

Contentment: The Antithesis of Prosperity Teaching

By Rick Blinson of KneePrints, Inc.

Jesus -- the Supreme Servant. He had rights to every glory and gain imaginable, but gave it all up in order to serve us -- even death on a cross, even while we were yet sinners! Unimaginable! What a great God we serve!

He could have promised magnificent, sweet-sounding formulas of personal gain to those who listened to His teaching. It definitely would have attracted larger crowds! But He promised primarily a life of self-denial and a cross. Love was the foundation of His message and He knew that pure love could only flow out of empty vessels. He wanted "living sacrifices" that would not be always trying to crawl off the altar.

Subtly referencing forms in the Old Covenant, He knew that the Father's desired aroma was the smell of death. The sacrifice of burning flesh on the altar was a sweet smell of invitation for God's presence to manifest in the midst of the people -- and as we know, when God shows up, nothing is ever the same.

God's first purpose in our lives is not making us a millionaire, but death of flesh in order to bring life in the Spirit. Only a dead man can be trusted to steward the true riches of God properly. He has nothing to protect, preserve, finance, or defend.

I like to think that God's true servants wear pants with no pockets. Like Achan did in Joshua's camp, we're not allowed to sneak a little off the top for ourselves and hide it away for later use. The only tool we have to hold onto things is not pockets, but our hands. And those hands are open hands of service, always serving and giving away all we have. He said He would give us our DAILY bread, didn't He?

In the recent best-seller, *"The God-Chasers"*, the many accounts of God's glory appearing in His people is always birthed out of personal death and intimate worship. In these times of spiritual intimacy, God seeds our spiritual womb with His purposes, which later grow into form through continual travail, and eventually, birth.

The enemy of true spiritual reproduction is the "formula" approach. Whenever we move into seeking dry, cold, mechanical formula's instead of

intimacy, the relationship is greatly hindered. God does not want us to translate and theologize Him into formula's to just insure our own self-preservation. He wants us to KNOW Him intimately. He wants just a dead person, empty of self, waiting to be filled with Himself (the fullness of Christ).

Those of us who minister as contemporary Levites are simply called to lead others into His Presence. However, we must remind the people in the Outer Court that you can't get into the Holy of Holies with first placing yourself on the altar and presenting to God the sweet aroma of a broken, empty, dead-to-self vessel. We are empowered to complete such a act by Christ's substitutionary act on the cross.

Also, like the Levites of old, today's ministers do not get an inheritance of land or possessions as the other tribes. Our inheritance is God and God alone. Maybe if we would just seek the latter wholeheartedly (God), we would be so content in Him that we would not need to vainly strive after the former (material things). If formula's were indeed allowed here, this one sounds like a winner to me! I would trade mansions, Lear-jets, and Rolls Royces for the glory of God any day, wouldn't you?

Even many non-Christians will agree that the idea of "sowing and reaping" is a powerful principle and we neglect it to our own demise. God wants to bless the heart intent towards Him! However, where those of us in leadership can cause many to stumble is by exploiting a good biblical principle for own gain and glory.

PRAYER: "Father, You are my inheritance and you are all I need. Show me anything in my life and ministry that misuses my authority and position for my own gain. I renew my commitment to be a living sacrifice before You. With open hands I give you all I have and all that I am. I trust you with providing for my needs because you have always been faithful to do it. I reject the spirit of poverty and I choose to be content.
In Jesus name, AMEN."

Paul's Warning to Ministers Not to Use Their Platform for Personal Gain

"If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

*But godliness with **contentment** is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we **have food and clothing, we will be content with that.***

*People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many grief's. **But you, man of God, flee from all this...**" (I Tim. 6:3-11)*

*"Unlike so many, **we do not peddle the word of God for profit.** On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, like men sent from God." (II Cor. 2:17)*

Our Role Model is Jesus - Who Denied His Self and Served in Love -- Even Unto Death

*"Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his **cross** daily and follow me." (Luke 9:23)*

*"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God **something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant,** being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death--even death on a cross!" (Phil. 2:5-8)*

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

*"This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers."
(I John 3:16)*

Rick Blinson is Founder/Director of KneePrints Prayer Ministries. KneePrints works with intercessors ad churches across much of the Mid-Atlantic region. Contact us about speaking to your group, or scheduling a prayer conference for your church.

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