



ANSWER TO SILAS MALAFAIA'S CHALLENGE TO HIS CRITICS: WHY IS PROSPERITY THEOLOGY NOT ACCEPTED BIBLICALLY?

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

The present work is a response to a challenge launched by shepherd Silas Malafaia to critics of the Theology of Prosperity which he defends as biblical. Excerpts from the video “Pastor Silas Malafaia – Uma vida de prosperidade” were heard, studied and analyzed from biblical texts. But why is Prosperity Theology not accepted biblically? The objective of this study is to prove that Prosperity Theology has no biblical foundation, and is therefore unbiblical. It is intended, therefore, to present answers to the arguments sustained by him as evidence that the aforementioned theology has no biblical basis. To proceed with the analysis and response to these arguments, corresponding biblical texts selected from the YouVersion website were used, which contains different biblical versions, among others such as Online Bible, Greek Bible, Hebrew Bible, for comparison and analysis.

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In order to do so, an exploratory and descriptive qualitative research will be carried out in which the excerpts of the analyzed video will be observed in a deductive way in order to answer the problem question through a case study. Finally, each answer presented to each excerpt of the video highlighted in its respective frame highlighted in this study demonstrated the expected result regarding the question explored both based on biblical texts and the interpretations of other authors on the subject, being able to proceed to new analyzes since the subject is not exhausted in this study.

Keywords: Biblical Study, Biblical Foundation, Theology of Prosperity, Silas Malafaia, Anti-Biblical Arguments.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Prosperity Theology movement is based on the writings of radio preacher and Methodist minister William Essek Kenyon (1867-1948) who emphasized words spoken in faith and revelation about knowledge gained through the senses, which was summed up in confession of the positive faith that induced the action of God. Kenneth Hagin, in turn, being an illustrious promoter of the teachings of Prosperity Theology, later, more precisely in the 1960s, added prosperity to his doctrinal system developed in a biblical training center called Rhema. (ROSSI, 2015)

Prosperity Theology forms “a set of beliefs and affirmations, emerged in the United States, which claims that it is legitimate for the believer to seek results, to have favorable fortune, to get rich, to obtain divine favor for his material life or simply to progress” (CAMPOS, 1997, p.363). In this sense, this theology is understood as a doctrine of a Christian religious nature that advocates financial blessing as being God's will for his people and that its material wealth can increase through donations made to Christian ministries such as the preaching that is heard by the churches that defend it.

It is a theological current of North American origin that initially, in the 19th century, XIX, practiced the commercialization of faith from the distortion of biblical teachings,

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exalting the accumulation of earthly material riches. Nowadays, he preaches divine favor to those who become his followers, who learn to replace faith with prosperous ventures based on the teaching that Jesus Christ necessarily demands the pursuit of material wealth and good health. However, if faith is weak, it will give rise to misery and disease. This portrays the Positive Confession – another name for Prosperity Theology – which usurps the Christian teaching of the confession of faith (AUGUSTI and TICÃO, 2020). This in its original character was established by the Nicene Creed through the Early Church in 325 AD. which highlighted the basis of the Christian faith against false doctrines (FERGUSON, 2013, p. 418). According to Campello (2021, p. 139), unlike the original purpose, the positive confession is proclaimed by some prosperity churches, both physical and media, with a focus on material prosperity, indoctrinating their followers to confess that they already have what they want, this attitude is enough to guarantee that this will happen.

To answer the title question – Why is Prosperity Theology not accepted biblically? –, we will proceed to the analysis of a video by shepherd Silas Malafaia who launched a challenge to the critics of this theology who see it as unbiblical while he defends it as biblical.

The objective of this study is to prove that Prosperity Theology has no biblical foundation, and is therefore unbiblical. It is intended, therefore, to present answers to the arguments supported by Silas Malafaia as evidence that this theology has no biblical basis. Therefore, a peculiar research method is developed to analyze excerpts from a video where the manifestation of the phenomenon in question occurs, observing its agreements and divergences with biblical texts.

2. METHODOLOGY

An exploratory and descriptive qualitative research was developed in which the excerpts of the analyzed video “A life of prosperity” were deductively observed in order to answer the problem question through a case study. Considering Sampieri, Collado and Lucio (2013, p. 376), this research aims to understand and deepen the



phenomenon in question, which is explored from the perspective of seeking to understand the facts that occurred in the specific environment of its execution in order to clarify points divergent from the preconization of the referred theological doctrine in face of the biblical texts used for the arguments in its defense.

Furthermore, this research is carried out under a qualitative approach because it alludes to the analysis of observed data that must be described in order to proceed with the answer to the problem question, through the collection and analysis of data that are practically simultaneous since the analysis is not standard given that each study has its own analysis scheme (*ibid*, p. 447). The research carried out is exploratory because it seeks to analyze examples that can stimulate the understanding of the case through bibliographic surveys, citations and examples taken from the study material, and it is descriptive because it analyzes the object of study in detail, investing in the collection of qualitative data.

Although there is a lot of study on this topic, the realization of this particular study seeks a deepening in order to understand its complexity in the present case, considering the details of the observations made within the specific case study focused on the media presentation in video form whose excerpts are basic elements of analysis.

3. THEORETICAL REFERENCE

Prosperity Theology is not biblically accepted because it distorts the biblical text through doctrines created by men from contradictory exegesis. Note the following biblical text:

Porque nada temos trazido para o mundo, nem coisa alguma podemos levar dele. Tendo sustento e com que nos vestir, estejamos contentes. Ora, os que querem ficar ricos caem em tentação, e cilada, e em muitas concupiscências insensatas e perniciosas, as quais afogam os homens na ruína e perdição. Porque o amor do dinheiro é raiz de todos os males; e alguns, nessa cobiça, se desviaram da fé e a si mesmos se atormentaram com muitas dores. Tu, porém, ó homem de Deus, foge destas coisas; antes, segue a



justiça, a piedade, a fé, o amor, a constância, a mansidão. (1 Co 6:7-11)

Prosperity Theology under the motto “Living as a son of the king” reduces everything to economic terms and goes against these biblical statements when it says that poverty is demonic because God being a loving and rich father wants his children to be healthy, prosperous and rich since suffering denies its presence. As for the motto, it seems ironic since Jesus, of poor origin, did not enjoy material abundance and did not have goods (ROSSI, 2015). What would it be like, then, to live as a son of the King? Their doctrines contradict the sacred text which reads that “the poor shall never cease in the land” (Deut 15:11; Mt 26:11; Mk 14:7; Jon 12:8). According to these verses, if Prosperity Theology were right, God would be a liar. Verses such as “it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God” (Mt 19:24) are not well accepted, perhaps read, in the preaching of the respective theologians because they contradict their doctrinal principles of acquisition of goods and riches through a self-serving and selfish faith. From an individualistic perspective, this theology proposes to love things and use poor people, manipulating them (*ibid.*).

Capriles (2022), reveals that the Theology of Prosperity is not something theoretical for him, as he experienced it in practice, which is why he is ashamed to confess that he was once a preacher of this erroneous theology that motivates greed in people, teaching them that in order to sow correctly they must offer money in the ministry of some rich man or a rich ministry that they may reap the same prosperity that the person or institution enjoys as coming from God. He analyzes the above verses from the perspective of Prosperity Theology, which incites the believer to want to become rich at the expense of the apostle Paul's warning that “those who want to get rich fall into temptation” when, in fact, they should obey his command to flee from the temptations set forth in the verses. This same kind of attitude is repeated with regard to other biblical verses: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth” (Mt 6:19); Contrary to this warning, Prosperity Theology teaches that “the more goods you accumulate for yourself, the greater will be a sign of God's blessing on your life”. He



points out several contradictions in the comparison between the teaching of Jesus and that of this diabolic theology (as he qualifies it), respectively: a) we must not desire riches – we must desire riches; b) the poor are blessed (Lk 6:20; Jas 2:5) – poverty is slavery and being poor is sin; c) we must be content with what we have (Heb 13:5) – we must not be content with little. These are just a few of the many examples that this theology violates the sacred text.

Capriles (*ibid.*) ends his message presenting the testimony of Jim Bakker, an American sheepherder who became rich through the arguments of Prosperity Theology that promised riches to those who sowed money in his ministry, so later, after losing all his fortune and falling into poverty, as well as being convicted of twenty-four counts of fraud, realized that he should examine the scriptures to see what was wrong, and concluded that “there is no way to interpret riches or material things as a sign of God's blessing.”

According to Pieratt (1993, p. 151), Prosperity Theology preachers always hold services in their churches based on the theme of financial prosperity. To support their teachings, they use countless Bible verses to force into the believer's mind that he receives in proportion to what he gives; however, he cautions that such verses do not imply a mathematical rule, and points out:

A noção de que receberemos somente se dermos é uma perversão da ideia cristã de caridade. Isso tem mais a ver com o utilitarismo pagão, que avalia todos os atos morais da vida segundo o benefício recebido por aquele que o pratica. A ética cristã que devemos dar, porque Deus nos deu primeiro. Para o cristão, o dar deve ser um ato de adoração, gratidão e amor, não um exercício em que se calcula o quanto receberemos de volta.

These innumerable verses that correspond to isolated texts of the Bible reveal that the Theology of Prosperity, also called the “Word of Faith Movement”, “Gospel of Health and Wealth” or “Name it and Claim it”, is nothing but product of capitalism and the psychology of success in search of privileges, through which God is confronted by imposing on him the obligation to grant prosperity to the believer who is in fact the



one who defines what God's will is and not the other way around, diminishing his sovereignty. (ROSSI, 2015)

Prosperity Theology is endowed with a marketing character that includes requests for donations, sale of products to help the believer in his religious experience such as soaps and brooms, hammers and pairs of socks, anointed prayers and amulets, holy water from the Jordan River, miracles, CDs and DVDs, crosses with sand from the holy land, etc. They offer healing and deliverance from various ills through the distribution of printed advertisements that are equivalent to investments in the achievement of diverse desires and social status. In this way, religion becomes the best option to help solve personal problems, extending to the very nation in which people suffer the effects of fundamentalist discourses that promise a solution to social problems, but do not deliver. And their own speeches full of terms like “determine” instill in the minds of their listeners the thought that, investing their faith in this verb, they become able to become new entrepreneurs.

However, if they do not take possession of the divine promises, it means that they are contaminated by Satan, as Campello (2021, p. 135, 136) also points out – “introduction of doctrinal contamination in the ecclesiastical environment”, with which Capriles (2022) agrees. “Prosperity theology is spreading like gangrene through the body of Christ, so much so that it is increasingly difficult to find a church that is free from this contamination.” Thus, they are prone to a series of misfortunes in life, as the fault is exclusively of the follower due to their little faith (AUGUSTI and TICÃO, 2020). And Pieratt (1993, p. 158) emphasizes that “if prayer was not answered, it failed for lack of knowledge”. In this same line of reasoning, Capriles (2022) says that “the theology of prosperity is the concept that God desires wealth for all his children and that if any child of God is not yet rich, it would be because he is not “sowing” correctly”. From an equivalent point of view, Rossi (2015) emphasizes that a follower of Prosperity Theology is not financially prosperous just because he is in sin under the evil influence of the devil, does not have enough faith or does not understand biblical teaching well Campello (2021, p. 137) agrees with these thoughts:

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Incute-se-lhe a ideia de que o cristão tem poder, e, por isso mesmo, não tem necessidade de suplicar o favor e a ajuda de Deus; ao invés disso, ele deve DETERMINAR em nome de Jesus aquilo que ele deseja e assim será feito. Pronto! Não só essa teologia, mas também há religiões que ensinam a “determinar” que seus desejos sejam realizados. E qual explicação se dá quando esse desejo não se realiza? Simples: a culpa é do crente que fez alguma coisa errada, ou porque não tem fé suficiente.

