

Give us this day our Daily Bread.

What Jesus taught about Prosperity

Book overview

Prosperity is what Jesus teaches. Prosperity is at the heart of his message. He starts his ministry with turning water into wine; how outrageous is that? He finishes with giving Peter a great catch of great fishes, making Peter a wealthy man. In between, he repeatedly tells you and I what the rules of prosperity are and how we can be prosperous ourselves.

We ask the question, “What does Jesus mean when he uses the words of Isaiah ‘I bring good news to the poor’ as his Mission Statement?” Does he mean, “You don’t have to be poor any more?” Does he intend that you and I should enjoy abundance?

This book examines the, parables, miracles, teaching and examples which reveal how Jesus does it and wants us to do it too, whoever we are, so that we can be prosperous.

“Give me this day my daily bread” is the most prosperous prayer ever uttered.

The sample chapter chosen is chapter 5, for no particular reason. The revelation in each chapter about prosperity will challenge many people because the truth seems to have been hidden, and when it is revealed the lights are popping all the time. Exciting stuff to those who will know the truth, and wish to be set free.

CHAPTER 5

Water into Wine

This event, known the world over, is not a teaching of Jesus but a ‘live’ demonstration of prosperity truth.

The party is over too soon! The wedding celebrations are cut short! It's time to go home because the wine has all gone. Shame on the host for not having enough! Wedding celebrations often went on for many days in that culture, and the wine provided was normally sufficient to last to the end. In this case it doesn't, so there's a problem; they need more wine.

The account which follows describes how Jesus rescues this situation by turning water into wine – best wine. Now the celebrations can continue.

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

"Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim.

Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet."

They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

It's difficult to think of anything more prosperity minded than this event. Providing for basic needs is one thing, but to create wine for excessive celebration is another! This is Jesus' first miracle - and it's not healing a sick person either! Abundance and opulence is at the heart of what Jesus does. It could almost be described as hedonism.

We might miss the prosperity significance by looking only at the miracle. We might think the miracle is in order to demonstrate divinity, when it's actually to solve a problem of not enough alcohol. Jesus laid aside his divinity when he became a man, so he has no reason to prove he is God. (Elsewhere in his word, he is at pains to emphasise that he is the son of man, not the Son of God). Be in no doubt that it is as a man, that he performs this miracle.

If we fail to catch the significance of this event as a prosperity message, we miss the point. There is mismanagement in this wedding feast, and the blame could be levelled at the host. But in our affairs also, we are not without fault. We've all been too selfish or wasteful with our money and consequently don't believe we deserve a helping hand to solve the problem we create. That is not what God has in mind for us at all. He wants us to know abundance and have freedom to spend liberally.

Some would argue that we should be sparing, but Jesus gives the green light to indulgence. And those who would suggest that Jesus himself was mean, should remember that he produces only the very best wine. How does he know it's the best wine? Because he's a wine expert!

It's a banquet where, it seems, the guests have consumed so much wine that they can no longer discern what is good and what's not-so-good. No doubt the wine they had been drinking was perfectly acceptable, but by comparison to the wine that Jesus produces, it is going to seem inferior. The master of the banquet knows that the wine miraculously provided is not only

better than the wine they've been drinking, but that it's the best wine. That makes the master of the banquet a wine expert also.

Note that the master of the banquet commends the bridegroom for saving the best 'till last. In itself, this is a great message of prosperous hope. When the laws of prosperity are operated, the best is available. Most of us only come to understand these laws late in life, after we've tried everything else. We might have led very successful lives, using a high work ethic, diligence and determination, but ultimately we prove that it is prosperity truth, applied through faith, which brings forth the best. Not just better, but absolutely the best.

Prosperity is exactly what the universe desires we should enjoy.

Prosperity is OK. It's what the universe wants for us all, and we need to prayerfully meditate on this story to find out the way to enjoy prosperity for ourselves.

There's a temptation to believe we have no right to the best there is, so let's change our minds by considering this story. Here we are considering wine, and we know that the price of a bottle of wine can vary enormously from inexpensive to outrageous. But if God has given one person the ability to pay for the best wine, why should he not do the same for you and me? We can relate this to everything in life – house, car, holidays, clothing etc. Surely, what God has done for one person he can do for you and me. If we will always 'economise' in our thinking, we will always have a limited life. If, on the other hand we know that abundance is available, then as we, ourselves, believe for it, so we will receive it.

