pick up and then lye down at your own choosing.

Often the familiar draws us in and leads us astray. It is as we are in a fog yet say, but this lamp post looks familiar and that house, I think we turn left here. Only to find we are far off from our destination or even lost. So it is too often, in matters of truth, “we think we are surely on the right path, and the voice of the evil one whispers, 'That is the way, walk in it.' You do so, and you find to your great dismay that instead of the path of truth, you have been walking in the path of unrighteousness and erroneous doctrines of man.” (Spurgeon, *Holy Spirit Power*)

Note that in the same breath John speaks of walking in truth and being a witness to bring others into truth, he tells us to “**do so faithfully**”. People are not drawn to an inconsistent truth. An inconsistent truth in your life is about as effective as a half truth. As with training a child, it the consistency or faithful adherence to walking in truth that brings growth and health to the soul. This is a witness for the glory of God. The man or woman of God whom others see the consistency of truth. Real truth working in your life is consistent. It is as God, who is truth, the same yesterday, today and forever. So it must be with truth in your life.

Bring others into Truth

Truth: Aletheia (al-ay'-thi-a); Word Origin: Greek, Noun Feminine

1. **objectively**; the truth as taught in the Christian faith, **respecting God and the execution of his purposes through Christ**, and respecting the duties of man, **opposing alike to the superstitions of the Gentiles** and the inventions of the Jews, and **the corrupt opinions and precepts of false teachers** even among Christians

2. **subjectively**; truth as a **personal excellence**; that candour of **mind which is free from affection, pretence, simulation, falsehood, deceit**

Just as we were led to truth but had to grow into truth so it is that we must lead others. It is all the

more difficult in a culture that permeates propaganda against truth and cloaks it's deception with half truths. So many, even in the church, have prejudices and presuppositions that when they hear truth it seems contrary to the lies they have come to believe to be true. Therefore, it is hard to hear truth. You may lead them to a truth and they see it to be true but hard to walk in because of their paradigms of truth. We are called, as John sates, to be a witness of Truth. With the love of Christ, the hope of our charity, we aid others to hear, see, and walk in the light of truth. We must be a people who honor God and do His bidding. We must be a people who live lives evidently contrary to the ideologies and purposes of a fallen world. Truth in our lives must be an obvious contradiction to the lies of those who do not know truth. We must act different, choose differently, live differently, and think differently. We must live lives void of false pretenses and spiritual fronts. When we live truth and truth is evident in our lives to others we are then fellowhelpers with truth to bring life and hope to a dieing and desperate world.

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Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. II Timothy 2:15

The Prosperous Soul (Part I)

By Pastor Marvin R. Barham

3 John 2-8 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest _____ **and be in** _____, even ___ **thy soul prospereth**. For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the _____ **that is in thee**, even as thou _____ **in the truth**. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children _____ **in truth**. Beloved, thou **doest** _____ whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; Which have borne **witness of thy charity** before the church: **whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well**: Because that for his name's sake they went forth, **taking nothing of the Gentiles**. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be _____ **to the truth**.

1. The prosperity and health he speaks of is not foremost (although it will very well be a reward thereof) is not that of _____ motives but instead a healthy and increasingly abundant soul (_____, _____, _____) growing in the Spirit of Christ.
 2. Too many hear the Word of God and are moved with good _____ but it begins and ends there. We have said that "_____" is when you hear the word of God and do it.
 3. The more you _____ the Word of God the more it begins to _____ in you. Faith (obedience) comes by hearing, hearing by the Word. The more you hear, the better your _____ gets. The better your hearing gets, the more you _____.
 4. The truth must be _____ you. The prosperity of your soul is the _____ of the truth working in you and you _____ in the truth.
 5. Great harm can come from _____ in truth. A _____ truth is not a truth at all, it is a _____. This is why if we bring people into the Kingdom of God and teach them grace with no _____ or _____ we are unjust and teach a half truth. As such, if we teach them accountability and responsibility and fail to teach them that it is not of their own merit by which they are made Holy but by the _____ of God again, we teach a half truth.
- John 16:13** *Howbeit when he, the _____ of truth, is come, he will guide you _____ all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.*
6. "Man can guide you **to** a truth, but it is only the Holy Spirit who can guide you **into** a truth." (Spurgeon)
 7. People are not drawn to an _____ truth. An inconsistent truth in your life is about as _____ as a half truth (or a lie).
 8. So many, even in the church, have _____ and _____ that when they hear truth it seems _____ to the lies they have come to believe to be true. Therefore, it is _____ to hear truth.
 9. Truth in our lives must be an _____ _____ to the lies of those who do not know truth.
 10. When we live truth and truth is _____ in our lives to others we are then _____ with truth to bring _____ and _____ to a dieing and desperate world.

