

The Danger of Prosperity (continued)

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Preacher: Christopher Baker

[0:00] Last week we were sharing from Deuteronomy. And to be honest, I had a lot more that the Lord had laid on my heart that we didn't get to share. Because we kind of ran out of time, so guess what? You get to hear more of it this morning.

We are in Deuteronomy. We're going to start again in chapter 8, which is what we were looking at last week. And the thing that we were talking about, and it goes right along with the little bit that we've shared this morning.

What we were talking about is the world that we live in so often focuses on the worries or the danger of not having enough.

We get conditioned to worry about, oh, what if I don't have enough money to pay the bills? What if I don't have enough to get this or to do this or to do that? We focus on that as a danger.

But very seldom do we focus on the other end of things. The danger of prosperity. The danger of having enough.

[1:00] Does that, sometimes when you say it, that doesn't seem to make sense, does it? The danger of having enough. You think, oh, if I have enough, then things are all set. That's not the case. Because there is a danger that comes with prosperity that we often don't think about, but the Bible does.

And it tells us and explains the danger that is there. And I think this is especially true for us because we live in the United States. One of the most prosperous nations in the entire world.

We can think of ourselves as not being rich or not being wealthy. But you know what? If we compare ourselves to the majority of the world, we are immensely prosperous.

We have food. We have shelter. We have clothing. We are blessed and prosperous. But herein lies the danger. Deuteronomy chapter 8.

Going to begin in verse 10. And I'm going to ask if you found it, if you'd stand as we read God's word. Deuteronomy 8, beginning in verse 10. Deuteronomy 9, beginning in verse 10.

[2:01] When you have eaten and are full, then you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which He has given you. Beware that you forget not the Lord your God in not keeping His commandments and His judgments and His statutes which I command you this day.

Lest when you have eaten and are full and have built goodly houses and dwelled therein. And when your herds and your flocks multiply and your silver and your gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, then your heart be lifted up and you forget the Lord your God which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt from the house of bondage.

Let's pray. Lord God, thank you again for this time that we have together. For your presence here. For your word. And I just pray that it soaks into our hearts and minds. I pray, Lord, that you would have our full attention for the next few moments.

Thank you for being the God that you are and for giving us your word. In Christ's name we pray. Amen. You can be seated this morning. These verses list the danger.

It starts off, and we covered this last week, when you're eaten and are full. That means when you have plenty. When you have food. When you have your necessities taken care of.

[3:20] That's what it says. When you have eaten and are full. And then in verse 11, there's a word that it starts with. It says, beware. Beware indicates that there's a danger, doesn't it?

That there's something to beware of. I know when we hear that word, beware, the first thing that comes to my mind is a sign that you'll see once in a while. On a fence, maybe, as you go up to see someone at their house.

What might that sign say? Beware of the dog. Why do you think that sign is there? It's a warning. Why?

Because there's a dog there that is apparently could be dangerous, and you need to beware of that. You need to watch out for it. God says beware. And what you need to beware of is that you forget the Lord your God in keeping His commandments and His judgments.

And then in verse 12, lest when you have eaten and are full, you have all this that God has given you. Verse 13, your herds and your flocks multiply. Everything you have is multiplied. Verse 14, then your heart is lifted up and you forget the Lord your God.

[4 : 25] You have all these things in your life. And let's face it, we do. We have a lot of stuff. We have cars. We have homes. We have hobbies. We have collections.

We have all this stuff. And the Bible is saying beware that in the midst of that, that you do not forget the Lord your God.

It goes on in this chapter. Look down in verse 17. And you say in your heart, my power and the might of my hand has gotten me this wealth.

There's part of the danger too. We begin to think we have the things that we have because we've earned them. Because I've worked hard for what I have because I have the intelligence and I put the work in and my hand, my power, my might, my intelligence, I have earned this.

Do you ever think that in your life? Be honest. I've earned what I have. There's a danger in that, folks. It's what the Bible is telling us. We begin to say that my power, the might of my hand has gotten me this wealth.

[5 : 32] Look at verse 18. But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He that gives you power to get wealth, and that He may establish His covenant, which He swore to your fathers as it is this day.