We need to change our minds from accepting that we are rich or poor according to an accident of birth or the influence of chance. Instead, we need to understand that we make our own reality by

what we think, and change that reality by changing our own thoughts.

If the words of scripture indicate that we should enjoy prosperity, how can we, if we are poor? This question is crucial, but few people ever think to ask it of themselves; they merely accept what they have as what they deserve. They go along with a 'lack' mentality which, as we have already seen, is something of which to repent.

The guests at the wedding are disappointedly preparing to leave the banquet because of the shortage of wine. They have no concept of abundance and excellence; instead, without questioning their situation, they give up hope of a better outcome. We are, by nature, exactly the same. We accept our existing state unquestioningly, without using our minds to realise the abundance which is on offer. We can understand that the guests have no idea what is possible, because they have no evidence of the miraculous producing a better outcome. But why should we not recognise what is available, when we see abundance all around us, both in creation and in the lives of others? The answer is that to see and accept it for ourselves, we need renewed minds.

The guests use no faith to secure more wine. Indeed, they don't know how it happened; they simply enjoy the result. But Mary initiates the eventual solution because she knows what others don't.

Mary exercises amazing faith.

Seeing the supply is exhausted, Mary draws Jesus' attention with the words, "They have no more wine." Mary trusts that Jesus will know what to do, but it seems that Jesus himself is unsure of his own methodology and perhaps even of his faith, because he appears to resist Mary's prompting. Then,

notwithstanding Jesus' rebuke, she turns to the servants and says, "Do whatever he tells you."

When we use faith, we should do as Mary does and confirm the corresponding action. It would not have been sufficient to say "Jesus will provide." Mary knows that the servants should be prepared to do something themselves. They need to respond to the situation with corresponding action. Elsewhere in scripture, Jesus himself very often instructs people to do something as a demonstration of the faith they profess to have. He tells lepers to go and show themselves to the high priest, and Peter to throw the net over the other side of the boat. In this case Mary chooses the action which corresponds to her faith, by getting the servants together and telling them – through the words "Do what he tells you" - that Jesus is about to take control.

Bear in mind that this is Jesus' first miracle. He has no track record, so her intervention shows Mary to be a woman of remarkable faith.

Is Jesus ready?

Very often, something which pops (or has been popped) into our mind is not something to which we should pay attention. So Jesus needs to make sure that this is something he should do. To exercise faith for something, requires clear confidence in the mind that what is desired, is appropriate.

Jesus tells Mary, "My hour has not yet come." This may have meant that Jesus is not yet ready in his own mind to exercise the faith required to perform a miracle. If it was you or me, we might have needed to deal with prejudicial thoughts about whether the situation justified a miracle. Perhaps we would say "they don't deserve to be helped," or "they'll only get more drunk" or "what will people think of me?" Perhaps Jesus himself has thoughts like these to deal with but decides to go ahead knowing any manifestation will never be based upon what

the guests deserve, but on God's grace. I can also imagine the concern and compassion which Jesus had for his friends. He wished to bless them, because he can. Abundance is to be poured out on anyone who believes for it.

Jesus has dealt with the issues in his mind, and now needs to establish the process. This will not be easy, and needs planning time. There is no rush in the Spirit. Take time to let the universe understand the exercise of faith, and respond when ready to do so. Jesus is faced with negative evidence in the outer world, and he needs to spend time focusing on bringing different, positive thoughts to bear on the issue.

The very powerful prosperity principle is that Jesus does not hasten to resolve the issue. He waits until he can hear in his spirit the confirmation to proceed. It's difficult to wait for prompting because we want to rush ahead and resolve a difficulty without waiting. Isn't it the case that we discover an issue, or are told about something - normally negative - and allow our minds to accept that information as a trigger for action, such that what had previously been the priority in our minds is no longer relevant? The result is often confusion and complexity.

If we will quietly consider whether or not the issue we have recently become aware of is the issue to deal with, and wait for prompting in our spirits, we will do well. Jesus has to consider how he will proceed - the methodology is always important - then he has to visualise the process and the desired end result. He has to get his mind to believe that in those stone water jars there is wine - the best wine. He has to visualise the expressions on peoples' faces as they taste it, and he has to visualise their continuing enjoyment of the celebrations. This exercise of the mind takes time. If we would only spend time meditating and visualising what we desire, we would be so much more successful.

