

## Prosperity Philippians 4:9

So far our corrected translation of **Phi 4:9** reads, “*These things* [doctrinal principles] *also you have learned* [*manthano*—learned from a teacher under strict academic discipline] *and received* [accepted through metabolization of doctrine] *and having heard* [under discipline] *and seen in me*” The conjunction *kai* is correctly translated “and,” and then the phrase *eidete en emoi* is translated “seen in me.” This means not only to see but also perspective or perceptive ability, and therefore means to **understand**. This means doctrine in the heart (the right lobe of the soul). *Emoi* is the instrumental case of *ego*, and therefore we could say “by means of me,” or “through me,” in other words, through the teaching ministry of the pastor.

“...*Practice these things...*” Next we have the verb *prassete* which means to practice, to perform repeatedly or habitually, and to execute, followed by the demonstrative pronoun *tauta*, translated “these things.” It means to solve a problem, to apply principles to the situation and execute it. To get to supergrace you must have maximum *epignosis* in your right lobe, and it must be applied. The stronger you become spiritually, the more opposition you will face from Satan and the kingdom of darkness. This opposition will come in the form of your three great enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, **1Jo 2:15-17**.

“...*And the God of peace shall be with you.*” Again, “and” is the conjunction *kai*, followed by *ho theos* (the God) and the definite article *tes* (of) *eirene* (prosperity). *Eirene* means **prosperity** (the origin of the name Irene). *Eirene* in the *descriptive genitive singular* form is similar to the Hebrew *shalom*, which means prosperity—spiritual prosperity, temporal prosperity, prosperity by association, historical prosperity, dying prosperity, and every other category of prosperity, with God as the source. And God says you will have no prosperity from Him until your *gnosis* is *epignosis*, and until you have enough to crack the maturity barrier. The “God of prosperity” is God’s title in relationship to the supergrace life and the blessings that follow. “Shall be” is *estai*, the *future active indicative* form of the verb *eimi*, and is correctly translated “shall be.” There is no true prosperity unless it comes from God, or unless you are associated with a supergrace or ultra-supergrace believer.

The complete corrected translation of **Phi 4:9** now reads, “*These things* [doctrinal principles] *also you have learned* [*manthano*—learned from a teacher under strict academic discipline] *and received* [accepted through metabolization of doctrine] *and having heard* [under discipline] *and have understood by means of me* [Paul’s teaching ministry]. *Be putting these into action and the God of prosperity shall be with you, all of you* [supergrace believers].”

God wants every believer to *eirene*, or prosper, according to the Bible. However, God has certain spiritual laws that He tells us we must follow in order to receive His highest and best in our lives. He has established spiritual principles that we are to follow concerning the giving of ourselves and our time, talent, and treasure. And if we can’t believe God’s promises in this realm, how can we believe His promises for eternal salvation and everything else we claim to believe?

There are two extreme positions that Christians take concerning prosperity. Some Christians hear that God wants them to prosper and follow Him simply for that reason. The opposite extreme is the belief that prosperity for Christians is wrong and that poverty is a godly thing. There is no question that the Bible warns us against false prosperity. However, we can prosper by following God's spiritual decrees concerning prosperity, which are outlined in His Word, 3Jo 1:2, "*Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.*" There is a way to prosper that is not evil, and that is to follow God's way for prosperity. In God's plan, you will prosper physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially.

God created all the wealth on this earth, Hag 2:8, Psa 24:1, Psa 50:10. Did He create it all for unbelievers? Did He create it for hard-hearted, sinful individuals who curse Him, deny Him, disobey His Word, and couldn't care less about Him? Look how our Lord put it in Mat 7:7-11, "*Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened. Or what man is there among you, when his son shall ask him for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he shall ask for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!*"

God is no different from any other father; He wants the best for His children. He wants the world to see prosperous, joyful Christians. If He was willing to give us His only Son, why would He hold anything else back from us? He has already given us His best; He will not refuse to give us everything else, Rom 8:32. Many great men of God throughout the Bible have prospered as a result of following God's rules for prosperity. All Christians are heirs to these same blessings that Abraham received from God, Gal 3:9. Our God, the God of prosperity, wants us to receive blessing through following His laws of prosperity, Deu 8:18, 3Jo 1:2.