Prosperity Theology, also referred to as the Faith Movement, preaches empowerment in every sense as Hunt (2000, pp. 332,333) states about the bad exegesis of Philippians 4:19 about the automatic divine right of all Christians who believe in the in the Bible enjoy health and economic prosperity since material benefits are inseparable from spiritual benefits through the atonement of Christ who not only removes sin, but also sickness and poverty. In this sense, prayer loses its value according to the criticism made by the General Council of the Assemblies of God to the Theology of Prosperity whose practice of positive confession encourages believers to confess instead of praying for things that God has promised, neglecting the teaching of the word of God about prayer. For confessionists, believers must confess the blessings and not pray for them. (GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, 1980, p.5)

Onken (2009, p.1) shares the same thought of the aforementioned Council when declaring that the biggest problem for Christians who submit to positive confession is the fact that they believe they know exactly what God wants as if God had revealed everything to them their plans, thoughts, or will, leaning on their own perspective rather than adequately considering the will of God which must be above human will. However, the will of God fails to be considered and properly emphasized when the doctrine of positive confession declares that a person can have anything. However, this is not so in the Scriptures as can be seen from the following verses that denote when something does not correspond to the will of God: the building of the temple by David (1 Chr 17:4); the removal of the thorn in Paul's flesh (2 Cor 12:9); the joy of having something pleasant or pleasant (Jas 4:3); the fulfillment of the heart's desire (Lk 22:42). God's will will always prevail over the believer's plans or desires. (GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, 1980, p. 4)

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The aforementioned Council accuses the doctrine of Prosperity Theology of not taking into account the biblical context so that adherents are more concerned with making the Word mean more what they want than becoming what the Word wants them to become, proving that they love God for what he does and not for what he is. Scripture passages cannot be isolated from their specific context, nor must they be eternalized or contemporary, giving shape to Christian existentialism. Furthermore, the truth of God's Word is applied universally, i.e., dichotomously in all social circumstances in which humanity finds itself. Therefore, it is necessary to ask whether a teacher or a teaching is of God or of man according to what is written in Matthew 7:20 - "By their fruits you will know them". (*ibid.*, 1980, pp. 8,9)

Theologians Jones and Woodbridge (2011, pp. 81-86) consider Prosperity Theology - which promises diverse riches - as a poor theology whose focus falls on human material needs, becoming inconsistent with the Gospel that focuses on life, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a bewildering gospel that omits Jesus and neglects the cross, thereby demeaning his prominence as the Savior of mankind. They assert that the Bible does not offer facilities for anyone, but presents all the means for a person to become upright before God and men. However, this goes against the promises of this doctrine as highlighted by Mariano (1999, p. 169-170) about his preachers:

O crente que almeja receber grandes bênçãos precisa ser radical na demonstração de fé. Deve fazer coisas que do ponto de vista do "homem natural" e do cálculo racional seriam loucura. Precisa dispor de muita coragem. Deve assumir riscos, doando à igreja algo valioso como salário, poupança, herança, joias, carro, casas com a certeza de que reaverá centuplicado, o que ofertou. Não pode guardar qualquer resquício de dúvida quanto ao retorno de sua fé, já que, advertem os pastores, "a dúvida é do Diabo". [...] tal demonstração de fé é denominada de "provar" e "desafiar" a Deus.

Prosperity Theology, however, does not teach the believer to be radical in his demonstration of faith compared to Job's faith (Job 42:11b) when he remained faithful to God regardless of the misfortunes that befell him. However, his lecturers emphasize texts that show the financial prosperity of a particular biblical character



without pointing out his struggles, pains and losses – this part does not matter to his business. Prosperity Theology does not mention the painful phase of Job's life as a way of encouraging the believer to obey God, for who wants to be like Job and go through what he went through before receiving his gifts from God? Those who follow this theology do not want to pay the price of submission to God's will; he only wants words that massage his ego, that encourage his appetite for profits and material advantages, without recognizing that he needs changes in character or personality that show moral, emotional, sentimental prosperity, that cooperate for a healthy life in every way. (CAMELLO, 2021, p. 197, 199-200, 372)

4. PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF OBSERVED DATA

4.1 CHALLENGE TEXT IN FULL

The shepherd Silas Malafaia launched a challenge to those who usually criticize his work, which is based on Prosperity Theology. His challenge is to ask his critics to prove in the light of the Bible that this theology is wrong. These critics he refers to may be bloggers, news sites and distinguished strangers who, in his understanding, want to make themselves known through criticizing people in the media; the author belongs to this last category without, however, aiming at the objective that he emphasizes.

The full text that presents this challenge is highlighted below. In preaching in a video titled "A life of prosperity", Malafaia says his message addresses a topic that Christians are prejudiced against when he believes that 2 Corinthians chapter 9 presents the best way to explain that the offering is a means of receiving divine favor because it is a service to God through which he will be rewarded and, therefore, a means of happiness. He categorically states that God works with the law of reward. He ends his speech by saying to challenge him through the Bible:

O pastor Silas Malafaia, em seu último programa Vitória em Cristo, no dia 02/06, fez um desafio aos críticos de seu trabalho e da mensagem pregada em torno da prosperidade. O pastor desafiou tais



críticos a provarem teologicamente que sua pregação está biblicamente errada. “Chegou o grande dia, o dia que eu estou desafiando muitos críticos que gostam de dizer que estou no besteiro da teologia da prosperidade”, afirmou o pastor no início do programa. (grifo da autora). Malafaia veiculou em seu programa o vídeo da primeira parte de uma pregação na qual fala de prosperidade e desafiou seus críticos a contradizerem sua mensagem à luz da Bíblia. O pastor afirmou que destina seu desafio a sites de notícia, blogueiros e “ilustres desconhecidos”, que estão tentando ficar conhecidos através de críticas a quem está na mídia. (grifo da autora). A pregação, intitulada “Uma vida de prosperidade” foi proferida pelo pastor em um culto de ceia ministrado na Arena HSBC, no Rio de Janeiro. Ele inicia sua pregação pedindo que os fiéis analisem e suas palavras antes de “recebê-la” porque, segundo ele, se trata de uma mensagem que tem preconceito de cristãos, medo de pastores falarem do assunto, ação do diabo para neutralizar os fiéis sobre o assunto, bravatas emocionais, argumentos filosóficos e “pouca Bíblia”. “Duvide, critique e determine”, orienta. Em sua pregação o pastor discorreu sobre três tópicos a respeito do assunto: “O que é a oferta”, “Características de um verdadeiro ofertante”, e “Resultados na vida do ofertante”. Malafaia citou o texto de 2ª Coríntios capítulo 9, que ele afirma ser o melhor compêndio do Novo Testamento sobre o assunto, para explicar o que é a oferta. Malafaia afirmou que a oferta é um meio de se receber o favor divino e um meio de felicidade. Ele explica ainda que a oferta é um serviço para Deus, através do qual o ofertante será recompensado. Em vários momentos da mensagem o pastor frisou que não estava pregando uma mensagem apelativa emocionalmente, mas sim ensinando os fiéis de acordo com a Bíblia. Afirmando que “Deus trabalha com a lei da recompensa”, Malafaia explicou o terceiro tópico da sua mensagem, falando das consequências da oferta na vida de quem a dá. Explicando que o fiel vai colher aquilo que planta, o pastor falou que “tão importante quanto a qualidade da oferta, é a qualidade do solo”, e criticou aqueles que, segundo ele, “gostam de dar oferta pra picareta”. Ele lembra ainda que quem semeia muito é que vai colher muito. Após a exibição da pregação, o pastor afirmou no programa que “negar que a Bíblia fala sobre prosperidade, é negar a própria Palavra”, e que “prosperidade é obedecer às leis de Deus”. “Se você não crê em prosperidade é porque você não crê na Bíblia”, ressaltou. Malafaia concluiu seu programa afirmando que é totalmente transparente nas ofertas que recebe, e que investe milhões em programas de televisão e obras sociais. Ele encerrou o programa afirmando que continuará falando sobre o assunto no próximo programa e desafia: “tenta me contraditar, não fica inventando filosofia barata não. Não bota em blog e em site não, me contradiz na Bíblia. Diz que eu interpretei errado, ou cala sua boca, e deixa de ser um crítico mané que fica falando bobagem e colocando minhoca na cabeça do povo de Deus. Assista ao vídeo na íntegra: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDFmctcG2GY>[2]



4.2 THE SHEPHERDER SILAS MALAFAIA DEFENDS THE THEOLOGY OF PROSPERITY

The shepherd's video is quite timely for some clarifications regarding the faith given to the Christian by Jesus Christ. It can be found on the YouTube channel under the title "Uma vida de prosperidade". Here is Richard Baxter's thought:

Aquele que busca conhecimento com o propósito de se exibir para as pessoas torna-se sinônimo de vaidade. Aquele que busca conhecimento com o intuito de ensinar outras pessoas torna-se sinônimo de amor. Mas aquele que busca conhecimento, visando aplicar o conhecimento adquirido em sua própria vida, torna-se sinônimo de sabedoria.

Silas Malafaia challenged critics of his work and his preaching based on prosperity theology, calling on them to prove biblically that this theology is wrong. This requires an appropriate response. This is a challenge that the Lord God launches to those who seek to know his truth, not Silas Malafaia. What Malafaia did was to challenge what he thinks about what God condemns. Then I understood from God that I should accept the Lord's challenge to accept the challenge of a man whose wrong thinking does not match biblical reality.

Malafaia used the expression "distinguished unknowns" as those who are seeking recognition at the expense of those who are in the media, like him. Until there is a kernel of truth in his interpretation of these critics, by one or the other who act in this way, it cannot be denied that this is an ill-timed Malafaian defense since it cannot be generalized; not everyone who criticizes him has the stance he refers to, but they are in fact seeking the truth to speak with biblical propriety for the true gospel as Jesus taught. After all, Jesus is the Lord of the Word, Jesus is the Word (Jhn 1:1), and not Silas Malafaia as he called himself at 05:34m in the video "Uma vida de prosperidade"[3]:

- Here's the challenge for you to contradict me. Now be careful not to embarrass yourself, see son, so you don't misrepresent the word of God, because then you'll hit a master of the word.

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To 'find oneself' lord of the word, a god, owner of the truth, someone who is above all contestation, is to stop being an ordinary person like any other who declares his total dependence on God. Knowing too much has gone to his head, diverting him from the absolute truth that emanates from God through the wisdom from Above. Knowledge and wisdom must be based on the fear of the Lord since the letter kills, but the spirit gives life: "We do not preach the Law, but proclaim the covenant of the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives them life" (2 Cor 3:6b). The author is not the lord of the word, as Silas Malafaia, who called himself "lord of the word" is not, either, because the word belongs to the Lord and not the author's either.

