

PROSPERITY



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Prosperity

Charles Fillmore

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Foreword

It is perfectly logical to assume that a wise and competent Creator would provide for the needs of His creatures in their various stages of growth. The supply would be given as required and as the necessary effort for its appropriation was made by the creature. Temporal needs would be met by temporal things, mental needs by things of like character, and spiritual needs by spiritual elements. For simplification of distribution all would be composed of one primal spiritual substance, which under proper direction could be transformed into all products at the will of the operator. This is a crude yet true illustration of the underlying principles on which the human family is supplied on this earth. The Father has provided a universal seed substance that responds with magical power to the

active mind of man. Faith in the increasing capacity of this seed substance, whether wrapped in visible husks or latent in invisible electrical units, always rewards man with the fruits of his labor.

The farmer may seem to get his supply from the seeds he plants, but he would never plant a seed unless he had faith in its innate capacity to increase, and that seed would never multiply without the quickening life of Spirit. Thus we see that all increase of substance depends on the quickening life of Spirit, and this fact gives us the key to mental processes that when used spiritually will greatly increase and at the same time simplify our appropriation of that inexhaustible substance which creative Mind has so generously provided.

In the following lessons we have attempted to explain man's lawful appropriation of the supplies spiritually and electrically provided by God. When we understand and adjust our mind to the realm or kingdom where these rich ideas and their electrical thought forms exist we shall experience in our temporal affairs what is called "prosperity."

We said "their electrical thought forms." Let us explain that all creative processes involve a realm of ideas and a realm of patterns or expressions of those ideas. The patterns arrest or "bottle up" the free electric units that sustain the visible thing. Thus creation is in its processes a trinity, and back of the visible universe are both the original creative idea and the cosmic rays that crystallize into earthly things. When we understand this trinity in its various activities we shall be able to reconcile the discoveries of modern science with the fundamentals of religion.

Modern science teaches us that space is heavily charged with energies that would transform the earth if they could be controlled. Sir Oliver Lodge says that a single cubic inch of the ether contains energy enough to run a forty-horse-power engine forty million years. The divergence of opinion among physicists as to the reality of the ether does not nullify the existence in space of tremendous potentialities. Sir Arthur Eddington says that about half the leading physicists assert that the ether exists and the other half deny its existence, but, in his words, "both parties mean exactly the same thing, and are divided only by words."

Spiritual understanding says that the ether exists as an emanation of mind and should not be confused in its limitations with matter. Mathematical measurements applied to the ether work it out of existence because its reality is in the Mind that conceived it and its being is governed and sustained by ideas, and ideas have no physical dimensions. So the ether will have existence and deposit matter only so long as Mind has use for it. When infinite Mind has completed the cycles of creation, both the invisible and the visible universes will be rolled up as a scroll and disappear and only Mind remain. "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fade away."

It adds greatly to the stability of a Christian's faith to know that Jesus anticipated the discoveries of modern science of the existence of that kingdom called "the ether." He named it the kingdom of the heavens, and His illustrations of its possibilities are unsurpassed. He did not say it was a place the good would inherit after death but an estate we could have here and now. "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Jesus taught that we can incorporate life-giving rays into our mind, body, and affairs through faith. Where physicists merely describe the mechanical presence of life as energy, Jesus taught man how by the exercise of his mind he can make that life obey him. Instead of a universe of blind mechanical forces Jesus showed the universe to be persuaded and directed by intelligence.

What we need to realize above all else is that God has provided for the most minute needs of our daily life and that if we lack anything it is because we have not used our mind in making the right contact with the supermind and the cosmic ray that automatically flows from it

Lesson One - Spiritual Substance, the Fundamental Basis of the Universe

DIVINE MIND is the one and only reality. When we incorporate the ideas that form this Mind into our mind and persevere in those ideas, a mighty strength wells up within us. Then we have a foundation for the spiritual body, the body not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. When the spiritual body is established in consciousness, its strength and power is transmitted to the visible body and to all the things that we touch in the world about us.

Spiritual discernment reveals that we are now in the dawn of a new era, that the old methods of supply and support are fast passing away, and that new methods are waiting to be brought forth. In the coming commerce man will not be a slave to money. Humanity's daily needs will be met in ways that are not now thought practical. We shall serve for the joy of serving, and prosperity will flow to us and through us in streams of plenty. The supply and support that love and zeal will set in motion are not as yet largely

used by man, but those who have tested their providing power are loud in their praise.

The dynamic power of the supermind in man has been sporadically displayed by men and women of every nation. It is usually connected with some religious rite in which mystery and priestly authority prevail. The so-called "common herd" are kept in darkness with respect to the source of the superhuman power of occult adepts and holy men. But we have seen a "great light" in the discovery by physical scientists that the atom conceals electronic energies whose mathematical arrangement determines the character of all the fundamental elements of nature. This discovery has disrupted the science based on the old mechanical atomic theory, but has also given Christian metaphysicians a new understanding of the dynamics back of Spirit.

