

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Gain in God's World

Speaker:

Steve Heitland

Date:

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Scriptures:

Genesis 30:25-43

Theme: Pursue your gain from the righteous King who always provides for his people.

Introduction: Everyone in God's world has a vision of the good that they are pursuing. We all want gain in some form and we have all a standard of judgment or evaluation that we use to make decisions, but we can also feel uneasy or unsettled in the pursuit of gain. Is the pursuit of power and wealth legitimate or idolatrous? And how should we think about our role in the common good as God's people?

Jacob faces his struggle to gain wealth in 2 stages in this passage:

1. Two paths to gain (25-36)

After the birth of Joseph, Jacob is ready to return home. He has his people (11 sons), but he has no place or prosperity (cf. Gen 28:13-15).

He asks Laban to be released from his service. Laban flatters and tries to negotiate, knowing that Jacob's presence has produced his prosperity.

Jacob persists and works out a deal with Laban. Laban then violates the terms of the deal and seeks to take advantage of Joseph.

Laban represents the path of selfish, unrighteous gain. He is a pragmatist—unprincipled and self-serving. Jacob represents righteous gain. He trusts the Lord, even when he is defrauded, and pursues his gain in the Lord.

Heb 11:6 teaches us that genuine biblical faith requires us to pursue personal, righteous gain. We must believe that God "rewards those who seek him"—which means that he gives gain to his people.

2. The nature of true gain (37-43)

Even though Laban cheated, Jacob trusted the Lord and set about caring for the flock with the expectation that the Lord would provide for him.

As he cared for the animals, he bred the stronger for himself and the weaker for Laban. This was the Lord's judgment on Laban for his rebellion and the Lord's blessing of Jacob for his faith.

We can find 6 principles about gain: a) all gain comes from the Lord; b) all gain is driven by a vision for the good; c) righteous gain must be gained righteously; d) evil men may gain for a season, but it will not last; e) righteous gain benefits those to whom we are covenantally connected; and, f) righteous gain is used to build godly dominion.

Questions:

1. What is your vision of the good? What values drive you?
2. What are you building? Why and how are you building it?
3. Are you pursuing gain through faith in God?