It is written, "Who compares to thee, O God?"; therefore, with whom can God be compared?! (2Sam 7:22; Ps 35:10; 71:19; Isa 40:18,25; Jer 10:6,7; Jn 17:3; 1 Tim 1:17). From what can be seen from the highlighted verse, there is presumption and arrogance in someone who intends to put himself on an equal footing with the Lord Jesus, as the title above denotes usurpation of a divine attribute under a threatening tone to those who rise to criticize him, because after all he calls himself a lord of the word, that is, he already foreshadows that he cannot be contradicted. Jesus, although being God, did not consider it usurpation to be equal with God, but stripped himself of his real divine condition, humbly assuming the form of a servant, free from all arrogance and pride (Phil 2:6,7). It seems that Malafaia didn't get the lesson right about a person being in the image and likeness of God! (Gen 1:26; 5:1; 9:6; Jas 3:9)

It would seem improper to take advantage of certain means such as someone's name to do God's work, because if that person has a name, many will hear him, and if someone speaks of him, many will listen to this one who actually speaks of God. So what is more important: to speak of God using this medium or not to use this medium to speak of God for fear of the words of contempt of the renowned one? Let them talk, say, think what they want about you, because the most important thing is what you are saying about God to other people. That's what really matter.

So just because someone goes against Malafaia's words does it mean they do it to appear in the media?! So everyone who goes against his words is wrong, and only



he is right?! Wouldn't it be the case that someone opposes him in his opinions and interpretations because he understands biblically that he is wrong?! So, Malafaia "thinks" he is totally right whose words are beyond any doubt?! His words are beyond dispute?! Is he right in everything he says?! Malafaia needs to learn not to be radical in his opinions. He needs to develop the balance he talks about in Galatians 5:23 – humility, meekness, gentleness, temperance (cf. most Bible versions).

For the Lord to be seen, it is necessary to show the Lord, no matter the means because the Lord is the one who blesses us to achieve the desired end. And it doesn't matter if they say you're doing it for this purpose, because what really matters is doing God's work and saving many people through your ministry.

All evangelistic work must be seen and never hidden. There's no reason to light a candle and hide your light because of useless motivations like not wanting to give your rival room to say that you're doing something at the expense of his name. If your evangelistic work is not getting views, God instructs you to do what is necessary to achieve such a noble goal, because these media nitpicking doesn't matter; matter God. God provides the means. And who can contest God's means? If God approves of doing this or that, let it be done for the glory of God.

And the words of the one who says they use his name to make a name don't matter, because what really matters is the name of Christ. In fact, if he says that, he is also using the name of the Lord to make a name, and therefore who would he be to accuse someone, or to belittle someone as if he was very important?! As if he were even more important than God!

A candle is not lit and its light hidden, but a candle is placed in plain sight so that everyone can see the light. It is no use doing a work for the Lord and keeping it hidden so that no one can see it; if no one sees this work, how can people be evangelized so that they may reach the salvation of the Lord? You are leaving something hidden because, because of the opinions of others coming from selfish people who only think about themselves, about growing in front of other people,



about having a name, status; Is it because of these people that a servant of God would fail to do his evangelistic work?! God's work must be seen by all so that people who need the Lord's salvation can read and receive the truth in their hearts, and through this truth, achieve true liberation in Christ. "That by all possible means I may save some" (1 Cor 9:22).

You need to make yourself visible otherwise people won't see the work of evangelism you've done to save them. Even if others think you are not a minister of the word of God, surely you are to those who are proof that you have won them to Christ. And this is your defense before those who judge you (1 Cor 9:2-3). In fact, no one is qualified to do this work for themselves. On the contrary, their qualification comes from God (2 Cor 3:5), for it is he who enables his servants to be ministers of the new covenant (2 Cor 3:6). And it is for the sake of the gospel that this work is done and also to be a partaker of it (1 Cor 9:23). Furthermore, no one can boast of proclaiming the good news, for all who do so are impelled by God to do so. And woe to those who do not announce the good news! (1Cor 9:16).

Paul renounces his rights, as even that of being proud, and the faithful servant of God must likewise renounce the vanity of not wanting others to say that he is using someone else's name to make his own name grow: that would be pride on his part, which must not be allowed to manifest itself because your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit in which these vanities do not fit.

Malafaia is a theologian like the present author and like so many others. But to what extent can theology affect a biblical interpretation faithful to the word of God? What theologies are being developed according to the possible respective conveniences? What conveniences can there be to defend theologies that are not consistent with the word of God?

It is necessary to be attentive to the biblical interpretations that are made, because what is understood is not always what God really wants to convey. Without realizing



it, it is customary to put words in God's mouth, to say that he said what he did not say, as it is written:

As suas visões são falsas, e o que eles anunciam é tudo mentira. Eu não os enviei, mas eles dizem: “A palavra do Senhor é esta.” E ainda esperam que as palavras deles se cumpram! Eu lhes digo: “As visões que vocês veem são falsas, e o que vocês anunciam é tudo mentira. Vocês dizem que as palavras são minhas, mas eu não lhes disse nada. Por isso, o Senhor Deus diz a eles: “As suas palavras são falsas, e as suas visões são mentiras, e por isso eu estou contra vocês”. (Ez 13:6-8)

It is necessary to direct pure believers towards the discernment of the will of God revealed in the Holy Scriptures, and not to that which corresponds to the will of men who preach the revealed word of God - i.e., with regard to this will of men, it is understood that they are outside the will of God. They are men! Not everyone who claims to be a man of God is in fact a man of God: he can be a man of men! “Not everyone who says to me: Lord, Lord! shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Mt 7:21). Preaching prosperity theology is a shepherd doing God's will?

4.3 ONLINE PREACHING FROM MALAFAIA ON PROSPERITY

In a sermon by Malafaia, under the title “Uma vida de prosperidade” (YouTube, 2018)[4], he discusses the theme of supply, the behavior of the giver and the results in the lives of those who offer and those who do not offer, under the characteristic high-sounding and authoritative tone of voice – which is different from authority –, citing several biblical verses to validate his interpretations. Video transcriptions were performed by listening and checking the time elapsed in each highlighted section. Each excerpt is followed by an argumentative answer that can provide the expected result. Some expressions are highlighted with underscores to highlight some information of importance for what is intended to be discussed. The video excerpts with their narration are broken down in hours, minutes and seconds – not necessarily in chronological order due to the sequential correspondence of the text – as shown in the respective tables in the body of the text.

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4.3.1 ANALYSIS OF EXCERPTS FROM THE VIDEO “UMA VIDA DE PROSPERIDADE” HIGHLIGHTED IN TABLES AND THEIR RESPECTIVE ARGUMENTATIVE ANSWERS

Twisting, twisting and squeezing the bible marker tape, he quotes the biblical reference 2 Corinthians 9:4:

Frame 1 - Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 08:37m

Firme fundamento de glória. A oferta é um assunto tremendamente espiritual que tem sólida base no mundo espiritual.

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

In verses 1 and 4 of the respective text, the following expressions stand out (Biblical versions: A21, ACF, ARA, ARC, NAA, NBV-P, NVT, TB, VFL): administration, assistance, assistance to the people of God, service to the holy people, ministry to the saints, offering to the people of God, who are done in favor of the saints (1); unnoticed or unprepared, from this firm foundation of glory, as for this trust, for all this trust that we had in you, you are still not ready, even after all that I have told you, you are not ready, after all that I have told you them, trust placed in you (4).

Firm foundation of glory or firm foundation of glory. What is the basis of glory: giving with avarice, being guided to give in order to receive even more, or giving with a heart uninterested in having a financial return in the form of profitable monetary gain? The basis of glory is giving as a blessing according to verse 5, not as covetousness or covetousness. The Greek terms “εὐλογίαν” /eulogian/ and “πλεονεξίαν” /pleonexian/ mean respectively blessing and covetousness (desire for advantage). May the donation or offer be a blessing free from selfish interests such as “I will give so much to receive even more...”, never due to moral, emotional, sentimental

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pressure, which incites the understanding of obligation, of giving out of embarrassment as a feeling of guilt for not offering because there is no provision at the moment or the threat of a greater loss if one does not offer, but offering even though there is no provision such as “borrow it and then return it”, clashing with the Pauline exhortation to “give with joy” with readiness of will according to what you have and not according to what you don't have (2 Cor 8:11-15; 9:7), a disinterested liberality, independent of any profitable returns.

Firm foundation of glory, therefore, does not mean the offering itself, but the way in which it is made, with what heart is dedicated to making it, as an act of kindness and not of greed according to the explanations that distort the real meaning of the text sacred with regard to greed for money. A sure foundation of glory is to be prepared to make a worthy offering before the Lord, meaning something that is a cause for glory to his name, an offering that is agreeable to him, disinterested, liberal, i.e., unattached to money; it is from this firm foundation of glory that the apostle Paul is speaking and trying to teach us the correct way to give. However, it is not the glory of the Lord that is extolled in this context, but the glory of the offering – the offering as something worthy of all praise. It is written that nothing and no one can take the place of God: “I will not give my glory to another, nor the praise that belongs to idols” (Isa 42:8), but a surreptitiously misused expression can have this contradictory effect the word of God, taking away his honor and glory.

Quoting 2 Corinthians 9:5, he says:

Frame 2 - Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 09:44m

A oferta é uma bênção, não é maldição,
não!

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

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However, concerning what has been said before, if a blessing eludes the divine instruction as to its proper place before God, not being above him in any way because he is the owner of the blessing, being above it, and not the other way around, then what could be a blessing can become a curse according to its contradictory principles to the biblical reality. Read:

Ai de vocês, guias cegos!, pois dizem: 'Se alguém jurar pelo santuário, isto nada significa; mas, se alguém jurar pelo ouro do santuário, está obrigado por seu juramento'. Cegos insensatos! Que é mais importante: o ouro ou o santuário que santifica o ouro? Vocês também dizem: 'Se alguém jurar pelo altar, isto nada significa; mas, se alguém jurar pela oferta que está sobre ele, está obrigado por seu juramento'. Cegos! Que é mais importante: a oferta, ou o altar que santifica a oferta? Portanto, aquele que jurar pelo altar jura por ele e por tudo o que está sobre ele. E o que jurar pelo santuário jura por ele e por aquele que nele habita. E aquele que jurar pelos céus jura pelo trono de Deus e por aquele que nele se assenta (Mt 23:16-22).

Beginning with the explanation of the offer itself, he quotes verses by heart, i.e., without reading the Bible. A brief testimony: one day, watching a service, I noticed that the shepherd asked the congregation to read a certain biblical passage, but he didn't do it himself, because he didn't read it. He quoted it by heart and began to interpret the verses. At that moment, I felt the need to read literally every verse of the scripture passage indicated, and I realized that as I read, my mind and spirit were opened to an understanding beyond what he was preaching. God made me see through my reading what the shepherd was unable to convey because it came straight from the divine source, straight from the mouth of God. So, I concluded that when we orally reproduce a verse without reading it from the bible, in a cult from which we understand that we will receive God's direction for our life, we fail to receive some specific guidance from God that only he can provide us.