Many people are destroyed by their wealth because they do not obtain it through God's guidelines. However, there is absolutely nothing wrong with being prosperous and successful *if* we obtain and retain our prosperity as a result of following God and His Word. God wants us to possess prosperity, wealth, and money, but He does not want them to possess us. In fact, God gave us His precious promises for this very reason, 2Pe 1:4, "*For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature.*"

Prosperity and abundance are part of God's divine nature, and He has given us more than 3,000 promises in His Word. The God of prosperity said in the very first chapter of the Bible, in Gen 1:26, "*Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.*" If God is prosperous, and if He created us to be just like He is, is it not obvious that He desires us to prosper and increase as well? Even in the creation of the earth, we see the manifestation of the abundance that God planned for us, even by looking within the fruits and vegetables of Gen 1:11, "*Then God said, 'Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, with seed in them, on the earth'; and it was so.*" God has provided the seeds so that we will be able to reproduce what we use many times over. It is something within that causes the fruits and vegetables to multiply, just as there is something within the believer that produces the multiplication of prosperity.

In Mat 13:23, seeds represent Bible doctrine, which produces fruit for the believer, *“And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.”* In 2Co 9:9-11, *“As it is written, ‘He scattered abroad, he gave to the poor, His righteousness abides forever. Now 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; you will be enriched in everything for all liberality, which through us is producing thanksgiving to God.’”* The first chapter of Genesis tells us how God stocked the earth with fish, animals, and birds, and how He provided plants and fruit trees. He then created a man who was meant to enjoy this abundance and be master over the earth, Gen 1:26, *“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’”*

God provided Adam with great abundance, but through the fall Adam surrendered his riches and his dominion over all the earth to Satan. This is why Satan is called a thief in Joh 10:1-10, because through his lies and his promotion of human viewpoint, he robs blessings and prosperity from mankind. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to earth for one purpose, to destroy Satan’s work, 1Jo 3:8, *“The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”* And our Lord succeeded in His mission. Before ascending into heaven, He said in Mat 28:18, *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”* 2Co 8:9 says, *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”*

2 Corinthians chapters 8-9 deal primarily with the subject of finances. When the Lord became poor so that we could be rich, this applies to spiritual riches, but also refers to riches, wealth, and prosperity. As we examine the Scriptures carefully, we discover that the Lord Jesus Christ was not poor when He walked this earth 2,000 years ago. In fact, Mat 11:19 says, *“The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, ‘Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard.’”* He ate fine food and drank good wine. He was not poor! Our Lord knew God’s guidelines and instructions for prosperity. However, He also gave up everything at the Cross, even His clothing. He could not have been any poorer than He was at that time. When He died, He did not own one thing in this world.

Some people assume Jesus was poor because He said in Luk 9:58, *“The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”* Jesus did not have a permanent residence where He slept, because He was the first traveling evangelist. He was constantly on the move.

How can anyone say that Jesus was poor if He was able to meet the needs of the large group of people traveling with Him (Luk 10:1-8)? Jesus and His organization had a treasurer, Judas, Joh 13:29. Notice what kind of person the Lord chose to hold His finances. He was not concerned about people stealing from Him or getting the best of Him in a deal. He was a complete master of God’s guidelines and instructions to prosper (e.g., Mat 6:33; Luk 6:38; Psa 84:11, 68:19; Pro 3:9-10, 11:25). He applied these principles repeatedly to meet His needs. The Lord Jesus Christ had the most genuine faith that has ever been seen on this earth, and as a result, He was able to turn little into plenty. He had absolutely no need for worldly material assets because He knew He could apply