One thing to realise is that Jesus wants to resolve this issue of not enough. He always wants to resolve that issue for all of us. There isn't enough wine, but Jesus has unrestricted access to the absolute best. 'Not enough' situations are exactly what Jesus came into this world to remedy.

Jesus produces wine. He produces about one hundred and fifty gallons of it – equivalent to more than a thousand bottles. Do you think he has a sense of humour? I certainly do. The celebrations would continue and there could still have been many people, but it's hard to see the production of wine from water on this scale, as anything other than a demonstration of incredibly excessive abundance. The fact that it is the best wine also indicates that Jesus wants these guests to enjoy an experience of prosperity that they had never had before.

Methodology is important.

The way Jesus performs this miracle is clearly described. He wants the wine all produced at once and to the same standard of excellence. He tells the servants to fill the jars with water and they're filled to the brim. They are then to draw the 'liquid' from the jars and take it to the master of the banquet, who doesn't know where it has come from.

The prosperity message is seen in the quality, the quantity, the availability and the methodology.

Jesus takes what is there and uses it. The divine substance is the water, which Jesus uses to create the wine. The servants are obedient and exercise their own faith when they draw the wine (which they knew had been water) out of the jars and take it to the master of the banquet. That is their corresponding action, because they have to believe that they are taking not just water to the master of the banquet, but wine. Because they follow through the instructions exactly, they can believe that the result will be miraculous.

Faith is vital.

Faith is a vital prerequisite of prosperity. Jesus demonstrates faith, Mary demonstrates faith and the servants also demonstrate faith. Each is at its own level, and is necessary for the final result. Faith is believing in what you cannot see. Mary could not see the solution, Jesus could not see the created result and the servants could not see how it happened - but each believed!

The faith which Mary shows is remarkable, because she believes that there will be a way, where there seems to be no way. But she also knows that it doesn't matter through which channel the abundance and prosperity comes, because the universe knows how to provide what is sincerely believed for. It is enough to know and believe that we have a right to it, and God is on the case.

Jesus has remarkable faith, because he has never had this experience before. How do you produce wine, where there is no wine? He believes with all his heart that the water will become wine, and enjoys that reality before it happens. He believes that the method will work, and the people will be richly blessed.

The servants demonstrate great faith, because they never waver in carrying out the orders even though they seem bizarre. They laboriously lug one hundred and fifty gallons of water to those jars, and they fill them to the brim - they don't want to miss out by under filling! And then they draw down from each jar sufficient for the master of the banquet to taste and approve. They alone know that it was water they put in those jars!

All these demonstrations of faith and their miraculous result, are transferrable into our own life circumstances. It wasn't just for them, then and there; it is the same for us, here and now. We can have just the same success if we will use the faith for the law of

supply, which is a prosperity truth. ‘My God shall supply all my needs according to his RICHES in glory in Christ Jesus.’

A real event, not a parable.

The fact that this is a real event, reveals something of the life of Jesus, his background, his acquaintances, his family, and his social values. It’s not a parable with a hidden or metaphysical meaning; this is the real deal about prosperity thinking. This is how prosperity thinking actually happens. This is how prosperity thinking changes lives.

This is the first miracle Jesus does, and we’re told it reveals his glory and that his disciples believe in him. The message is that it is good to be prosperous and abundant. It isn’t just the miraculous that reveals his glory, it’s the prosperity; it isn’t just that Jesus ‘saves the day’ but that he gives those people the best time of their lives; it isn’t just that he saves the bridegroom from embarrassment, but that the wedding is honoured and blessed.

This story, which has been told millions of times, also shows that prosperity is never for selfish reasons alone – it is also to use for the greater good of those we are given to bless. And this is what happens; while Jesus is enjoying the best wine himself, his greatest delight would have been to see others enjoying it also, and enjoying the celebration of his dear friends who are marrying. What looked like a season of limitation proved to be a party of abundance. There is a lesson here for us all.

Prayer:

Thank you for giving me abundance. It is unrestricted by my own sense of worth, and allows me freedom to enjoy myself as well as bless others. I am receiving more and more faith to grow in the grace of prosperity thinking, and it is developing each day. I repent of my thoughts of lack and limitation, which I now no longer allow.