Therefore, it is necessary to do the biblical reading in a cult because the opening of the bible opens the eyes of faith, of understanding, of the spirit, to receive blessings, spiritual strengthening, promises, directly from God, and not from human reason that guideline in the biblical verses without leaving aside his humanity, making it clear that it is the power of God manifesting itself, but, in fact, it is man's arrogance in wanting



to show that he is like this with God! This attitude does not correspond to the doctrine of God: “And they read the book, in the law of God, and declaring and explaining the sense, they caused that, by reading, it was understood” (Neh 8:8).

The public and private reading of the Holy Scriptures can never be abandoned, because in addition to preserving the memory of God's covenant with his people, it is also a source of life in every way. The reading of biblical texts is something recommended and commanded by God himself from the Old to the New Testament and must be carried out with devotion:

- a) “And he took the book of the covenant and read it in the ears of the people” (Ex 24:7);
- b) “When all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God, in the place he chooses, you shall read this Law before all Israel in his hearing. When all Israel shall come to appear before the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose, thou shalt read this Law before all Israel in his hearing” (Deut 31:11);
- c) “And afterward he read aloud all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the book of the Law” (Josh 8:34);
- d) “I found the book of the Law in the house of the Lord. And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it” (2 Kings 22:8);
- e) “And he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant, which was found in the house of the Lord” (2 Kings 23: 2);
- f) “The book of the Law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded Israel. And he read in it, before the square, which is before the Water Gate, from dawn until noon, before men, and women, and wise men; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the Law” (Neh 8:1,3);



g) “And when he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he entered the synagogue on the Sabbath day, according to his custom, and stood up to read” (Lk 4:16);

h) “And when this epistle has been read among you, make it also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that which came from Laodicea, read ye also” (Col 4:16);

i) “I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren” (1 Thes 5:27);

j) “Blessed is he who reads, and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep the things that are written therein; for the time is at hand” (Apoc 1:3).

shepherders who often quote Bible verses, but do not read them themselves before the congregation of the righteous, lead listeners to take their eyes off the Bible by the simple fact of reciting them without doing the proper reading, as if the memorized words were a crown of glory, something venerable, since the attention of the people is totally turned to him, withdrawing attention from the bible. In this way, he becomes the focus, and the bible loses focus.

By way of illustration, at 06:11m of the video, Malafaia says:

Frame 3 - Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 06:11m

Eu também quero dizer uma coisa aqui pra você. Vou deixar até você abrir a bíblia pra você ouvir o que eu vou te falar. Escute o que eu vou te afirmar aqui nesta noite. Olha aqui pra mim e esquece a bíblia. Olha aqui. Achou 2 Coríntios 9? Agora olha aqui pra mim

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

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Who is uttering the above sentences, God or a man?! "We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29) Let them open the bible?! "I will speak", "I will tell you." "Forget the bible?!" Words that diverge from biblical teachings:

a) It is necessary to open the bible to receive, through its reading, divine instruction (Ps 32:8), wisdom (Ps 1:1,2; Pr 1:7; 4:7; Eccl 2:26; 7:12 ; Jas 1:5), fellowship with God (1 Cor 1:9; 1 Jhn 1:3; 3:24), understanding of the divine word (Job 12:13; Ps 119:130; Pr 9:10; Lk 24 :45; Col 1:9; 1 Jhn 5:20), submission to God's perfect will (1 Sam 15:22; Heb 5:7; 12:9; Jas 4:7);

b) It is necessary to hear the voice of God and not of men; it is not what man says or affirms, but what God says, affirms and confirms: "The people cheered him, shouting: 'Behold, it is a god and not a mere mortal who speaks to us!' At the same moment an angel of the Lord struck Herod with a disease, for he did not offer the glory to God. He was eaten by worms and died" (Acts 12:22,23). God is not mocked! (Gal 6:7). God is God and Lord of the Word. "Consecrate them in the truth, which is your word" (Jhn 17:17). "All thy words are true" (Ps 119:160);

c) Forget the bible?! What is written in the bible? Read:

"Do not fail to speak the words of this Book of the Law and to meditate on them day and night, so that you may faithfully carry out all that is written in it. Only then will your ways prosper and you will have success" (Josh 1:8). "Make every effort to obey and do all that is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, not turning aside, either to the right or to the left" (Josh 23:6) they explained clearly the meaning of what was read and helped the people to understand each passage". (Neh 8:8) The word of God enough to make us understand that we must never forget the bible!

At 10:30m into the video, he starts reciting, without reading, the verses in Acts 17:25 and Psalm 104:27-29, and at 10:49m some people take their eyes off the bible because he is reciting the verses without read them, showing a mastery over the word of God, as if intending to demonstrate full knowledge of it.

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At 11m, he begins to recite 1 Chronicles 29:14 also without proper reading, and does so with other verses in the sequence of preaching. And, en passant, something that draws attention from 08:33m to 08:44m is the fact that he keeps pressing the bible page marker, rolling it tightly.

The Lord Jesus is the Word, the Word made flesh, and he must be read to be received, understood, learned, felt, obeyed, from beginning to end, for he is the beginning and the end. If the Lord Jesus fails to be read, what he has to offer is lost. Jesus must be the focus as well as the reading of his word, for Jesus and the Word are one – he is the Logos, the divine Word.

In that sermon, at 11m of the video, he says that the offering is a blessing, a seed that God gives, a service to God through which the offerer will be rewarded, a firm foundation of glory, a solid foundation in the spiritual world, a means of receiving divine favor and a means of happiness - relying on 1 Chronicles 29:14, Jeremiah 21:14, Romans 2:6, 1 Corinthians 15:58, 2 Corinthians 9:2,4-7,12 -13. Malafaia claims that 2 Corinthians 9 (considering the highlighted verses) is the best textbook in the New Testament for explaining what the offering is; however, this explanation is based on their own interpretations. Would they be correct?! The answer has already been given above.

The interpretations may be “almost all” correct. However, the issue is not exactly one of interpretations; rather, with regard to focus and vision. As most interpretations are acceptable as they are good to the ear, hearers naturally tend to accept everything that is said without reflecting, without questioning, without evaluating, without investigating, far from a Berean spirit (Acts 17:11) and thus, receives them in full with the aim of putting them into practice as soon as possible. And would this practice really be in accordance with the real direction of God?



4.3.2 FAITHFUL INTERPRETATION OF BIBLE VERSES

How, then, would a more faithfully explained interpretation of these verses be? See, first, the fifteen verses of 2 Corinthians 9 in their entirety, under the biblical versions NVT[5] and NBVP[6]:

v. 1 Indeed, as to this service to the holy people, I need not write to you.

FOCUS: Offering for God's people.

VISION: Offering as a service to God's people, to help God's people, and not for the purpose of getting advantage or profit or gain etc, because he rendered this service to God, believing that God will reward him for it. Self-seeking vision, and not genuinely generous because it lacks the true spirit of contribution.

As it is written, on the Day of Judgment, many will tell the Lord that they prophesied in his name, cast out demons in his name, and performed many miracles in his name, but he will clearly tell them, "I never knew you. Depart from me, you who do evil!" (Mt 7:22,23)

v. 2 I know how eager you are to help, and I have expressed to the churches in Macedonia my pride that you in Achaia have been ready to send an offering since last year. Indeed, it was his dedication that encouraged many to contribute as well.

FOCUS: Helping others.

VISION: Offering for the good of others and not for themselves.

v. 3 Still, I send these brothers to make sure you are ready, as I have told them. I don't want to praise you for no reason.

FOCUS: Being ready by preserving good character.



VISION: Whoever gives offering expecting to be rewarded already has his reward: the lack of righteousness; but whoever loves willingly gives freely, expecting nothing in return, aiming at nothing, and is rewarded by the love of God. What is the purpose of the offer?!

v. 4 What a shame it would be for us, and even more for you, if some Macedonians came with me and found that you were not ready after all I told them!

FOCUS: Avoiding the dishonor of a collection other than scriptural instruction.

VISION: The practice of giving must be linked to gratitude to God for his deeds in the life of the offerer whose financial health comes from a spirit of contribution detached from earthly vanities by the aspect of Christian liberality that rejects greedy actions. Being prepared is not just professing evangelical, but being in communion with God and his word above human instructions.

v. 5 So I thought it proper to send these brothers ahead of me. They will see to it that the offer you promised is ready. But let it be a voluntary offering, and not given grudgingly.

FOCUS: Offering free from the avarice of giving for the greed to gain more in return.

VISION: Promised, fulfills. And let it be without avarice, without selfish interests, as if seeking benefits for oneself, or with usury.

v. 6 Remember: he who sows only a few seeds gets a small harvest, but he who sows bountifully gets a bountiful harvest.

FOCUS: Contributing generously, reflecting the benevolent spirit of the giver.

VISION: Harvest proportionate to sowing, i.e., generosity must be proportionate to what is received from God. Therefore, it does not mean giving much to receive much, but receiving from God richly in order to be able to give generously – the harvest corresponds to the spirit of sowing: With what spirit are you planting? What are you



planting in order to reap what? The main objective is to lead many people to thank God and, consequently, be reached by him for salvation.

v. 7 Each one must decide in his heart how much to give. Do not contribute reluctantly or out of obligation. For God loves a cheerful giver.

FOCUS: Joy in free will giving.

VISION: Giving with joy and not out of obligation to church leaders, nor out of interest in self-advantage, as in "It is in giving that we receive". Then, "I'll give it to have!" (Focus shift)

v. 8 God is able to grant you all kinds of blessings, so that at all times you will have everything you need, and much more, to share with others.

FOCUS: Others, not the provider.

VISION: The person will not be able to have it; she will have to give. That is, first God gives so that, then, the blessed can share with others, i.e., can also bless in the likeness of God.

v. 9 As the Scriptures say: "Share generously with those in need; your righteous deeds will be remembered forever". (vs. Ps 112:9)

FOCUS: Dignified character before God and men.

VISION: Always have to be able to disperse to the needy, showing your just beneficence.

v. 10 For it is God who supplies the seed for the sower, and then the bread for his food. In the same way, he will provide and multiply your seed and bring forth many fruits of righteousness through you.

FOCUS: It is God who provides the ability to give and reward the giver.

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VISION: A great harvest as a result of pure generosity in giving: heavenly rewards due to a charitable spirit. It gives because it has; it has because God gives in advance. As everything comes from God and exists only because of him, only God has the right to say how things should be dispensed, in this case, how offerings should be made, according to the way he thinks best, and not as man says that has to be. Obedience to the voice of God and not to the voice of “religious” men. It is God who gives the seed!

v. 11 In everything you will be enriched so that you can always be generous. And when we take your offering to those who need it, they will give thanks to God.

FOCUS: Abundance watered with simplicity, free from self-satisfaction for purposes diverging from the divine purpose.

VISION: The person will not be able to have it; she will have to give. That is, God will give him first, even before he gives offerings. Offer as a thanksgiving and not as a reward.

v. 12 So two good things happen as a result of your offerings (ministry service)—the needy of God's people are helped, and they will overflow with gratitude to God.

FOCUS: The needy, not the giver.

VISION: Helping others is a necessary duty and a proper service that pleases God and conforms to the gospel dispensation that meets the needs of the Saints.

v. 13 As a result of your service, they will give glory to God. For your generosity to them and to all who believe will show that you are obedient to the good news of Christ.