His faith to His Father's laws for prosperity, in order to obtain whatever He needed, as in Mar 8:13-20. When you're doing the will of God, there is always more than enough provided by God. This does not mean that you will not have any needs, as Paul mentioned in Phi 4. It does mean that when believers operate under God's guidelines, He always provides, 2Co 9:6-12. This is when Psa 23:6 becomes a reality: *"Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life."*

When the tax collectors of Capernaum came to Peter and asked for money, our Lord was able to pay them, Mat 17:27, *"Go down to the shore and throw in a line, and open the mouth of the first fish you catch. You will find a coin to cover the taxes for both of us; take it and pay them."* Miraculous things happen to believers who have positive volition toward doctrine; those who live by perception, metabolization, and especially application of Bible doctrine have miracles manifested in their life in the realm of prosperity. It may not be the world's way of getting things, but it is God's way, Mar 10:29-30, *"Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, but that he shall receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms."*

Our Lord could have used these same laws to produce money for any of His other needs, if He so chose. When Peter and the other disciples had fished all night and came up empty, the Lord Jesus Christ was able to produce so many fish that the nets broke, Luk 5:1-11, and a similar instance is reported in Joh 21:1-11. When the Lord needed a donkey to ride into Jerusalem on that first Palm Sunday, He did not have to rent or buy a donkey. He simply told two of His disciples to go into the village of Bethphage to look for a donkey and its colt tied alongside the road, Mat 21:2. He told them to take these animals and, if anyone asked what they were doing, to simply say that the Lord needed them. When He needed a room to serve the Passover meal, He did not go to a hotel to rent one. Instead, He sent two of His disciples into Jerusalem and told them to contact a "certain man" who would lead them to another man, Mar 14:12-16. They would tell this man that they needed a large upper room and he would take care of everything, and this is exactly what happened.

In Mal 3:8-9, the Lord dealt with those who rejected God's guidelines for prosperity: *"Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, 'How have we robbed Thee?' In tithes and offerings. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you!"* The curse is mentioned in Hag 1:6c, *"He who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes."* Solomon said Ecc 5:11, *"When good things increase, those who consume them increase."* The Lord continues in Mal 3:10-12, *"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this," says the Lord of hosts, 'if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it may not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes,' says the Lord of hosts. 'And all the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land,' says the Lord of hosts."*

Whatever any of us need in any realm, God's laws say that He will provide them when we keep Him first in every area of our lives. However, what does it mean to keep God first? One example of this is to never start any day without first of all spending a period of quiet time of prayer—a time when you can speak with Him and ask Him for

guidance, direction, and help concerning anything that you're going to need throughout the day, Mat 7:8, "*For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.*" Another example of putting God first is to set time aside for the study of His Word on a daily basis. This includes God being more important to you than your social life, and spending more time seeking God than you do on the computer, watching television, or enjoying your games and hobbies. Seeking God on a daily basis must be more important to you than seeking financial prosperity. Only by being honest with yourself will you ever begin to live in God's guidelines and instructions for prosperity. We must also put the needs of the Body of Christ ahead of our own needs; remember, the attitude of a servant is...

*Do all the good you can, by all the means you can,  
in all the ways you can, in all the places you can,  
at all the times you can, to all the people you can,  
as long as you ever can.*

Many Christians give God some time on a Sunday, perhaps one or two Bible studies during the week, and maybe a few minutes of prayer each day, and that is as far as they go. However, such a lifestyle obviously does not put God first. We need to deny ourselves each day and put Him first in every way, Luk 9:23, "*And He was saying to them all, 'If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.'*"

The world's system of prosperity puts many things ahead of God, such as money, success, possessions, and personal recognition. This is in violation of the divine laws for prosperity. God wants us to prosper, but only if the prosperity will never come ahead of Him. He desires us to enjoy riches, honor, and a long life, as long as we reach these goals by keeping Him first and always humbling ourselves before Him. This is God's "prescription" for prosperity in every area of our lives. We must believe that He will do what He says He will do. God's guidelines and instructions for prospering will only work to the degree that we *apply* them to our lives.