

Kingdom Report

Week of 20 April 2019

The 2020's : The End of Propheteering in the Church and Government

The populists in both the church and government promise the masses what they want to hear....something for nothing. In the coming 2020 decade the masses will have a meeting with economic, political and spiritual reality. After that coming disaster we can start getting serious about Kingdom economics and real prosperity...

Below is the front cover of this week's Financial Mail, South Africa's premier weekly business magazine. It says, "PROPHETEERING: How some Charismatic Churches Fleece their Flocks."



This is a terrible indictment of a cult movement that has been infiltrating our charismatic movement now for 40 years. It has gotten so bad that both government and the media are making efforts to stop this ongoing corruption and fleecing of the faithful.

I wish the front page story had been: "Prosperity: How the Charismatic Churches are helping their members to create jobs, wealth and a new vibrant South African economy."

But this is not the only "Propheteering" going on. Next month is election time in South Africa and the political discourse is full of the government populists promising the people FREE EVERYTHING. Free housing, free water, free electricity, free university education for all, free health service, free social grants for 18 million people, free everything is what "freedom" seems to be about.

This is the essence of what the "populists" in both church and government use to attract the masses...tell them what they want to hear. Paul warned about this to

Timothy... "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lusts shall they heap themselves teachers, having itching ears.*"

If there is something that the voters want to hear is....these are all the things that the government is going to give you....just vote for us. The voters have itching ears, they want to hear politicians with promises.

In the biggest churches across the land what do people want to hear....this is how Jesus will make you rich.

But each populist movement needs something from the masses. The populist politician needs votes. The populist preacher needs money.

Here is my prediction for the 2020's. As the economy crashes the promises of prosperity and free goodies and wealth and success will come to naught. And will obviously to all come to naught. To such an extent that great disillusion sets in among the people, and then great anger and then rebellion against the political and religious order that propagated these illusions.

Let me make a brief comment on the basic flaws in each of these populist movements and then go onto something more positive for us to pray over this Easter weekend.

Socialism as a political economic system has always been a failure. The idea that government can create jobs or create wealth and prosperity or that government can solve our problems is a deeply rooted illusion that is soon going to lead to disaster here in South Africa as it has all across Africa and everywhere else it has been tried.

To give to the needy government must first take from those who have produced wealth. The gross inefficiency of this process whereby bureaucrats allocate and administer the nations surplus always ends up in corruption and waste on a grand scale. As Margaret Thatcher presciently observed "Socialism works until you run out of other people's money to spend."

The second fatal flaw of socialism is the old saying "there is no such thing as a free lunch." Meaning someone had to work to produce the food and serve it. You might not have paid for it but that does not mean it was free. There are no free houses or free electricity or free education. Someone paid for it and it was not the government. And the problem is that socialism inevitably takes more and more from the few producers until they do not want to produce any more, emigrate to a friendlier nation or just retire and stop working and producing.

The third great flaw in socialism is giving people the idea that they have a right to free goods that others have produced and those goods have been taken by government force from people and given to others. Nobody has a "right" to someone else's labour...that is what slave masters tell slaves.

Enough said about that for now.

The essence of the mistakes of the prosperity gospel lies in these facts:

1) The first is a failure to teach a proper theology of work. The starting point for a theology of work is the first great commandment given by God to all mankind found in the first chapter of the bible right after the creation of mankind...Gen. 1:26-28:

Gen 1:26 And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

Gen 1:27 And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Gen 1:28 And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Be productive, subdue the earth and have dominion! That means a commandment from God for each of us to be involved in productive labour. This is honourable ministry as unto the Lord. Work is sacred. It is God's first commandment to all people! The avoidance of work is sin. "Six days of the week shalt thou work" is a commandment.

2) The second is the failure to distinguish between the difference in what is God's work responsibility and what is our work responsibility.

This is evident in the constant variations and false teachings on "give and it shall be given unto you." The mistake here is to get people to think they must get into a transactional relationship with God in order to be blessed. That means in essence you must give to God (or in this case God's representative) in order to receive from God.

This can be in the form of tithes or offerings or "seed faith" or the new fad in the money for nothing movement "the trading floors of heaven".

This twisted theology totally ignores Romans 8:32 ***"He that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things."*** Please read that carefully and prayerfully. Everything we receive from God is free! God does not require a financial transaction from you. He will freely give you all things that Christ paid for on the cross. They are yours...including prosperity and blessing.

3) The third failure is the mistake of not giving into the marketplace.

