

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE -

10.16.2022

LIVING OPEN-HANDED

I. INTRODUCTION

Psalm 112:1-10

Praise the Lord!

Blessed is the man who fears the Lord,
who greatly delights in his commandments!

2 His offspring will be mighty in the land;
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches are in his house,
and his righteousness endures forever.

4 Light dawns in the darkness for the upright;
he is gracious, merciful, and righteous.

5 It is well with the man who deals generously and lends;
who conducts his affairs with justice.

6 For the righteous will never be moved;
he will be remembered forever.

7 He is not afraid of bad news;
his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord.

8 His heart is steady; he will not be afraid,
until he looks in triumph on his adversaries.

9 He has distributed freely; he has given to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever;
his horn is exalted in honor.

10 The wicked man sees it and is angry;

he gnashes his teeth and melts away;

the desire of the wicked will perish!

II. WE NEED THE WISDOM PERSPECTIVE OF WEALTH

- The general attitude of Proverbs concerning riches, wealth, and money is positive.
- You will get the sense as we read through the Proverbs, just as we read in Psalm 112, that God is not opposed to giving his people wealth and prosperity and riches.
- We need the proper perspective concerning wealth as we read what Proverbs has to say about it.

1. The Lord blesses the righteous with wealth

- Proverbs 10:6 Blessings are on the head of the righteous, but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence.
- Proverbs 10:22 The blessing of the Lord makes rich, and he adds no sorrow with it.
- Proverbs 15:6 In the house of the righteous there is much treasure, but trouble befalls the income of the wicked.

- The first word in Proverbs concerning wealth expresses that it is a reward for those who honor the Lord.
- Proverbs 3:9-10 Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; 10 then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine.
- Notice the goal of wealth is to honor the Lord.
- Don't miss the connection drawn in all of these proverbs about the relationship between spiritual values and one's wealth.
- We can generally expect to gain materially if we honor the Lord with our wealth.
- He is the source of enduring wealth and he gives that to the righteous.

2. The promise of wealth is attached to the one who finds wisdom

- Proverbs 3:13-16 Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, 14 for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. 15 She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. 16 Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.
- Proverbs 8:18-21 Riches and honor are with me, enduring wealth and righteousness. 19 My fruit is better than gold, even fine gold, and my yield than choice silver. 20 I walk in the way of righteousness, in the paths of justice, 21 granting an inheritance to those who love me, and filling their treasuries.
- Solomon asks for wisdom and God's response (1Kings 3).
- Wealth is seen in Proverbs as a consequence of wisdom.

3. We must be careful not to trust in our wealth

- Proverbs 11:4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.
- Proverbs 11:7 When the wicked dies, his hope will perish, and the expectation of wealth perishes too.
- Proverbs 11:28 Whoever trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.

- Whoever trusts in their wealth is a fool.
- Wealth can have some advantages in this life, but it will be of no avail to you for the things that are of ultimate importance.
- Luke 18:23-27 But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. 24 Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! 25 For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” 26 Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” 27 But he said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”
- We are cautioned many times in Scripture about the trap that wealth can be.
- Jesus made it clear that our heart follows what we treasure.
- That’s why we must lay up for ourselves treasure in heaven (Matt 6:19-21).
- 1 Timothy 6:9-10 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.

4. Wealth has its limitations and troubles

- Proverbs 13:8 The ransom of a man's life is his wealth, but a poor man hears no threat.
- Proverbs 14:20 The poor is disliked even by his neighbor, but the rich has many friends.
- Wealth can be a blessing and it can also bring a lot of trouble.
- Riches and wealth come from the Lord, but we must not make them ultimate things in our life.

5. Wisdom is better than wealth

- There are things of superior value than wealth and riches.
- Proverbs 16:8 Better is a little with righteousness than great revenues with injustice.
- Proverbs 16:16 How much better to get wisdom than gold! To get understanding is to be chosen rather than silver.
- Proverbs 28:6 Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways.
- Notice that Solomon recognizes that not everyone who is wise and godly will be wealthy.
- There are so many other things that are more important than money.
- Proverbs speak of inner peace, loving relationships, peaceful relationships, honesty, a good reputation—all of these things and more are better than lots of stuff.
- They all flow from wisdom and the fear of the Lord.
- Proverbs 30:7-9 Two things I ask of you; deny them not to me before I die: 8 Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, 9 lest I be full and deny you and say, “Who is the Lord?” or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.
- We need to learn this middle ground of contentment.
- That’s the secret Paul discovered. He learned to be content with much and with little.

- Paul wrote, *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me!”* (Philippians 4:13)

III. WE ARE TO BE GENEROUS WITH OUR WEALTH

- What are we to do with our wealth?
- Well, ultimately we are to earn it, receive it as a blessing from the Lord, spend it, and give it to the glory of God.
- One of the clear things Proverbs says on what we are to do with our wealth is that we are to be generous people.
- The righteous live life with open-hands of generosity not with tight-fists around their stuff.

- Proverbs 3:9-10, we are to honor the Lord with our firstfruits, that is our giving to the Lord of our tithes and offerings.
- Proverbs 31:20 She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy.

- We are not to be stingy people. Proverbs doesn't look favorably upon the stingy.
- Proverbs 21:13 Whoever closes his ear to the cry of the poor will himself call out and not be answered.
- Proverbs 28:22 A stingy man hastens after wealth and does not know that poverty will come upon him.

- We are blessed when we are a blessing to others.
- Proverbs 11:24-25 One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. 25 Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.
- Open-handed people get richer and richer in all the ways that matter most.
- “One gives freely” means to “scatter or distribute widely”.
- Picture someone scattering seed, throwing it around freely without worrying or paying attention to where every seed might fall.
- The person who scatters like this, is enriched, but the one who is not generous, will impoverish himself. The tight-fisted man ends up poorer.

- Look at these other proverbs stating the same thing:
- Proverbs 19:17 Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed.
- Imagine that, when you give to those in need, you are lending to the Lord. It's like he is in your debt, and he never defaults on his loans.
- Proverbs 22:9 Whoever has a bountiful eye will be blessed, for he shares his bread with the poor.
- Proverbs 28:27 Whoever gives to the poor will not want, but he who hides his eyes will get many a curse.

- Acts 4:32-35 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. 33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. 34 There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold 35 and laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

- James reminds us of our obligation to one another if we claim to be people of faith.

- James 2:14-17 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.
- People of faith will be distinguished by how they treat their stuff. Are they generous?
- What kind of faith do you have if you see a brother or sister in great need and you say, “*I hope everything works out for you*” when it is your power to help them out?
- We are to provide for the needs of the saints.
- If you’re not generous what does that say about your heart?
- What does that say about your faith?
- What does that say about your allegiance to Christ?
- How tightly we hold to our stuff says a whole lot about how much we are actually trusting Christ for eternal riches and where we are really laying up treasures.
- Why are we to be generous? Why are we to live open-handed?
- “*We are swimming every moment in an ocean of divine generosity.*” - Ray Ortlund
- We are to be generous people because our God is an infinitely generous God.
- And nowhere else is that lavish generosity displayed but in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2 Corinthians 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.
- Paul gives this example of Christ’s self-sacrifice and generosity as motivation for giving to the church.
- Christ’s generosity is the wisdom of God displayed.
- Christ’s generosity is the motivation for our generosity.

2 Corinthians 9:6-11

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully[d] will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency[e] in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 9 As it is written,

“He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever.”

10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?