

PROSPERITY CONSCIOUSNESS: RISING ABOVE THE FEAR

By Reverend Karen S. Judd, LCSW

OPENING WORDS

The opening words this morning are from the philosopher, James Allen. “Through his thoughts, man holds the key to every situation and contains within himself that transforming and regenerative agency by which to make himself what he wills.”

HOMILY

Through my hospice ministry, I have met some incredible people over the years and I recently began working with a woman named Connie, whose life exemplifies prosperity consciousness. Her life has much to teach us during these times. For we are being inundated with thoughts, images, emotions, and beliefs that are fear based ; especially regarding economics. We have been erroneously conditioned to believe that our lives are completely shaped by what happens around us and to us. During these times we need to remind ourselves it is not what happens “out there” but what we do or think about what happens, that matters. The starting point in realizing prosperity, is to accept responsibility for our own thoughts, thus taking charge of our lives.

Let us begin with a working definition of prosperity. The word prosperity comes from the Latin root which translates to : “according to hope” or “to go forward hopefully.” Eric Butterworth, in his book, Spiritual Economics, states prosperity is a way of living and thinking, and not just money or things. Prosperity is “spiritual well-being.” This involves the whole experience of a healing life, satisfying love, abiding peace and harmony, as well as a sufficiency of what Aristotle called the “furniture of fortune.”

Connie is presently a resident in a skilled nursing facility. She is 91 years old and looks younger. She needs a wheelchair to get around. She is well groomed and her room has photographs of family members and friends, a painting of her beloved second husband, Ed, hanging on the wall, and a fresh floral arrangement on her dresser. She has graciously and candidly shared with me about her incredible life and has given me her permission to share some of her story with you.

From a very young age Connie had life experiences that taught her it was possible to get what you want in life, to have goals and dreams, to be self confident, to listen to her inner guidance and that God is ever present in her life. She has held onto these thoughts throughout her life and created a prosperous life, affirming “ I always got what I wanted in life.”

Many of us, did not have the early life experiences that taught us how to create a prosperity consciousness and we need to seek out teachers to learn this way of being. Fortunately, we live in a time where there are many teachers on the subject of

prosperity, and related fields -such as the law of attraction and manifestation. Catherine Ponder is thought to be the first modern thinker to use affirmations to attract abundance and she is a prolific writer on the topic of prosperity. Her emphasis on positive thinking gained her the title, “ The Norman Vincent Peale of lady ministers.” Her research traced the practice of affirmation back to the early Egyptians. At that time, manifestation of “substance” (the intelligence and energy that transforms thought into matter) was taught only to members of the royal family, for it was feared that if the masses had this knowledge, they would not want to continue to be workers and slaves for the monarchy.

It was Moses that brought the Egyptian mystical teachings into the Judeo-Christian tradition. Baby Moses, the son of poor Hebrew parents, was found by the Pharaoh's daughter and was raised as a member of the royal court, he had access to mystical teachings, including how to work with substance – the intelligence and energy that transforms thought into matter. When Moses was forced to leave Egypt because he killed an Egyptian, he had this esoteric knowledge with him.

Creating prosperity consciousness begins with having the right thoughts. The thought is- it our divine right to be prosperous – experiencing peace,health, happiness and plenty in our world- and the Ultimate Creator wants this for us. God is the Source of man's supply as the Creator of this rich universe, and God's will for us is the wealth of the universe. In Deuteronomy 8:18, the words of Jehovah to Moses are “ I will remember Jehovah God, for it is He that giveth me the power to experience wealth.” During later centuries, following the death of Jesus, religion became more secularized, leading to variations and departures from Jesus' original teachings. During the Middle Ages, to assure wealth only to a privileged few, teachings of “poverty and penance” were offered to the masses as the only way to salvation, in order to keep people in poverty. Lack and privation were promoted as a “Christian virtue.” Millions were led to believe that it was “pious to be poor,” and some of these old feudal ideas about poverty as a spiritual virtue persist today, but they are false, man-made ideas. In Proverbs, the words of Solomon are “As a man thinketh within himself, so he is.”

The first step to prosperous thinking is to clean out your mind of negative, limited, and unforgiving thoughts. Clean out your physical space as well by releasing, giving away, selling or otherwise getting rid of whatever you no longer want or need. Such items as clothing, furniture, letters,files, books or any personal possessions. Get them out of the way to make room for what you do want. Sometimes it is necessary to let go of unsatisfying relationships and old ways of living that no longer please or satisfy you. A wonderful tool to help with this process is Stretton Smith's “The 4T Prosperity Program: Tithing of Time, Talent, Treasure for Prosperity and the Fullness of Life.” It is available in a study group format complete with audio tapes and a workbook. Periodically The 4T classes are held at Unity Churches.