Who gives us the power to get what we have? God. It's not us. And if you begin to say, well, I'm the one that put in the work. Who gave you the ability to put in the work?

Who gave you the strength to do that? And you can say, no, it's my intelligence. I had this idea. Or I'm the one that, who gave you the intelligence that you have? God.

There is the danger that we begin to say, I've done it, instead of saying, God did it. God allowed me to accomplish it. God allowed me to do it.

We have to, as believers, remember that. And the other thing that we have to remember about all this prosperity that God has given us, guess what? Whose is it, ultimately?

[6 : 30] It's not ours, is it? Oh. Things got quiet when I said that. It's not ours, is it? You know, if we went around and all of you had to tell us what your bank account had in it.

I know, that'd be a very uncomfortable thing. But how often do you think that that's not yours? Is it yours? Well, kind of.

You have control over it, right? But is it ultimately yours? Let me share just a few verses. We're not going to necessarily turn to all these. You can write them down if you want, but we're going to go through them quickly.

Genesis 14, 19. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth.

What does possessor mean? If you possess something, what does that mean? You own it. And it says God is the possessor of heaven and earth.

[7 : 29] So what does that mean? God owns what? I mean, heaven and earth. That kind of covers it all, doesn't it? And if you think, well, I'm not sure that that verse quite convinces me.

Job chapter 41, verse 11. Who has prevented me that I should repay him? Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine, is what God says.

What is under the heaven? Everything. Everything. Everything we see and know around us is under heaven. And God says it is mine.

Okay? If that doesn't convince you, in Exodus 19, 5, it says this. Now, therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, God is speaking here, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is, guess what the last word is?

Mine. Mine. You know, when we have children, they like that word, don't they? Mine. I mean, they learn no first, but mine doesn't usually follow too far behind.

[8 : 40] They want to grab onto things and hold onto them and say, mine. Now, if that toy belongs to that child, can they say mine? Is that accurate?

Yeah. But who does it really belong to? Does it belong to them? Who does it really belong to? Let me ask you this.

Who can take it away from them? Mom and dad. Or who allows them to have it? Mom and dad. So whose really is it?

In this example. It's mom and dad's, isn't it? And really, you do understand, children don't really own anything. You understand that, right? Legally, they don't really own anything.

The parents own it all. That's how it is with us and God. We may say mine, but who gave it to us? God. Who can take it away from us?

[9 : 42] God. So whose is it really? God's. One more verse, and I could go through more. Psalms 50, verses 10 through 12. God is speaking.

For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, and all the fowls of the mountains, and all the wild beasts of the field are mine.

If I were hungry, I would not tell thee. For the world is mine, and the fullness thereof. The fullness thereof means everything in it.

Everything in the world, God says, is mine. For us as believers, folks, this is so crucial that we understand that.

That what we have, we have, because God has allowed us to have it. He gave it to us, and guess what? If He so chooses, He can take it away. So we need to remember that when we have it, we need to praise God for it, and use it for what?

[10 : 45] For Him. Use it for the things that would be pleasing to Him. Is this an easy lesson to forget? Yeah. This is easy to forget.

Because guess what? You go into the bank, and you look at your account. Whose name is on it? Does this say God's account? Whose name is on it? Yours.

Yours. You look at the deed to your home, whose name, and the property you own. Whose name is on it? Your wife. But your name, right? You look at the title for your car.

Whose name is on it? Your name. So again, that all lends us to start thinking, this is mine. We need reminded as believers that it belongs to God.

That is something that we need reminded of frequently. That I, I'll just speak for myself, I need reminded of that frequently. That everything I have, God has allowed me to have, He has control over it, and ultimately it is His.

[11 : 50] How do we remember that in our life? How do we go about remembering that so we don't forget? It said beware lest you forget that. So how do we do that? All right, guess what?

Stay in the Word. Yeah, God's Word tells us how not to forget this. If you're in Deuteronomy chapter 8, just turn back to Deuteronomy chapter 6, beginning in verse 5.