FOCUS: Liberal giving to meet the needs of others through obedience to the voice of Jesus.



VISION: To give glory to God. To be generous, not for the sake of receiving it back, abounding in blessings received, but as a proof of obedience to the word of God, as a spontaneous subjection to the doctrine of the gospel of Christ.

v. 14 And they will pray for you with deep affection, because of the overflowing grace that God has bestowed on you.

FOCUS: Imitating God's unconditional generosity is exceedingly excellent.

VISION: Those who give generously need not worry about future needs; that is, he should not get stuck in the thought that he must give much to earn even more, corrupting the principle of generous and disinterested sowing by distorting the meaning of the sacred text of sowing much to reap much for which they set aside the purpose of saving the people souls in favor of pocket enrichment.

v. 15 Thank God for this gift so wonderful that words cannot express it!

FOCUS: The unspeakable gift of God that we should seek to imitate.

VISION: To thank God for providing each faithful servant, worthy of being called by his name, the blessing of the gifts received that allow the manifestation of love in imitation of divine love.

See an exegesis of 2 Corinthians 9 focusing on helping the brothers through a vision focused exclusively on the purpose of the Gospel, free from the ambitious attempt to benefit from doing the work in the kingdom of God (not ruling out the certain possibility of God benefiting his servants) , even if this includes helping others, that is, helping the brother free from the objective that this will revert to his own benefit.

The apostle Paul develops the theme of sowing not in the “field” of the economic sphere, aiming at the success of investments in business, of financial returns, as many ambitious shepherders intend to interpret, but in the “field” of the spiritual kingdom whose harvest refers to the heavenly aspect. God can bestow material



blessings on generous people as they are detached from earthly or selfish interests, but these blessings offer no guarantees for this life or for eternal life.

The Apostle Paul's instructions regarding the great collection, metaphorically involving sowing and reaping: the Macedonian Christians and the Corinthian Christians wanted to do good works like providing for the poor people of Jerusalem. Paulo alludes to the functioning of a crop, so that a portion of the current harvest is saved for the following year, which will serve as seed. However, if the farmer consumes too much of his current crop, he will end up saving too little, which will lead to the planting of few seeds and, thus, his next crop will be much smaller. However, if he saves and sows many seeds, his next harvest will be bountiful. Thus, Paul makes a comparison between giving generously and sowing bountifully. Similar to the kingdom of God, a great harvest can be achieved through the generous and sincere contribution of his servants. But does this harvest refer to what you will receive from God for yourself for having invested a lot in his kingdom, for having offered money to the church? No! This harvest refers to what God's people will gain through the contribution of his servants. This doesn't mean that God doesn't bless them too; offering servants can be blessed, but this blessing is not tied specifically to the act of offering.

One cannot accept in the kingdom of God the kind of discourse that advocates material prosperity, or referring to any other area, as coming from the offer that is made within the church; it is as if this limits God's power to give to whom he wants and how he wants, regardless of his doings (Mt 5:45; Rom 9:18). It is biblically understood that offering implies satisfaction to practice, implies giving with joy, and not in response to the pressure of the inflammatory preaching of ministers who aim at the economic growth of the church for application in different purposes, to the detriment of the true sense of economy of the church, reflecting an oxymoron as selfish kindness - i.e., "I'll give it to myself"; this human vision of economic prosperity must not overlap with the vision of the economy according to the church, which is exercised in favor of good administration for the edification of lives and not for the



cult of money, which causes a decrease in the virtues highlighted and proposed by the gospel that are not below monetary values.

In fact, God knows the needs of each one and exhorts in his word to seek his kingdom and his justice before anything else and, as a promise, he will satisfy all your needs, not letting you lack what you need (Mt 6:33), that is, the kingdom and justice of God involve a posture of faith and fidelity to God in the sense of obedience to his teachings of detachment from materialities and the mission given by him to preach the gospel of grace for free to all peoples, and not theologies of prosperity that are at odds with the true prosperity promised by God. God blesses whom he wills, not necessarily the giver (Rom. 11:6). God knows each person's needs and meets them according to his will, regardless of what he does. Therefore, he must get rid of the stigma that it is in giving that you receive, that if you offer, God will make you prosper financially.

God gives each of his servants the opportunity to contribute, and it is true that he can give more money to the giver so that he can give even more, but this is not always the case – multiplying his money – for he may provide other ways of giving contribution, and not just with money. Being generous must be a consequence of the prosperity that God gives to those who are going to give; then first comes the prosperity of God which is followed by generosity, otherwise how could one give what one does not have? As in this prayer: “Lord, help me to have it so that I can give it to my brother”. Generosity in double dose because first it is already present in the person's heart even before giving, it is already an innate gift; and, second, because she won and did not retain, but distributed according to her possibilities, considering her budgetary capacity and under a prudent sense of altruism: “The prudent carried oil in their vessels, with their lamps”. And they answered those who did not have it: “The oil we have is not enough for us and for you. If you want oil, go buy it!” (Mt 25:4,9). Therefore, the gift of God precedes any act of generosity. Receiving from God comes before giving to someone, because in order to give I need to have, and who gives me is God, and not the offerings I make, that is, it is not the offerings I make that will make me prosper, but God in His infinite goodness.

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2 Corinthians 9 talks about giving to poor Christians as an act of generosity out of obedience to God's word regarding the responsibility to care for those most in need. You can't turn a blind eye to those who need help, and, not always, this help works like offerings to the church to be distributed to the needy, but it can be offerings to someone closer, regardless of whether they are in the church or not. God sees the generous heart, not the place where generosity is practiced. God sees the way it is done and not necessarily what is done - the way we react to someone else's situation of need is more important than the action in favor of that need, because the reason that leads a person to the action of offering in the church, for example, it may not be to act moved by love in the heart, but by the love of money that aims to receive as a result of this action, based on what he heard in a sermon about "give more to receive more". This God sees! And to that he replies: "I never knew them! Get away from me, you evildoers!" (Mt 7:23).

Acts of generosity, such as offerings, do not save or justify anyone before God, but only reflect the salvation already received, and, therefore, the Christian offers as a form of gratitude to God for what he has already received and not as a way of being rewarded for their human works. Works do not save or justify anyone. God delights more in obedience than in sacrifices (1 Sam 15:22), i.e., He is more pleasing to God when a pure and disinterested heart is kept in the most diverse actions, than when works are done for the benefit of the result.

God does give money to whomever he wants, but the focus of this gift is not to distribute or offer in order to earn more; the focus is to give, to offer, without seeking return. Contribution should stimulate the Christian to pray for those who are going to receive, since once they are blessed they can get rid of their needs and, thus, also start to contribute and pray for others after their own liberation: one prays for the other who is well and this one begins to pray for another who is also well, and so on, always. The wealth that Jesus Christ bestows on the Christian is more valuable than economic riches, for these are fleeting and the former is eternal. Whoever has Jesus has everything: wisdom (not to be confused with human wisdom), spiritual purity, knowledge of the word of God, peace of mind, discernment that delivers from

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deception, etc. As it is written, "Without me you can do nothing" (Jhn 15:5). Without Jesus, a person does not breathe; therefore, he cannot work to earn money. Whoever is alive is alive by the grace and power of God. "In everything give thanks" (1 Thess 5:18).

Generosity is behavior that expresses kindness and not selfish interests. Those who give "generously" - i.e., with liberality, without seeking self-interest, without expecting anything in return, without greed - will receive abundant blessings according to their needs known by God, and not properly in money, which can be in other ways. In his foreknowledge, God knows the needs of his children which he has already decided to supply, unconditionally, for the simple fact that he wanted to bless. All that is given out of a pure and disinterested heart God sees and rewards according to his omniscience. Even if God grants a bountiful material harvest to those who contribute to the church through offerings, this does not reflect the standard nor the promise of the New Testament. According to the biblical passage below, it seems comfortable to give. Who wants to be a Christian literally? Who wants to pay the price of being a Christian? How does the true minister of Christ act? Talking about prosperity is easy. Offering and encouraging offering is easy, but are they really ministers of Christ? As it is written:

Eles são servos de Cristo? Mas eu sou um servo melhor do que eles, embora, ao dizer isso, eu esteja falando como se fosse louco. Pois eu tenho trabalhado mais do que eles e tenho estado mais vezes na cadeia. Tenho sido chicoteado muito mais do que eles e muitas vezes estive em perigo de morte. Em cinco ocasiões os judeus me deram trinta e nove chicotadas. Três vezes os romanos me bateram com porretes, e uma vez fui apedrejado. Três vezes o navio em que eu estava viajando afundou, e numa dessas vezes passei vinte e quatro horas boiando no mar. Nas muitas viagens que fiz, tenho estado em perigos de inundações e de ladrões; em perigos causados pelos meus patrícios, os judeus, e também pelos não judeus. Tenho estado no meio de perigos nas cidades, nos desertos e em alto-mar; e também em perigos causados por falsos irmãos. Tenho tido trabalhos e canseiras. Muitas vezes tenho ficado sem dormir. Tenho passado fome e sede; têm me faltado casa, comida e roupas. Além dessas e de outras coisas, ainda pesa diariamente sobre mim a preocupação que tenho por todas as igrejas. (2 Co 11:23-28).



The needy are beneficiaries of God's special providence: "from the dust he lifts up the little one, and from the dunghill he lifts up the needy" (Ps 113:7). It is God's generosity that guarantees goods to his chosen ones; therefore, the offerings of men are a consequence of this divine generosity, and not an act of mere human origin that, after being practiced, will enable the offerer to obtain merits and rewards. As if it were a magical act. The truth about offerings and offerers is that the contribution to the needs of others multiplies the offerer's gratitude to God from those who receive much before even offering; this is spiritual enrichment that takes precedence over material enrichment – this, of course, for those who care about the truths of God, for those who value spiritual blessings, which does not mean rejection of material blessings, of course not, but rejection the value given to material blessings over heavenly ones. Important to remember: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon [riches]" (Mt 6:24).

Malafaia says that a Christian is known for what he gives, but he does not say that voluntary donation is based on love and not on the expectation of a return for the offering given. He suggests the theory of proportionality by which you reap what you sow – planted a lot, reap a lot –; You can't buy heaven for giving too much! However, this harvest from which the offerer expects to receive back is intrinsically linked to money offered in the church, or is it linked to the sowing of the word of God for the salvation of souls and, hence, can occur (i.e., it is not certain that it will occur) a reward from God? It is necessary to keep in mind that God grants blessings by his will and not because of the deeds of men.

To state categorically that someone will be rewarded because of the offerings he makes is to allude to the Old Testament message that anyone who does not offer in the church is robbing God (Mal 3:8), adapting it to the current context without mentioning the real divine motive for that exhortation, that the Israelites were more concerned with their pockets than with the things of God, as the support of the Levites and the priests. Hence God challenged them, declaring that to receive his blessings they must obey him; Furthermore, it fails to allude to the message of the New Testament that the most important thing about the law (which is already passed,

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since we are under the grace of Jesus), which also refers to the present day, is the practice of justice, mercy and of faith (Mt 23:23).