Science now postulates space rather than matter as the source of life. It says that the very air is alive with dynamic forces that await man's grasp and utilization and that these invisible, omnipresent energies possess potentialities far beyond our most exalted conception. What we have been taught about the glories of heaven pales into insignificance compared with the glories of the radiant rays--popularly referred to as the "ether." We are told by science that we have utilized very meagerly this mighty ocean of ether in producing from it the light and power of electricity. The seemingly tremendous force generated by the whirl of our dynamos is but a weak dribble from a universe of energy. The invisible waves that carry radio programs everywhere are but a mere hint of an intelligent power that penetrates and permeates every germ of life, visible and invisible. Scientific minds the world over have been tremendously moved by these revolutionary discoveries, and they have not found language adequate to explain their magnitude.

Although a number of books have been written by scientists, setting forth guardedly the far-reaching effects that will inevitably follow man's appropriation of the easily accessible ether, none has dared to tell the whole story. The fact is that the greatest discovery of all ages is that of physical science that all things apparently have their source in the invisible, intangible ether. What Jesus taught so profoundly in symbols about the riches of the kingdom of the heavens has now been proved true.

According to the Greek, the language in which the New Testament has come down to us, Jesus did not use the word heaven but the word heavens in His teaching. He was not telling us of the glories of some faraway place called "heaven" but was revealing the properties of the "heavens" all around us, called both "space" and "ether" by physicists. He taught not only its dynamic but also its intelligent character, and said that the entity that rules it is within man: "The kingdom of God is within you." He not only described this kingdom of the heavens in numerous parables but made its attainment by man the greatest object of human existence. He not only set this as man's goal but attained it Himself, thereby demonstrating that His teaching is practical as well as true.

The scientists tell us that the ether is charged with electricity, magnetism, light rays, X rays, cosmic rays, and other dynamic radiations; that it is the source of all life, light, heat, energy, gravitation, attraction, repulsion; in short, that it is the interpenetrating essence of everything that exists on the earth. In other words, science gives to the ether all the attractions of heaven without directly saying so. Jesus epitomized the subject when He told His followers that it was the kingdom from which God clothed and fed all His children. "Seek ye first his kingdom, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto

you." Science says that the electrical particles that break into light in our earth's atmosphere are also a source of all substance and matter. Jesus said that He was the substance and bread that came from the heavens. When will our civilization begin really to appropriate and use this mighty ocean of substance and life spiritually as well as physically?

This inexhaustible mind substance is available at all times and in all places to those who have learned to lay hold of it in consciousness. The simplest, shortest, and most direct way of doing this was explained when Jesus said, "Whosoever ... shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that what he saith cometh to pass, he shall have it." When we know that certain potent ideas exist in the invisible mind expressions, named by science both "ether" and "space" and that we have been provided with the mind to lay hold of them, it is easy to put the law into action through thought and word and deed.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,

Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune," said Shakespeare. That flood tide awaits us in the cosmic spaces, the paradise of God.

The spiritual substance from which comes all visible wealth is never depleted. It is right with you all the time and responds to your faith in it and your demands on it. It is not affected by our ignorant talk of hard times, though we are affected because our thoughts and words govern our demonstration. The unfailing resource is always ready to give. It has no choice in the matter; it must give, for that is its nature. Pour your living words of faith into the omnipresent substance, and you will be prospered though all the banks in the world close their doors. Turn the great energy of your thinking toward "plenty" ideas, and you will

have plenty regardless of what men about you are saying or doing.

God is substance, but if by this statement we mean that God is matter, a thing of time or condition, then we should say that God is substanceless. God is not confined to that form of substance which we term matter. God is the intangible essence of that which man has formed into and named matter. Matter is a mental limitation of that divine substance whose vital and inherent character is manifest in all life expression.

God substance may be conceived as God energy, or Spirit light, and "God said, let there be light, and there was light." This is in harmony with the conclusions of some of the most advanced physicists. Sir James Jeans says, in "The Mysterious Universe," "The tendency of modern physics is to resolve the whole material universe into waves, and nothing but waves. These waves are of two kinds: bottled-up waves, which we call matter, and unbottled waves, which we call radiation, or light. The process of annihilation of matter is merely unbottling imprisoned wave energy, and setting it free to travel through space."

Spirit is not matter. Spirit is not person. In order to perceive the essence of Being we must drop from our mind all thought that God is in any way circumscribed or has any of the limitations that we associate with things or persons having form or shape. "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath."

God is substance, not matter, because matter is formed, while God is the formless. God substance lies back of matter and form. It is the basis of all form yet does not enter into any form as a finality. Substance cannot be seen,

touched, tasted, or smelled, yet it is more substantial than matter, for it is the only substantiality in the universe. Its nature is to "sub-stand" or "stand under" or behind matter as its support and only reality.

