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Stuff that matters to Wayne

Does God Simply Bless Those Who Believe With Financial Blessings?

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If we are faithful to 'live a Christian life', does God, in return, pour out His heavenly blessings on us? The answer is "it depends". Depends on what, you ask? I'm glad you asked. It depends on two things: God's will and our hearts and the two are directly connected. Today I was in my daily Bible Power Hour (I just gave it that term to sound cool to the hip young Christian kids) and I came across this most interesting part of the Bible (it's a bit long for our unfocused generation so belt up):

Luke 16: 1-13

And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

² And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward.

³ Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

⁴ I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

⁵ So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

⁶ And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

⁷ Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

⁸ And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

⁹ And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

¹⁰ He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

¹¹ If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?

¹² And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

¹³ No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Although I had read this multiple times in the past, today I got knocked back in my seat a bit. My wife and I had, just hours before, had a lengthy discussion about money which can be summarized as my wife saying "We should not expect that God will bless us financially. It's up to him, not us or our acts." With this statement I totally agreed but it also doesn't take into consideration the fact that God *did* bless abundantly a few folks that were close to him and still does today. I sat back and thought about our own life and how to answer this question. As a quick background, we had, with very good intentions, purchased a franchised business and subsequently lost everything as a result of things out of our hands. This led to, as I write this, over 8.5 years of financial pain. Read that again. That's not a short time. Our expectation was that God would bless our venture and lo and behold, this venture was

not at all blessed financially. How could this be? How could we end up in a state of indebtedness in the world's system when were children of the Living God??? There were moments of much anger and of much disappointment in ourselves and God. Even today we are unable to simply go on a vacation (Visa paid last year), go out and splurge on a meal once in a while, buy fancy and expensive gifts for people, and all this other 'stuff' that we see people around us doing. However - and thank God for however - I can say that I have never reached a point of closeness to God like I have reached today. I cannot speak for my wife, of course, but let me tell you this: God has done a mighty work on this former sinner. He brought my world to nothing. He brought me to a point where I am a modern day beggar, if you will. I had to come shamefully back to my parents and beg them (sometimes every month) for money to pay our mortgage, for money to pay for car repairs, and more. I have a few friends who have generously given me gifts and taken me out and more, and even now, over 8 years later, I am still financially unable to repay these acts. Sometimes I'm still hit with a slight feeling of guilt and shame, but that's the devil. Why? Because I am becoming the wise steward above. Job, a 'good man', was ruined and God let it happen. Come on. Let's not avoid the topic. God sat back on his armchair and said "Go ahead. Devastate him, satan." And satan did. Ouch. But there was a point to take away from that. To God there was one thing that topped the chart of importance for him and that was this: God was proving that Job loved Him and would never curse him. And He was right. Following the devastation, note, God also restored him. God is in the business of tearing down and rebuilding. And thank God! If God had chosen to build on my spiritual foundation of 2008, it would have collapsed by now since some foundational items were out of whack. For example, I had secret sin. Further, my eyes weren't fully on him. Further yet, although I claimed He was number one, He wasn't. I am now fully convinced that if God had elected to pour out a financial blessing on me then, it would have both ruined me, but I also would have lost it all at some point anyways. Why? Here is why: God loves us so much that He would rather bring us to nothing on earth as rather than let us enjoy complacency here and die and go to hell. That's right. I said 'go to hell'. That's exactly where I was going. And if you haven 't received Jesus, so are you. Deal with God on this ASAP by the way. But back to money. If you re-read the above scripture from Luke (I have been blabbing a long time since referencing it, sorry about that) you will note that Mr. Steward was facing imminent job loss. I suspect Mr. Steward was a bit complacent. He was working for a rich boss who trusted he was looking out for Corporation Royale Inc. Unfortunately, even if he wasn't slacking, it looked like the accounts receivables were out of control and the CEO wasn't able to get his planned trip to Hawaii. Not cool. This situation of facing potential job loss forced Mr. Steward to wake up and smell the coffee. To get out of the box and think creatively and take action. It worked. The boss loved his new initiative and kept him on board. He even called him 'wise'. I suspect Mr. Steward thought he was doing pretty well, before being called to task. These disruptions in our lives are a form of suffering. They typically force us to deal with the very foundations of our lives. During these disruptions all sorts of stuff starts bubbling to the surface such as fear and anger. I was blown away what kind of garbage started coming out of my mouth when we were crashing. The Bible says that 'from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks' so if trash was coming out of my mouth, what in the world was in my heart? Deep wickedness, apparently. Not the love I thought was there. And so God started burning it out of my heart and giving me this great opportunity to trust Him and only him. Even after the business crashed, I got a job. Lo and behold, one calendar year later, the company made some bad investments and essentially went bankrupt giving the pink slip to myself and everyone else on staff. What? Back to zero again? But this time I was trained! I had become more wise! Through my own business suffering, I saw the warning signs flashing months before and prepared myself accordingly. Also, although I often talk about the hard times and the suffering of those business years, in the midst of that deep pain, I also met some of the best connections of my life who have since encouraged me and pushed me to new levels. So why all of this suffering? Simple. God cares more about our character than our comfort. I read this [most amazing blog post](#). after reading Luke 16 and doing a quick search online. This post talks about three key things and absolutely read them in detail yourself:

1. Self honesty

2. Outward honesty
3. Honesty with God

I can say that I was not getting a clean bill of goods in all these categories before my suffering, but through it, I was forced to see myself for what I was and God for who He is and as a result all three categories above have been amazingly improved. So that brings us back to the conversation with my wife and whether or not God will just bless those who believe with financial blessings. The answer is 'it's up to Him'. What I do know is that if financial blessings come into the house of someone who is not spiritually prepared for them, I am confident that destruction will follow because God loves us so much. Remember this: where our treasure is, there also our hearts will be. That was a Bible reference, though I can't remember from where. Are we seeking first the kingdom of God? Or are we seeking the Earth's kingdoms? Would you build bigger storehouses if manna from heaven was overflowing out your windows, or would you go bring it to the hungry and needy? Would you buy a nicer car or help your neighbour repair theirs? Listen, people. Riches are very, very dangerous. They can land us in the flames of hell. Lazarus was just such a one who lived in lavish comfort but forgot to care about God... yikes. So, remember that it's God's will that we love and worship him above all other things that ever might come across our short little lives. If that part is checking out healthy, then maybe, just maybe, your heart is ready to funnel the blessings of heaven to the work of the gospel on the earth. And if He doesn't, so be it. Life is short and we ought be ultra thankful for these small blessings we have regardless. I know that I'm closer today than I was before to be trusted with such things, but I'm no longer angry at God or impatient. My daughter told me the other day "I know you love me, daddy." and tears welled up in my eyes because this is the stuff that matters. My heart is not in treasures but if God sees fit to fill my bank, I'm looking forward to the lives that dough can change - like how my life has been changed.

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