The Prosperous Soul (Part II)

By Pastor Marvin R. Barham/Johnny R. Barham

To prosper means to have life in, to be growing and increasing, to be bearing useful fruit. It is the opposite of being in poverty. So many are brought into the Kingdom of God and they are hungry to learn and grow in the things of God and the church fails them or they instead grow complacent or fail to seek truth beyond their revelation of their need for a savior. The result is that, instead of prospering in their souls, their souls grow in poverty. Instead of their lives changing as a result of the Word of God growing in them, they become religious or fall away only now, in both cases, having developed mis-conceptions of who God is and the heart of Father.

Truth or Consequences

We play the game of “*truth or consequences*”. **Romans 8:6** *For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.* Once the heart is drawn to the heart of Father, the very first thing that must begin to happen is the transformation of the mind. The mind will always justify the heart. The mind, or the way a man thinks, defines his heart, though it may be filled with good intentions; it defines what comes out of his mouth and his actions. It results in death. So, there has to be a choice beyond salvation. Do I pursue truth and the life therein, or do I live with good intentions but live a lie and reap the consequences thereof?

Vessels or Victims

One of the greatest lies the enemy has sold the average Christian is that of victimization. The idea that we are all victims of Adams choice and we forever shall have the shadow of sin glooming over us. This is a half truth. In the earth are the consequences of Adam's sin. His sin brought death into the earth. But we do not have to live daily in sin and the death that results from it. Instead, we are called to be vessels of righteousness. Again, a choice. Will you justify and excuse sin as a victim? Will you justify your gossip because you were the victim of an offense? Will you justify your lust because you were the victim of infidelity? Will you justify your compromise of righteous living because you are a victim of the churches hypocrisy? Or, will you choose to be a vessel of righteousness because you are in love of Jesus? This choice is the very foundation upon which truth will either begin to prosper your soul or lay dormant in your life. So many hear truth, but it so long lies dormant because of their hearts. Truth is no good just in your head, it has to get to your heart.

A Mind for Truth

There is a law of the mind of which God created us. Whatever goes into your eyes and hears and through that mind of yours never leaves. Oh, you may forget it and it may or may not affect your heart but it is in that mind never to be removed. Every good or evil thing you have ever heard, seen, said, or thought is there. It may be in your subconscious but it is imprinted on your brain and therefore is subject to the recall of your mind. This is why it is important to choose wisely what enters. Like an artist before a new canvas, he chooses with sure intent what colors to use, what brushes, and every stroke. When he is finished he will have a master piece that reflects and speaks what is in his soul and spirit or he will have a piece of junk that reflects his poor choices and use of resources. The Psalmist David said it well....

Psalms 1:1-6 *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD*

knoweth the way of the righteous: but **the way of the ungodly shall perish.**

The Apostle Paul admonishes Timothy to walk in Truth and warns of a time that will come when the people will grow weary of Truth and desire and flock to those who teach half truths that appease their want to feel holy but justify their enmity and lust of the flesh.

2 Timothy 4:1-5 *I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; **Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.** For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine;** but after their own lusts shall **they heap to themselves teachers,** having itching ears; And they shall **turn away their ears from the truth,** and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an evangelist,** make full proof of thy ministry.*

Folks, to walk in truth you have seek it, love it, meditate on it and bind it to your heart, soul (mind, will, emotions) and your entire life. To walk in truth you have to welcome the responsibility and accountability that it demands of your soul. To walk in truth you have to desire an intimate relationship with truth that demands transparency, surrender and sacrifice. **You have to be willing to let truth offend your flesh that your soul might be saved.** For your soul to prosper you have to have a mind that prospers in truth and you have to have a will that prospers in truth.

A Prosperous Will

1 John 2:14-17 *I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have **known (have relationship with) him (truth) that is from the beginning.** I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and **the word of God (truth) abideth (lives, dwells, reigns) in you,** and ye have **overcome the wicked one (sin).** Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh (selfishness),** and the **lust of the eyes (greed, perversion),** and the **pride of life (hedonism, humanism, materialism),** is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but **he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.** (Emphasis added)*

John tells us here keys to having a prosperous soul concerning the will of man. For your will to prosper it has to be hidden in the will of God. You have to have relationship with truth, let the Word of truth abide in you and you in it. You then overcome sin in your life with the love of truth more than anything else in this world. Then your will begins to line up with the will of God. I hear so many Christians say, "I am seeking the will of God for my life. I want to know God's will for my relationships, my ministry, my finances, my this and that." I hear them **seeking the will of God for everything in their life but God's foremost will – for them to start walking in truth.**

Peter said it best, **1 Peter 2:15-17** *For so is **the will of God,** that with **well doing** ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and **not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness,** but **as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.***

So, to have a prosperous soul you need to hear the Word of truth, learn the Word of truth, apply the Word of truth and then you need to have the Spirit of the Word of truth in your life as the Word tells us in **Romans 8: 26-28** *Likewise **the Spirit also helpeth** our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And **he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit,** because he maketh intercession **for the saints according to the will of God.** And we know that all things work together for good **to them that love God,** to them who are the called **according to his purpose.***

Now your mind can be in line with the mind of the Word of truth and your will can be in line with the will of the Word of truth. Now finally, the third part of your soul that needs to prosper – your emotions.