Job says, "The Almighty shall be thy defense, and thou shalt have plenty of silver." This refers to universal substance, for silver and gold are manifestations of an everywhere present substance and are used as symbols for it. Lew Wallace, in "Ben-Hur," refers to the kingdom as "beaten gold." You have doubtless in your own experience caught sight of this everywhere present substance in your silence, when it seemed like golden snowflakes falling all about you. This was the first manifestation from the overflow of the universal substance in your consciousness.

Substance is first given form in the mind, and as it becomes manifest it goes through a threefold activity. In laying hold of substance in the mind and bringing it into manifestation, we play a most important part. We do it according to our decree. "Thou shalt decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee." We are always decreeing, sometimes consciously, often unconsciously, and with every thought and word we are increasing or diminishing the threefold activity of substance. The resulting manifestation conforms to our thought, "As he thinketh within himself, so is he."

There is no scarcity of the air you breathe. There is plenty of air, all you will ever need, but if you close your lungs and refuse to breathe, you will not get it and may suffocate for lack of air. When you recognize the presence of abundance of air and open your lungs to breathe it deeply, you get a larger inspiration. This is exactly what you should do with your mind in regard to substance. There is an all-sufficiency of all things, just as there is an all-sufficiency of

air. The only lack is our own lack of appropriation. We must seek the kingdom of God and appropriate it aright before things will be added to us in fullness.

There is a kingdom of abundance of all things, and it may be found by those who seek it and are willing to comply with its laws. Jesus said that it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. This does not mean that it is hard because of his wealth, for the poor man gets in no faster and no easier. It is not money but the thoughts men hold about money, its source, its ownership, and its use, that keep them out of the kingdom. Men's thoughts about money are like their thoughts about all possessions; they believe that things coming out of the earth are theirs to claim and control as individual property, and may be hoarded away and depended on, regardless of how much other men may be in need of them. The same belief is prevalent among both rich and poor, and even if the two classes were suddenly to change places, the inequalities of wealth would not be remedied. Only a fundamental change in the thoughts of wealth could do that.

Before there is any fundamental social or economic change men must begin to understand their relationship to God and to one another as common heirs to the universal resource that is sufficient for all. They must give up some of their erroneous ideas about their "rights." They must learn that they cannot possess and lock up that which belongs to God without themselves suffering the effects of that sequestration. The poor man is not the greatest sufferer in this concentration of wealth, for he has not concentrated his faith in material things and chained his soul to them. Those who are rich in the things of this world are by their dependence on those things binding themselves to material things and are in material darkness.

Every thought of personal possession must be dropped out of mind before men can come into the realization of the invisible supply. They cannot possess money, houses, or land selfishly, because they cannot possess the universal ideas for which these symbols stand. No man can possess any idea as his own permanently. He may possess its material symbol for a little time on the plane of phenomena, but it is such riches that "moth and rust consume, and where thieves break through and steal."

Men possess as valuables their education, trade, ability, or intellectual talent. Ministers of the gospel possess scholarship or eloquence, and take pride in these spiritual possessions. Yet even these are burdens that must be unloaded before they may enter the kingdom of the heavens. The saint who is puffed up with his saintly goodness must unload his vanity before he gets in. Whoever is ambitious to do good, to excel his fellow men in righteousness, must lose his ambition and desire before he beholds the face of the all-providing Father.

The realm of causes may be compared to steam in a glass boiler. If the glass is clear one may look right at it and see nothing at all. Yet when an escape valve is touched the steam rushes out, condenses and becomes visible. But in this process it has also lost its power. Substance exists in a realm of ideas and is powerful when handled by one who is familiar with its characteristics. The ignorant open the valves of the mind and let ideas flow out into a realm with which they have nothing in common. The powerful ideas of substance are condensed into thoughts of time and space, which ignorance conceives as being necessary to their fruition. Thus their power is lost, and a weary round of seedtime and harvest is inaugurated to fulfill the demands of the world.

It is the mind that believes in personal possessions that limits the full idea. God's world is a world of results that sequentially follow demands. It is in this kingdom that man finds his true home. Labor has ceased for him who has found this inner kingdom. Divine supply is brought forth without laborious struggle: to desire is to have fulfillment.

This is the second step in demonstration for the one who has fully dedicated himself to the divine guidance. He immediately enters into easier experiences and more happiness than the world affords, when he covenants to follow only the good. There is an advanced degree along the same line of initiation into the mysteries of the divine. Before this step may be taken, a deeper and more thorough mental cleansing must be undergone. A higher set of faculties is then awakened within the body, and new avenues of expression are opened for the powers of the Spirit, not only in the body but also in the affairs of the individual. As he proceeds to exercise these faculties he may find some of them clogged by the crystals of dead thought that some selfish ideas have deposited, which makes him go through a fresh cleansing. If he is obedient to the Spirit and willing to follow without cavil or protest, the way is easy for him. If however he questions and argues, as did Job, he will meet many obstructions and his journey will be long and tedious.