Furthermore, there is still the expression “It is in giving that one receives”, which is not biblical. It is the opposite, one receives and then gives, because no one gives what he has not received or what he does not have. As for donations from a biblical perspective, it is understood that it is better to give than to receive (Acts 20:35), from which it follows that the objective of giving has nothing to do with receiving in return, there should be no vision of return, that is, never donate, offer, seeking benefits and advantages for yourself. This is what must be done above the offers that are made with interests beyond those proposed by Jesus, which are the love of neighbor and the salvation of souls. In addition, there are leaders using biblical texts in a coercive and threatening way to those who do not give tithes or offerings in churches, as they intimidate the faithful with cursing words as did the priest Pasur, the infamous “Terror-on-all-sides” (Jer 20:3). How many Pasures are scattered around the world “in the name of God”?!

Malafaia rightly said that “each seed has a time of maturation”, and goes on to ask “What type of land are you planting in?” And he adds: “Planting in the life of a crook, of people who have no natural affection, miserable, petty, is worthless, this land is arid, you plant in a fraudulent project, it is worthless. Go see who you're planting in. It's planting in someone's life, but go see who the person is; people who hate God, hate God's people, are stingy, miserable, barren land.” The question, then, is: how many Christians are planting in the lives of false shepherders, false teachers, false religious leaders since the offerings they receive do not go to the church, but to their pockets? How to know about this reality if not for a deep investigation based on previous suspicions from the facts that arise against these individuals? That is, it is foolhardy to speak in this way about people whose hearts and whose intentions are not known as God knows. This amounts to “to show respect of persons” (Rom 2:11). Because? Because God does not see as man sees (1 Sam 16:7). Man sees appearances, the external, but he is unable to see the soul, the heart of the other.



4.3.3 ANALYZING THE WORDS "MALAFAICAS"[7]

A person in your family is a scoundrel, i.e., a character without character or, better said, bad character. The fact that a person is a scoundrel does not mean that he cannot be transformed by God. As Malafaia himself said: "Let God be true and every man a liar", referring to Romans 3:4. Therefore, if it is written in the Holy Scriptures that God is no respecter of person, who is the man to say that this or that one does not deserve to receive the means of salvation? Even a false shepherd, when receiving the offerings and tithes in his church, may, at the same time, receive exhortations on how to administer them faithfully, and not with theft as a bad character religious leader does - the real "stealing from God", i.e., not obeying the moral virtues which he commands his people. Soon, he would have an opportunity for regeneration.

As no one has the omniscience of God to know what is going on in another's heart, there is no reason not to "plant" the seed of God's grace in a person's life. Planting, biblically speaking, does not just refer to money, as Malafaia advocates, no matter how specific the topic in that context was; rather, planting in one's life is above donations in offerings to the church (or, more properly, to church leaders who promiscuously redeem them for themselves). The vision of "planting in the life of the other" cannot be restricted only to the question of money, the question of offering, or even the question of tithing; it is necessary to think more about the "neighbor" than the "other", because when you think about the neighbor, you think like Jesus when, for example, he saved the life of the thief beside him on the cross.

Jesus was no respecter of person with regard to that man; Jesus did not condemn him, nor did he reject him because he was a scoundrel, miserable, fraudulent, petty, hating holy things because he was entangled with the profane; no! Jesus made an x-ray of his heart at that time when the candidate for the reprobation of men truly repented and Jesus, knowing his heart like no one else, was sure of his repentance, because, being God, he does not err and is not deceived; he knows who is who. Jesus did not condemn him for his misdeeds and moral defects. Precisely for being

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on that cross, Jesus, without errors or sins, paying for a crime he did not commit, being unjustly condemned by religious men - those, yes, who normally commit the sin of unjust and defamatory accusation, reckless judgment, exclusion and of rejection, which they declare to be acting in the name of God -, led the evildoer to the understanding that there were better paths than the ones he had walked until then. He therefore gave him, at the last moment, the opportunity for sanctification, an act of purification of character. That is, once purified by God because truly repented of their sins, the person now enjoys a new life, "a new creature" (2 Cor 5:17). If it were not so, as it is written, God would be a liar and Malafaia would be true.

Therefore, every man falls short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23), unless he believes in Jesus and manifests his faith in him (Rom 3:22,26) which brings with it repentance and consequent deliverance from sins. It is known, biblically, that there is not a righteous person on the face of the earth because all have gone astray and do not do good, whose throat is an open tomb, with deceiving tongues, full of curse words that deny their neighbor because they do not know their hearts, who are under the law and not under grace, even if they say otherwise, who lead their hearers to believe that non-givers are condemnable before God, but they, with their tendentious speeches, are not (Rom 3).

"For there is no difference" (Rom 3:22). The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ is for all and upon all who believe. The thief on the cross believed. Madeleine believed. Rahab believed. Zacchaeus believed. Paul believed. Who were these people before they knew God? Were they all perfect, without character deviations, without sins, without mistakes? Not. All were full of problems, which are well known in the bible, but God did not reject any of them because he saw their hearts sincere and ready to repent. He was no respecter of persons, he did not fail to pay attention to them because of their sins, but he assisted them until they were regenerated. Rahab, a harlot (Jos 2), is part of the lineage of Jesus Christ (Mt 1:5). She wanted to help the spies in their God-given mission: a whore of faith that God justified. Who, then, is a mere man to condemn sinners to the exclusion of God's grace, as Malafaia does from 26:29m to 26:55m in the video in question, since the

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action of planting according to biblical principles is not only linked to money ? It would not be the case to provide these people (remembering that they, like us: “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” – Rom 3:23) the blessing of hearing the preaching of the message of Christ that generates faith (Rom. 10:17) through faith itself and hope from the evangelistic mission by which “God accepts all through Christ Jesus, who saves them? (Rom 3:24).

It is not a case of supporting the mistakes of the other, but of seeing the possibilities of regeneration and salvation for the life of the next; it is not a merely social issue, but a spiritual one that logically requires prudence in dealing, which does not imply abandoning or rejecting. One may not physically walk together, but the heart walks side by side through sincere prayer that reaches God's ears when we cry out for someone's deliverance. Therefore, it is not simply to rant full of morality that the other is miserable, a scoundrel and that, therefore, he should be abandoned. This does not match the truth of God!!! We know, for example, that some have welcomed angels through hospitality without knowing they were angels (Heb 13:2; 1 Pet 4:9) not judging or reproaching them for their appearance or any other reason that caused repulsion. We also know that love covers a multitude of sins (1 Pet 4:8), i.e., it does not consider errors, defects and sins above the possibility of regeneration that involves forgiveness, for “it is through Jesus Christ himself that our sins are forgiven. And not ours only, but the sins of the whole world” (1 Jhn 2:2).

So, how to please God according to his word? Abiding in love for one another as brothers in Christ. We do not fail to welcome those who come to our house, to meet us, whose stories we know, and we can help them not necessarily with money, but by investing in prayer, counseling, or whatever is necessary within what can be done for their lives. It must always be borne in mind that no one is better than anyone else and this will remove any repudiation that goes against the divine principles of evangelization, taking into account those who suffer from different evils, as if we were suffering from the same evils (Heb 13:1- 3; 1 Pet 5:9), for today we do not have the same problem as the other, but we have other problems; no one is out of trouble, no



one, not even the best shepherd in the best church. The Church of Christ is for the sick and miserable who can receive salvation and deliverance from their troubles.

So what about the “barren-land person” he spoke out against, admonishing Christian listeners not to sow into her life? Sowing in the bible refers only to the money offering? Would not preaching the gospel to this type of person also be a “love offering” for the salvation of their soul? Is the preaching of the gospel only for good people of good character? Or just for those who will offer at church? Didn't Jesus warn us (Mt 5:46,47) not to consider (love) only the good (who love us), but also the bad, as they need deliverance? Doesn't God make the sun rise for the good and the bad, the just and the unjust, doesn't he make it rain on them, doesn't he make it happen to everyone? (Ecc 9:2; Mt 5:45) God does not despise or abandon an individual, but always provides him with a chance to regenerate. Why not us? Are we not in the image and likeness of God who is love (Gen 1:26)? Are we not enabled by the power and word of God to preach the gospel (Mk 16:15) - the word of salvation and fruits of regeneration and deliverance - to the ends of the earth, i.e., to all nations?

Below are some texts for reflection, partially transcribed from the aforementioned video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”, whose initial texts and respective refutations are found above.

Frame 4 - Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 21:21m

O cristão é conhecido por aquilo que ele doa.

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

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For what donates in monetary offer?! Or for mutual love? Read about how a Christian is known: “By this all will know that you are my disciples (Christians), if you have love for one another” (Jhn 13:35). How does a faithful Christian give? With what heart? Below, an enlightening text about the correct way and a pure heart to offer[8]:

Não é pra aparecer!

Doação de coração puro, sincero e fiel: jamais para aparecer, para aliviar-se de culpa ou por constrangimento de qualquer tipo.

Faça a sua missão como Deus lhe tem dado a fazer. Cada um tem a sua própria missão. Faça a sua como Deus a tem designado. E não se sinta culpado por não fazer o que outros estão fazendo; eles estão cumprindo cada um com a sua missão. E não queira jamais fazer para aparecer, fazer algo para mostrar sua ação para os outros.

Como ofertamos a Deus? Com que coração? Dar por dar, dar por qualquer outro motivo que não seja agradar a Deus, i.e., dar para agradar os outros, dar para nos sentirmos livres de culpa, dar por obrigação ou constrangimento...

De que maneira é feita uma oferta à casa de Deus ou a necessitados fora dela? As ações “ofertivas” são motivadas pelo quê? É para o modo como a oferta se realiza que Deus atenta, e não para a oferta em si. É para a disposição do coração que Deus olha.

Deus atentou para a oferta de Abel porque ele se preocupou em oferecer o melhor e assim o fez (Gn 4:4), diferentemente de seu irmão Caim (Gn 4:3). Nota-se nesse contexto o modo como a oferta foi realizada: a de Abel por gratidão e desejo de agradar a Deus, mas a de Caim por obrigação ou mero formalismo. Deus dá testemunho dos dons (Hb 11:4). Todavia, um pecado dá brecha para outros pecados (Gn 4:7,8).

É preciso ter muito cuidado com o modo pelo qual se faz uma oferta, pois, se for divergente dos princípios divinos, acarreta pecado que gera culpa diante de Deus. Logo, não há nenhuma vantagem em fazer ofertas que destoam da pureza do coração para com Deus, segundo o seu propósito, e para com os homens segundo a retidão do espírito (Sl 51:10; Lc 2:14).

The offer must never be intended to make the offerer known. It's not to become known! Just remember the word with which he is exhorted to act according to God's leading in Matthew 6:2-4:



Quando você der alguma coisa a uma pessoa necessitada, não fique contando o que fez, como os hipócritas fazem nas sinagogas e nas ruas. Eles fazem isso para serem elogiados pelos outros. Eu afirmo a vocês que isto é verdade: eles já receberam a sua recompensa. Mas você, quando ajudar alguma pessoa necessitada, faça isso de tal modo que nem mesmo o seu amigo mais íntimo fique sabendo do que você fez. Isso deve ficar em segredo; e o seu Pai, que vê o que você faz em segredo, lhe dará a recompensa.

Frame 5 – Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 26:52m

A lei da semeadura vai funcionar pra você; se você plantar, você vai colher. É princípio de Deus.