The second step to prosperous thinking is to daily, sit quietly and write down what you feel you want to be, to have, to accomplish and experience for the day, week, month or year. Being definite about prosperity and to write down and think about what you REALLY desire. Your mind is the connecting link between you and the rich but, unformed substance of the universe. If you never think definitely about the prosperous results you desire, no mental contract is made with the rich substance of the universe. List what you really want- not what you think you should have, nor what somebody else thinks you should have. Your deep-seeded desires are your soul's longings, tapping at the door of your mind. Write down dates by which you wish your desired good to be accomplished. From day to day, it is perfectly fine to change, revise, expand and rearrange your desires in their written form.

Connie's deep desire was to have a restaurant of her own, on Cape Cod. Her family attempted to dissuade her because it was a lot of work. She followed her inner longing and focused her thinking to make her dream a reality. She talked with people about her idea, gathered information, visualized how she wanted the restaurant to look, thought about what kind of dining experience she wanted to offer to her customers, and other details. Her parents, witnessing her focus, thoughtfulness and determination became attracted to her dream and gave their support. She found the type of location and building she was looking for and bought the property. Daily thoughts then focused on the building's renovation, restaurant equipment and other details. Her inner guidance led her to contact her college roommate, who formerly had a restaurant business, to see if she still had the equipment and if she would want to sell it. She did still have it and they agreed upon a price. Connie went to Stamford and brought the many boxes of equipment back to the Cape. Finally her restaurant was opened for business – Bishop's Terrace - for gracious dining. She loved her work and providing this dining experience for her customers. She continued to be curious and would learn new things for her business. With a radiant smile, she spoke about one of the desserts she created. She called it the “Terrace Delight.” It was made from meringue, whipped cream and peanut brittle in between the layers. She shared that her business was very successful, that she didn't need to advertise and they would serve 300 people. I inquired, 300 people a week? She said with conviction, “Oh no, 300 a day. We had two seatings one at 5:00 and one at 7:00.” She explained how they had both cold and hot hors d'oeuvres in the lounge, live piano music and she came to make homemade cakes for all her customers celebrating their birthday.

Connie did have experiences in her life that hurt her heart, one of the most painful was the loss of her only sibling, her brother, John, whom she loved dearly. He was 27, a fighter pilot in WWII and due to return home in a few days. His plane was shot down in March, over the Mediterranean. The family was told he would not have survived very long in the frigid water temperatures. She became momentarily sad, then smiled and shared how they would double date and with respectful tone in her voice, told how her

brother wanted to be a fighter pilot very much and went to Canada to train and entered the war as pilot for the British and when the US entered the war he switch to the US forces. She showed me his picture in his uniform. Over the years I have come across people who have never stopped being angry at someone or God for the loss of a loved one. Connie was able to forgive and keep the love she felt for her brother in heart.

Third step to prosperous thinking is to mentally picture your desires being fulfilled. That is what Alex did in the story, we heard during the children's focus, I Wanna Iguana. He imagined/visualized, the iguana being in his life – how he would care for him, play with him, and being happy with him.

Imagination is one of the mind's strongest powers. The more you dare to to image your desired good as a fulfilled result, and the more you dare to live your mental images, the faster the imaging power of the mind will begin producing results for you.

The fourth step to prosperous thinking are the daily affirmations, both verbal and silent. These are a form of command. Through verbally affirming or declaring the good you want, rather than continuing to talk about what you don't want, you begin to make firm in your mind and in the invisible ethers the good you desire. As you continue to affirm your good, it rushes forth as a visible result.

The final step in prosperous thinking is declaring that prosperity is yours now! Catherine Ponder recommends declaring to ourselves often, the following: “ Every day in every way I am growing more prosperous, successful, victorious. I am made for peace, health, and plenty, and I am now experiencing them in ever-increasing degrees in my life.”

Creating prosperity in your life is taking those conscious right thoughts, beliefs, images, feelings, into right action, to manifest in your life that which you desire. This includes expressing gratitude for your prosperity and tithing 10% of your gross income, and all the money you receive, to that person, place, or institution where you have received your spiritual food.

I am grateful for this opportunity this day, to speak with you about prosperity consciousness for I needed to revisit this topic. Preparing for this service, inspired me to practice daily, once again, the steps for prosperity consciousness. I enjoyed the process of creating this service and sharing with you today, ideas and experiences that I have found helpful and healing. My desire is that each of you will receive something YOU need, from today's service. If there is additional information or resources you would like, please see me after the service or contact me at karen.judd@sbcglobal.net. To find out more information about my ministry please visit my website at www.reverendkarensjudd.com.