Again, he who seeks the kingdom of substance for the sake of the loaves and fishes he may get out of it will surely be disappointed in the end. He may get the loaves and fishes, that is quite possible; but if there remains in his soul any desire to use them for selfish ends, the ultimate result will be disastrous.

Many people are seeking the aid of Spirit to heal them of their physical ills. They have no desire for the higher life,

but having found their lusts and passions curtailed by physical infirmities, they want these erased in order that they may continue in their fleshly way. It is the experience of all who have dealt with Spirit that it is a vigorous bodily stimulant. It restores the vitality of the body until it is even more sensitive to pleasure or pain than it was before the spiritual quickening. This supersensitiveness makes it more susceptible and liable to more rapid waste if further indulgence is gratified. That is why those who receive spiritual treatment should be fully instructed in the Truth of Being. They should be shown that the indulgence of bodily passions is a sin against their success in every walk of life and especially in the way of finances and prosperity. If substance is dissipated, every kind of lack begins to be felt. Retribution always follows the indulgence of appetite and passion for mere sensation. Both sinners and saints suffer in this valley of folly. The alternative is to dedicate yourself to the Father's business. Make a definite and detailed covenant with the Father, lay your desires, appetites, and passions at His feet and agree to use all your substance in the most exalted way. Then you are seeking the kingdom, and all things else shall be added unto you.

We want to make this substance that faith has brought to our mind enduring and abiding, so that we do not lose it when banks fail or men talk of "hard times." We must have in our finances a consciousness of the permanency of the omnipresent substance as it abides in us. Some wealthy families succeed in holding their wealth while others dissipate it in one generation because they do not have the consciousness of abiding substance. For many of us there is either a feast or a famine in the matter of money and we need the abiding consciousness. There is no reason why we should not have a continuous even flow of substance both in income and outgo. If we have freely received we must also freely give and keep substance going, confident in our

understanding that our supply is unlimited and that it is always right at hand in the omnipresent Mind of God.

In this understanding we can stand "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," depressions, losses, and financial failures and still see God as abundant substance waiting to come into manifestation. That is what Paul meant by taking up "the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day." The substance that has in the past been manifest in our affairs is still here. It is the same substance and it cannot be taken away. Even though there seems to be material lack, there is plenty of substance for all. We are standing in the very midst of it. Like the fish we might ask, "Where is the water," when we live and move and have our being in it. It is in the water, in the air everywhere, abounding, glorious spiritual substance. Take that thought and hold it. Refuse to be shaken from your spiritual stand in the very midst of God's prosperity and plenty, and supply will begin to come forth from the ether and plenty will become more and more manifest in your affairs.

Jesus was so charged with spiritual substance that when the woman touched His garment the healing virtue went out from it and she was healed. There were thousands of people in the crowd, but only the woman who had faith in that substance got it. It was already established in her consciousness, and she knew that her needs would be met if she could make the contact. In this there is a lesson for us. We know that strength is manifest everywhere, for we see it in the mechanical world. A great locomotive starts from the depot, moving slowly at first, but when it gains momentum it speeds down the track like a streak. Thus it is with spiritual strength. Beginning sometimes with a very small

thought, it takes on momentum and eventually becomes a powerful idea. Every one of us can strengthen his hold on the thought of divine substance until it becomes a powerful idea, filling the consciousness and manifesting itself as plenty in all our affairs.

As you lay hold of substance with your mind, make it permanent and enduring. Realize your oneness with it. You are unified with the one living substance, which is God, your all-sufficiency. From this substance you were created; in it you live and move and have your being; by it you are fed and prospered.

The spiritual substance is steadfast and immovable, enduring. It does not fluctuate with market reports. It does not decrease in "hard times" nor increase in "good times." It cannot be hoarded away to cause a deficiency in supply and a higher price. It cannot be exhausted in doles to meet the needs of privation. It is ever the same, constant, abundant, freely circulating and available.

The spiritual substance is a living thing, not an inanimate accumulation of bread that does not satisfy hunger nor water that fails to quench thirst. It is living bread and living water, and he that feeds on God's substance shall never hunger and never thirst. The substance is an abiding thing, not a bank deposit that can be withdrawn nor a fortune that can be lost. It is an unfailing principle that is as sure in its workings as the laws of mathematics. Man can no more be separated from his supply of substance than life can be separated from its source. As God permeates the universe and life permeates every cell of the body, so does substance flow freely through man, free from all limit or qualification.

In the new era that is even now at its dawn we shall have a spirit of prosperity. This principle of the universal