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Yes, it is divine principle. It is written, “Whatever a person sows, that is what he will also reap” (Gal 6:7) – as referring only to the good part of the planting. However, continuing the reading, it is noted that verse 8 explains the previous one: “If he sows in order to please his own evil desires, he will be planting the seeds of evil and logically will reap a harvest of spiritual ruin and death; but if he sows the good things of the Spirit, he will reap the eternal life that the Holy Spirit gives him”. It is understood that this highlighted expression refers to the spiritual sphere, and not material or financial; therefore it reveals the result of the exclusion of salvation by what he planted and the way he conducted the things of God. The sowing of which the verse in question deals is spiritual. Why just read single verses when the whole biblical meaning is tied to a global and not a specific context?

So, would the law of sowing be linked to the financial aspect of the offer?! Is the law of sowing related to the material field or the spiritual field? Does the law of sowing imply an investment, a “take it, give it” type of negotiation where there are bargains? Is it biblically guaranteed by God that the more money someone gives, the more money they get back?

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Many people turn their eyes to the word of God when it says that if you sow bountifully, you will reap bountifully, from a self-interested perspective - this is a way of encouraging people to give a lot of money to the church because "they will receive much more in return." However, that is not what 2 Corinthians 9:6 means. It is recommended, therefore, a reading of the original texts in order to understand the real meaning of each word in the biblical texts; in this way, the danger of biased readings ceases to exist. It is also necessary to predispose the heart to a perfect understanding of what God means, and not want to remain in what we prefer to believe to be the truth.

This verse reads that "he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully". In the original Greek the word "εὐλογίας" /eulogíais/, which is usually translated as abundance or plenty (blessings / praises), is not used for the purpose of blessing things, i.e., to bless offerings so that greater gifts are achieved, but with the purpose of praising, praising God as the one who gives things, and for that very reason, it is specifically about the abundant blessing of God poured out on the life of the one who has gratitude for him. So the term itself reveals the aspects of praise and gratitude for the blessings received which from God are always abundant because of their unspeakable greatness. And this is the true meaning that permeates the entire text of 2 Corinthians 9 regarding the law of sowing.

The belief that there is a financial return to those who make offerings in the church should not be encouraged. It occurs because he was previously graced by God to be able to do so with a generous heart, i.e., disinterested, not seeking advantages. Acting contrary to this understanding is the same as commercializing the faith.

"In Christ God has blessed us with every kind of spiritual blessing from heaven" (Eph 1:3). God promises spiritual blessings to those who submit to his will that they correspond to his divine attributes which include a way of being free from interest in our actions – of making your donations and giving of yourself out of love, and not looking for financial return or any other advantages.

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Here is proof that God gives what he wants to whoever he wants how he wants whenever he wants how much he wants because he chooses and blesses him: “For Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, If you bless me exceedingly, and my terms amplify, and your hand be with me, and make sure that evil is not afflicted!... And God granted him what he asked” (1 Chr 4:10).

And your blessed chosen one doesn't need to promise anything to God, doesn't need to give him anything in return, in order to receive his blessings from him. God is not a “bargaining god”. He is a rewarder of his faithful who seek him with all their hearts, and he delights to give them security, peace, freedom from suffering and an abundance of blessings.

At 28:15:

– The one who offers will have sustenance, will have provision, will have supply in the material and spiritual area. Spiritual needs will be met because of his offering. Grace is God's favor to man. It's grace. The law of provision means that when you plant offerings, God will supply material and spiritual needs in your life”.

Reply:

Reread what is immediately written in the rebuttal above. Does God give support only to those who give offerings in the church? How many needy people don't give offerings in the church and receive from the church?! God's grace is so great that he provides for both material and spiritual needs not because of the offerings that are given in the church; the offering helps in the work of the kingdom in every way, but it is not because of the offering, but because of grace.

The law of provision means that God always supplies material and spiritual needs, not just when offerings are planted. God's blessings are not limited to the actions of men! He gives to whoever he wants, he has compassion on who he wants, he has mercy on who he wants, he blesses who he wants; this has nothing to do with

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offering - God does not depend on anyone's offering to bestow blessings. (Rom 9:15,16)

Frame 6 - Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 28:32m

Necessidades espirituais da sua vida vão ser supridas por causa da sua oferta.

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

No! These needs will be met because of God's mercy on the life of the faithful believer who has fellowship with Him. The offering would be useless if he did not have faithfulness and communion, for God blesses whoever wants to and makes the sun rise and rain on everyone, just and unjust, good and bad (Mt 5:45), regardless of whether they offer in his church or not. God's goodness is not limited to what they offer in the church, but comes from their will and purpose; for example, he may bless an unbeliever to favor a believer; remember the story of the witchcraft who took food to the needy believer? So both of them did not give offerings in the church, but God blessed them – one to give and the other to receive.

However, at 38:59m of the video he gives an explanation for this, saying that there is a difference between wealth and prosperity, already foreseeing the question of any listener who did not understand his preaching; this is because he himself knows that his preaching is chaotic.

On 2 Corinthians 9:11:

Frame 7 - Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 29:11m

Para que em tudo enriqueçais para toda a beneficência”. Se tiver conhecimento correto do que é oferta, se você tiver atitudes corretas como eu te ensinei sobre

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oferta, é a lei da abundância. Sabe o que que é abundância? É a lei da sobra. Deus vai te dar não só pra suprir suas necessidades, mas pra sobrar pra você ajudar outro.”

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

That is, the person will get rich to help the other!!! This reflects a way of feeding greed under the guise of false philanthropic virtue. This sounds good to the ears and helps to avoid misinterpretations of intentions. Those who listen gladly receive it, thinking they will do great good without realizing the real intention that is created in their mind. All this reflects the persuasive power of the transmitter of the message who camouflages with apparently wise words the true purpose of the business, leaving it hidden (as a subliminal message).

Faced with those words, what can we say, then, of the brother who never got rich and always helped the other? Would this understanding not be in accordance with the verse where it reads, "That ye may be enriched in all things unto all goodness." Note that there is a bad exegesis of this verse on the part of this speaker, because, considering a person who never became rich financially, but always helped the other, it means that he became rich in other ways, not being rich in monetary terms, but having, at least, the desire to give money to those who need it and to be able to do so as far as possible; In addition, it is necessary to properly interpret the verse when it says “for all beneficence”, that is, not only to help with money, but in various other ways such as moral, professional, family support, etc, intercession, among many other things of interest equal importance.

Most important of all this was not said by the speaker - that above the supply of the saints' needs is gratitude to God for all his provision both to the giver and to the

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receiver, for both are under the power of God who blesses in order to do so (2 Cor 9:12-15).

Here is the real essence of the verses that complement the one quoted which cannot be separated from the latter. Biblical verses are not read separately from the global context in which they are found. The reading of a single verse isolated from the previous and later context becomes a pretext for a heresy, i.e., a false teaching of the true word of God, of what in fact God wants to convey to those who seek to hear his word and follow his direction. This refers to the deviations against which God warns his people not to be ensnared by them and made fat by false food.

The speaker says: "if you have the right attitudes like I taught you about offering". Which is more important: obeying the voice of God or the voice of man? Because this is the voice of man and not of God. If it were from God, it would be in agreement with the truth of God, that the text refers not to what is to be received in exchange for what is given, but to the many expressions of gratitude to God for everything in every way within the church and from her to all, without respect of persons, without partiality. God's teaching about offerings has nothing to do with what he is teaching, as has been explained before; it is enough to read in full each verse in question and to interpret them properly through a neutral exegesis, i.e., disinterested, impartial, which only aims to bring the pure teaching of the word of God to those who want to know its truth.

On 2 Corinthians 9:8:

Frame 8 - Excerpt from the video "Uma vida de Prosperidade" at 29:13m

Superabundeis em toda a boa obra.

Source: Excerpt from the video "Uma vida de Prosperidade". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

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Argumentative answer:

Does this verse specifically refer to the cash offering in the church?! Overabundance in offers?! Church ministries boil down to offerings?! And the other works of a church, wouldn't they also be equivalent to good works?! To abound in every good work means not only helping others in various ways (and not just giving in church), but also striving to seek more knowledge about God and things related to him and sharing that knowledge with others in the form of a gift evangelization by possible and adequate means. The verse refers to “every kind of good works” (2 Cor 9:8).

Frame 9 - Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 30:01m

Meu irmão, vai ler a bíblia, meu
filho!

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Malafaia pronounces this phrase ironically as if the Christian to whom he is addressing had no knowledge of the Bible. It gives the impression that he alone has this potential for knowledge, when, in reality, he does not have full knowledge of the Word of God, as no one else does; improvement in biblical knowledge is daily and inexhaustible. There seems to be no respect for the neighbor in terms of his personal experience with God. Each one receives from God what God wants to give him and that is enough (Rom 9:18). Could it be that Malafaia, in his presumed human and spiritual limitation, as can be seen from his speech, would like words like these to be addressed to him, since he is no different from anyone or better than anyone under the heavens?! Where is Malafaia's humility through divine admonition? As it is written, “Let the greatest among you be as the least” (Lk 22:26); “Let no one deceive himself: if anyone among you considers himself to be wise in this world, let him become a fool to be wise” (1 Cor 3:18); “Do nothing out of self-interest or out of

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foolish desires to receive praise; but be humble and consider others better than yourselves" (Phil 2:3). Furthermore, God is not limited to human exegesis. It takes every Christian to read again, several times each quoted verse to learn directly from God who reveals to his mind the pure truth as it is and not fostered by biased interpretations. If his self-sufficiency allows him to learn directly from God, right!

On Genesis 13:2,6:

Frame 10 - Excerpt from the video "Uma vida de Prosperidade" at 30:38m

Deus da abundância que faz sobrar. José do Egito. Povo no deserto – maná. Multiplicação dos pães. Pesca maravilhosa!"

Source: Excerpt from the video "Uma vida de Prosperidade". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Many have learned to take advantage of the word of God in favor of themselves instead of using it in favor of others, as it should be. Therefore, miracle texts that emphasize, for example, biblical facts concerning the theme of prosperity are very useful.

In this sense, the most appropriate texts are sought that show how a particular character evolved or prospered financially – this is the emphasis. However, the most important thing about each of these stories is not found in the final fact of prosperity, but, mainly, in the fact of the reality lived by the character: the struggles, the pain, the losses, the moral learning, the transformation of the character, the obedience to God to the detriment of one's own will, renunciation of one's own desires and wishes, etc.

These facts, all united together, were decisive for that character to achieve financial prosperity or a certain event to denote abundance of blessings. For example, when did Job achieve prosperity? Let's see: "They told how they were sorry for what had

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happened to him and they comforted him for all the misfortunes that the Lord had brought on him". (Job 42:11b)

Job lost his health, children, possessions, reputation, without ever accusing God, failing to recognize his sovereignty and worship him, and only after undergoing so much suffering in the midst, however, of continuous worship and obedience to the designs of God. God, achieved financial prosperity, recovered his family, rescued his social dignity, was rewarded with longevity:

O Senhor abençoou a última parte da vida de Jó mais do que a primeira. Ele chegou a ter catorze mil ovelhas, seis mil camelos, dois mil bois e mil jumentas. Também foi pai de sete filhos e três filhas. À primeira deu o nome de Jemima; à segunda chamou de Cássia; e à terceira, de Querém-Hapuque. No mundo inteiro não havia mulheres tão lindas como as filhas de Jó. E o pai as fez herdeiras dos seus bens, junto com os seus irmãos. Depois disso, Jó ainda viveu cento e quarenta anos, o bastante para ver netos e bisnetos. E morreu bem velho (Jó 42:12-17).