Prosperous Emotions

Hebrews 4:15 *For we have not an high priest which **cannot be touched with the feeling of our***

infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

God's emotions are not determined by His situation and circumstance or yours and mine. His response is not dictated by His emotions. If they were we would all be dead at the indignation He has at our sin and unrighteousness.

Prosperous emotions should be the result of a prosperous mind and will. Jesus had the mind of God and a will that was surrendered to the will of the Father. As such His flesh was in submission to His Spirit. Jesus showed emotion- He wept, He groaned, He laughed, He was angry. But He was always self-controlled. At no point did He react to His flesh or the circumstances that tempted it. His thoughts and actions were not the result of His emotions but His emotions demonstrated what was the mind and will of Father. What broke Father's heart broke His; What angered Father, angered Him; What grieved Father's Spirit, grieved His. He loved what God loved and hated what God hated and as a result never a thing came out of His mouth that was not first Gods; not a thought came to His mind that was not first Gods.

So how do we get there? **Romans 14:16-19** *Let not then your good be evil spoken of: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but **righteousness, and peace, and joy** in the Holy Ghost. For he that **in these things serveth Christ** is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore **follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.***

1 Peter 5:6-10 *Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: **Casting all your care upon him**; for he careth for you. **Be sober, be vigilant**; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom **resist stedfast in the faith**, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, **make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.***

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1. To prosper means to have life in, to be growing and _____, to be bearing _____ fruit. It is the opposite of being in _____. We play the game of "truth or _____". **Romans 8:6** For to be _____ **minded is death**; but to be _____ **minded is life and peace**. One of the greatest lies the enemy has sold the average Christian is that of _____. But we do not have to live daily in _____ and the _____ that results from it. So many hear truth, but it so long lies _____ because of their hearts. Truth is no good just in your _____, it has to get to your _____.

2. **Psalms 1:1-6** Blessed is the man that **walketh _____ in the counsel of the ungodly**, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his _____ is in the **law of the LORD**; and in his law doth he _____ day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his _____; his leaf also shall not wither; and **whatsoever he doeth shall _____**. The _____ **are not so**: but are like the chaff which **the wind _____ away**. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but **the way of the ungodly shall _____**.

3. The Apostle Paul admonishes Timothy to walk in Truth and warns of a time that will come when the people will grow weary of Truth and desire and flock to those who teach half truths that appease their want to feel holy but justify their enmity and lust of the flesh. **2 Timothy 4:1-5** I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; _____ **the word**; be **instant in season, out of season**; _____, _____, _____ **with all longsuffering and doctrine**. For the time will come when **they will not endure _____ doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall **they heap to themselves _____**, having itching ears; And they shall **turn _____ their ears from the _____**, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, **do the work of an _____**, make full proof of thy ministry.

4. You have to be willing to let truth _____ your flesh that your soul might be _____. For your soul to prosper you have to have a _____ that prospers in truth and you have to have a _____ that prospers in truth. **I John 2:14-17** I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have _____ (**have relationship with**) _____ (**truth**) **that is from the beginning**. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and **the word of God (truth) _____ (lives, dwells, reigns) in you**, and ye have _____ **the wicked one (sin)**. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the **lust of the _____ (selfishness)**, and the **lust of the _____ (greed, perversion)**, and the **pride of _____ (hedonism, humanism, materialism)**, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but **he that doeth the _____ of God abideth for ever**. (Emphasis added)

5. So many are seeking the will of God for everything in their life but God's foremost will – for them to start walking in truth. **I Peter 2:15-17** For so is **the _____ of God**, that with _____ ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and **not using your liberty for a _____ of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. _____ all men. _____ the brotherhood. _____ God. _____ the king.**

6. **Romans 8: 26-28** Likewise **the _____ also helpeth** our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And **he that _____ the hearts knoweth what is the _____ of the Spirit**, because he maketh intercession **for the saints according to the _____ of God**. And we know that all things work together for good **to them that _____ God**, to them who are the called **according to his _____**. **Hebrews 4:15** For we have not an high priest which **cannot be touched with the _____ of our infirmities**; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Prosperous emotions should be the result of a prosperous mind and will. Jesus had the mind of God and a will that was surrendered to the will of the Father. As such His flesh was in submission to His Spirit.

7. **Romans 14:16-19** Let not then your good be evil spoken of: For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but _____, and _____, and _____ in the Holy Ghost. For he that **in these things _____ Christ** is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore _____ **after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another**. **1 Peter 5:6-10** _____ **yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God**, that he may exalt you in due time: _____ **all your care upon him**; for he careth for you. **Be _____, be _____**; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom _____ **stedfast in the faith**, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, **make you perfect, _____, strengthen, _____ you.**