You cannot buy prosperity from God. You have to work for prosperity in the marketplace by trading the fruit of your work for the fruit of someone else's work. When Jesus said "Give and it shall be given unto you pressed down and running over shall men give unto you" tells you where you must give....you must give to people so that people will give to you. The more you give the more you get.

And here is where I want to end off with this third great truth and some great illustrations of people in the marketplace who did it God's way to obtain great prosperity without actually knowing they were following biblical principles:

Google

Larry Page and Serge Brin started Google as a free search engine. No money to be made. They gave freely for a long time. But as hundreds of million of people started using their free service they found a way to monetize those searches and make billions in profit. They increased their free giving with free Youtube for the masses, free Google maps, and many other freebies. The result....each of them are worth more than \$50 billion.

Facebook

Again the principle of freely give....and freely give a service to hundreds of millions of people to make billions in profits. Mark Zuckerberg is worth also more than \$50 billion. And Yahoo offered him \$1 billion for Facebook after he started when he was just 22...he turned it down. He had vision and passion for a social product beyond just making money.

IPhone

The iPhone came out in 2007. It made hundreds of billions in profits. It made Steve Jobs incredibly rich. Why? simple. Peter Diamandis in his book 'Bold' calculated that all the things that the 2007 iPhone could do would have cost in the 1980's the equivalent of \$900,000 of various machines and product equipment. Apple become the biggest company in the world by offering more, much more for much less!

Ford

But this is what Henry Ford did to make himself enormously wealthy ...the Model T Ford. He relentlessly drove the price of the car down through new manufacturing technology and mass production to where the common person could afford a car. He gave more for less...and became extremely wealthy.

This whole multi-billionaire class of entrepreneurs these last 20 years all come from this same mindset....how can I relentlessly bring down cost and yet add more value to my product, improve quality and service and thereby serve more customers.

That is what Jesus was talking about....give lots, give best price, give quality service and men shall give unto you pressed down and running over.

A reporter asked Steve Jobs widow, "How does someone become a billionaire?" She answered "Find a problem to solve for a billion people."

The billionaire entrepreneurs of our era are people who are obsessed with finding problems to solve for a billion people at a time. They dream big. They are visionaries who are able to excite people with a can do spirit.

Peter Diamandis of the Singularity University relates how when at Princeton University he started the space colonization club that had branches all across America. A close friend of his at that time and a chapter president of their space club was Jeff Bezos. Jeff told Peter that one day he is going to start a successful company so that he can finance a space rocket company...because mankind's destiny is to colonize space and government is not doing the job. Today Jeff Bezos the founder of Amazon is putting a \$1 billion a year into funding his own space rocket company 'Blue Origin'.

Why aren't we Charismatic Christians not making the billions? Because a number of reasons:

- We forgot that our first commandment was to subdue the earth and make it productive.
- We forgot that the meek are supposed to inherit the earth, not the Antichrist and his followers.
- We never learned to do wealth creation God's way....create networks of cooperation around great projects to subdue the earth, study and develop skills to subdue the earth and create value added products, give abundantly into the market place after creating new wealth abundantly, save capital by living modestly and invest capital wisely.
- We don't use our Charismatic gifts. The Holy Spirit was given to us as helper, to dream dreams and see visions...of new products, new technologies, new applications, new networks.

Here is the good news for us here in Southern Africa....

The bad news is that we are going to have to go through a painful process of disillusionment with the populists in our politics and pulpits.

But then we are going to reorganize ourselves with new vision and new leadership:

We have the great advantage and privilege of being on the African continent. A continent of 1,3 billion people who have endless problems. A continent where the 1st industrial revolution has not taken hold never mind all this talk of the 4th industrial revolution.

That means where there are great problems there are great opportunities. The great continental railroads still need to be built, the great steel mills, the chemical plants, the maritime fleets, the private airlines, the great factories and farms and agro-processing companies.

A billion people need food, clothing, transport, education, health care....there are huge amounts of new products and wealth that need to be created from the ground-up. That means plenty of opportunities for new millionaires and new billionaires.

We Christians get to shape a new world and a new economic system from the ground up because we Christians are the majority in Africa. We get to decide democratically how we want this continent run.

I am excited by our future. I believe the greatest revival and the greatest wealth creation still lies ahead...and we get to pick and choose from a great lot of tech that has already been freely given to us to make our job so much easier....

We just need to get our act together....and stop looking to freebies from politicians or miracle money from preachers.