Actually, let's start in verse 6. Deuteronomy chapter 6, verse 6. And these words which I command you this day shall be in your heart, and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise up, and you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes, and you shall write them upon the post of your house, and on your gates, and it shall be when the Lord your God has brought you into the land which He swore to your fathers, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, to give you great and goodly cities which you builded not. It goes on and on. But how does it say we need to try to remember this? What are some of the things it says so that we don't forget this? Love the Lord with all your heart.

That's the start. Okay, start in verse 7. Let's go through it real quick. Teach them diligently to your children. So don't just make sure you understand this.

[13 : 24] You need to begin to teach your children this, right? Do you know that when you start to teach something, you learn more than the one you're teaching? Teachers understand that.

As we teach our children, we are reminded of this. And it says, Talk of them when you sit in your house. So talk about the fact in your home that everything you have belongs to God. Talk about it. When you sit in your house and when you walk by the way. What does that mean when you walk by the way? So when you sit in your house and when you're out in the world just walking around, talk about it.

Tell others. Remind them. And when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. So in other words, when you lie down at night and when you get up in the morning, remember, it's God.

Bind them for a sign upon your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. Write them upon the post of your house and on your gates. What does that mean?

[14:30] What's that? Have it up in your house. Put it up where you'll see it. Things that will remind you. You know, they used to have the old thing tie a string around your finger, right?

To remind you of something. I don't know if that would work for me. I'd look down at that string. I'm supposed to remember something. But I still wouldn't remember what. But it says, write these things around us.

Put them up where we'll see it. Listen to music on the radio that will remind us. Listen to people.

Talk with people that will remind us of this. That it is all God's that He has entrusted to us.

It does not belong to you and I. Because when we begin to have that understanding, we are much more likely to reach out and use it to bless other people when we understand it's not ours to begin with.

I want you to turn to Psalms chapter 30. This is the last scripture we're going to look at. Because we see an example of this. Psalms chapter 30.

[15:40] The first six verses. And this is David writing here. I will extol you, O Lord, for you have lifted me up and have not made my foes to rejoice over me.

Lord, my God, I cried to you and you have healed me. O Lord, you have brought up my soul from the grave. You have kept me alive that I should not go down to the pit.

You notice what he says in there a lot? You. He's saying, God, you did this. I didn't do these things. You did it. Sing to the Lord, O you saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

For His anger endures, but for a moment in His favor His life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. Listen to verse 6. And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. We are prosperous. Would you agree with that? The I shall never be moved part means I will not be removed from remembering that God gave it to me. That it belongs to God and not me.

[16:50] Folks, God has entrusted us with a great deal. God has, it was talked about in Sunday school this morning, do you think God has expectations for us? Do you think?

Do you think He has expectations for the things He allows us to have? Back in the day when they didn't always use a card in the lunch line, sometimes your parents would send some lunch money to school with you.

You guys remember those days? If your mom or dad gave you money for lunch, did they have an expectation that went along with it? What was the expectation?

Whether you did it or not, did they have an expectation? To use it for lunch. God allows us to have all that we have. Do you think He has an expectation with it?

I believe He does and that's to use it for Him. Use it in ways that would please Him. Use it to reach out to others. Use it to bless others. And by doing that, we bless God.

[17:59] I know we've been on this for a couple weeks. It's not a hard lesson. It's not a complicated lesson, but it is a hard lesson. Remember that it's all God's. That every good thing we have, every good thing we experience, because of God.

We need to give Him the praise and use it for His glory. All right, let's bow our heads. Lord God, thank You again for this time we've had to share together and I thank You for Your Word.

I pray, Lord, that You would remind us in the prosperity that we have that what we have is Yours. that we are not to forget that. We are to remember it and we are to use it for Your praise.

Use it to bless You. Use it in ways that would be pleasing to You. And Lord, it is so easy to forget and to begin to think that it is mine, that I've earned it. But Lord, I pray that You'd help us to remember that it's Yours.

Help us to talk about that. Help us to share it. Help us to just be reminded of Your goodness and it is only because of Your goodness that we have what we have. Lord, just help us to take what we have and use it in ways that please You.

[19:07] In the name of Jesus, we pray. Amen.