Does prosperity theology take care of illustratively mentioning that painful phase of Job's life with the aim of encouraging the Christian to obey God, regardless of achieving blessings or not? Who wants to be like Job and go through what he went through before enjoying so much prosperity? They want Job's prosperity, but they don't want Job's suffering. This reveals a petty feeling similar to envy that only feeds on the good things in other people's lives without even wanting to imagine what the other goes through to be or have this or that, because many have a lot, but only God knows how! That part no one wants – the hidden part of these lives that encompasses various types of adversity, but the exposed part that shows their achievements unleashes the hidden side of other lives – the manifestation of dark feelings like the big eye.

Today we see people in churches wanting only to be rewarded without paying the price of submission to the will or purposes of God. They want to go to church and hear only words that massage their ego, that encourage their soul, that feed their appetite for greatness; they are not interested in looking inside themselves and recognizing that they need to be transformed in certain aspects of character,

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personality, as they do not understand these changes as a sign of moral, emotional, sentimental prosperity, which cooperate for the blessing of a healthy spirit and a healthy mind. Unfortunately, they only understand prosperity from a financial perspective that gives them material profits and advantages.

Frame 11 – Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 33:37m

Colegas pastores que estão assistindo esse programa, pegue esse DVD, alugue um telão na tua igreja e bota pro povo ouvir o que eu tô falando aqui. Não tenha medo de ensinar a verdade da bíblia.

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Truth of the bible or his? Why doesn't he encourage fellow shepherders to study the bible so they can give instructions divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit and not by him, a mere human being? Who is this man? The word of God says: “May he (Christ) increase and that I decrease” (Jhn 3:30), but here in this moment of preaching he preaches the opposite!

Frame 12 – Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 33:58m

Deus quer que a lei da sementeira, a lei da provisão, a lei da multiplicação (2 Co 9:10).

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Who is who to affirm what God wants? Who knows what God wants? Who can put words in God's mouth? How does the law of sowing apply in God's vision? Read the

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following biblical verses: a) “The prophet who arrogantly presumes to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak” (Deut 18:20); b) “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy among you; teach you vanities and speak from the sight of their heart, not from the mouth of the Lord”. (Jer 23:16); c) “They see vanity and lying divination who say: The Lord has said; when the Lord did not send them; and cause the fulfillment of the word to be expected. See you not a vision of vanity, and speak not lying divination, when you say: The Lord says, even though I have not spoken?” (Eze 13:6, 7).

Malafaia advising listeners the following:

Frame 13 – Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*” at 36:25m

Não dá pra copiar? Depois tu leva um CD, não é pra comprar CD, não é porque eu tenho que vender CD, não é nada disso. Mas pra você, a repetição, uma coisa, pra você gravar na sua memória, no seu coração, você tem que ouvir pelo menos 17 vezes pra guardar 90%; você tem que ouvir 17 vezes uma mesma coisa pra tentar guardar 90%. Isso aí é pesquisa científica correta que eu tô falando.

Source: Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

That is, he directs the people to listen to his CD 17 times, instead of directing the people to read the Bible as many times as necessary to learn from God, not from him. This is about when materiality trumps spirituality! Interesting is the date of this preaching – 09/24/2018 – concomitant with the political moment the country was going through at that time!!! Again an air of subliminal message! I will use here in due course two well-known hashtags: #entendidosentenderão #ficaadica

Combining the apparently useful with the pleasant. Why “apparently useful” and not useful? What is really useful, hearing the voice of God or the voice of man? Read the

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bible with the spiritual mind to receive the direct revelation of the word of God or listen to human interpretations that are made in the name of God or usurp him? What is actually more viable for Malafaia, selling CDs or getting people to listen to his teachings on CDs at the expense of teachings acquired through direct biblical reading? Subliminal, my dear Watson, subliminal!

He defends the "repetition" theory, confirming it in the name of scientific research in which education experts David Ausubel and Mohamed Youssef said that a student would need to be exposed to a word 17 times before learning it. On the other hand, the same source of this news[9] states that other research points to an average that varies between 15 and 20 times. In turn, Catherine Snow, professor of education at Harvard University (USA), says that there are different conditions for learning, just hearing the word once to learn it. Catherine Snow states that, on average, exposure of 15 to 20 times is enough to learn a word", not 17 specifically.[10]

Returning, however, to the malafaica contextual dimension regarding biblical learning, not everything that is linked to the scientific sphere applies in the biblical sphere. Therefore, when the intention speaks louder, the individual's tendency is to stick to what interests him, without mentioning the other possibilities. This is called bias, which is totally against biblical truth. It is time to remember Bible verses that reflect this understanding: "Do not use vain repetitions" (Mt 6:7). "In the multitude of words there is no lack of transgression" (Pr 10:19). "Out of excess of words come the promises of a fool". (Eccl 5:3)

Listening countless times to a particular sermon recorded by a man, no matter how famous a shepherd he is, is not in line with the teachings of Jesus, who takes a position contrary to mechanical actions. Furthermore, this is similar to the repetition of mantras or prayers, and in this case, the practice is performed through the ears and not through the mouth. Anyway, everything results in repetition. These types of practices do not show an approach to God, but a distance from him due to the dedication given to learning formulas at the expense of direct contact with him.



Through such a practice, the person is unable to receive his revelation, direction, guidance directly from God, since there is no search for God and his revealed truths in the Scriptures; there is therefore no harmony with the divine will and teachings. There is only a search for obedience to the voice of a man of renown, whom they think can be believed, as if it were God speaking through his mouth, and they begin to listen to him in order to achieve the great victories promised by him. In this way, the person is trapped in a conditioning given by man and, without realizing it, moves away from God whose promises are actually fulfilled.

In addition to all this, the most learned person will always be incapable of understanding the word of God, his truth, his will, his direction, if it is not for the Holy Spirit who enriches the human spirit with wisdom, since intelligence and intellectuality they cannot access the mysteries of God. Therefore, it is necessary to read the bible through the spirituality given by God to reach communion with him, and not through carnalities, such as the various human and technological resources that have been infiltrated in the church today. These are usurping God's place and many are getting carried away by them and their sponsors.

He declares:

Frame 14 - Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*" at 37:10m

Eu não vou deixar ninguém aqui confundido nem sair com minhoca atrás da orelha. Eu quero falar algumas verdades...

Source: Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

However, only God has the power to leave no one confused: "They that hope in you will not be confused" (Ps 25:3a). No one has the right to take the word of God as his own. Why didn't he say, like this: God [or the Holy Spirit or the Spirit of revelation] will

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not leave you confused? Or who used direct speech: "And the Spirit of revelation, the Holy Spirit says: I will not leave anyone here confused or go out with worms behind their ear..." Soon, when a said servant of God assumes the word of God as if it were his own, he is claiming for himself an authority that God does not give him, for what God gives him does not make him feel the owner of power.

Frame 15 – Excerpt from the video *"Uma vida de Prosperidade"* at 37:53m

Tem um monte de bilionários no mundo que nunca deram nada pra Deus, que nem acreditam em Deus, são riquíssimos, e tem até crente dentro da igreja que eu conheço que não dá dízimo, não dá oferta, não dá nada e é rico.

Source: Excerpt from the video "Uma vida de Prosperidade". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Poor comparison! It seems that Malafaia forgot the verses that say: "He makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust"; "Is there anyone on whom your light does not shine?" (Mt 5:45; Job 25:3). To be rich, you don't have to give anything in the church or believe in God, whether you're a believer or not. A person is already rich or becomes rich because that is how God granted him to be or to become. What shall we say then? That God is unfair? Not at all! For he said to Moses:

Terei misericórdia de quem eu quiser; terei pena de quem eu desejar." Portanto, tudo isso depende não do que as pessoas querem ou fazem, mas somente da misericórdia de Deus. Porque, como está escrito nas Escrituras Sagradas, Deus disse a Faraó: "Foi para isto mesmo que eu pus você como rei, para mostrar o meu poder e fazer com que o meu nome seja conhecido no mundo inteiro." Portanto, Deus tem misericórdia de quem ele quer e endurece o coração de quem ele quer (Rm 9:14-18).

The same is true of the poor. It is written, "The poor shall never cease in the land," and "As for the poor, ye shall always have with you" (Deut 15:11; Jhn 12:8).

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God is fair. In his righteousness, he gives, he fails to give, or he takes away. "The Lord gives poverty and riches; he humbles and exalts" (1 Sam 2:7). Who can challenge God's action? "As I act, who can undo it?" (Isa 43:13c). God knows everything. But "You say, 'I am rich, I have acquired riches, and I don't need anything'. But he does not recognize that he is miserable, pitied, poor, blind, and naked" (Apoc 3:17) – the former are the words of the foolish and proud who do not recognize the sovereignty of God.

Furthermore, the blessing of God is independent of tithes and offerings that are given in the church or what is done in the name of God, as these actions do not always reveal a sincere worship of God; they can even represent a petty attitude like the interest in getting back double or triple or... or... what you donated. From hearing so much preaching about achieving prosperity, say en passant, financial, from donations in the church, many end up believing this, leaving aside the true donation that pleases God, and that has been neglected in the name of theologies that distort the truth of God – the offering of one's life as a living sacrifice to God in order to serve him with humility and faithfulness through the gifts through a new life:

Irmãos, Deus mostrou por nós uma grande misericórdia. Por isso, peço-lhes que ofereçam a ele as suas vidas em sacrifício, isto é, um sacrifício vivo, puro e que lhe seja agradável. Esta é a maneira espiritual de vocês o adorarem. Não sejam mais moldados por este mundo, mas, pela nova maneira de vocês pensarem, vivam uma vida diferente. Então vão descobrir a vontade de Deus, isto é, o que é bom, agradável a ele, e perfeito. (Rm 12:1,2)

However, instead of offering their lives to Christ, i.e., fulfilling his teachings such as a) loving the enemy, b) forgiving the offender, c) owning up to one's mistakes, d) being merciful to others, e) covering the brother's nakedness, etc., many who cry "Lord, Lord" just put out of their mouths those words that do not correspond to what they actually feel for the Lord. The "Lord" in their mouths is a mere vocative to show service: "Why do you call me '*Lord, Lord*' and not do what I say?" (Lk 6:46). They are self-serving, not generous. Everything they did was for their own good. Here is the difference and the results: "There are those who give generously, and see their riches increase; others withhold what they should give, and fall into poverty. The

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generous will prosper; he who gives relief to others, will receive relief" (Pr 11:24-25). Generosity implies disinterested, detached action!

Frame 16 - Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*" at 38:20m

Eu vou começar a te explicar com um texto, mas até o texto não é a coisa mais importante da explicação, mas é o começo da explicação.

Source: Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

He recites Psalm 115:16, without direct Bible reading as he normally does. He knows the bible by heart and sautéed. Knowing by heart does not mean knowing in spirit and in truth. How many times do we remember a verse, we quote the verse, and it doesn't touch us deeply, but when we open the bible and read the same verse, the wisdom of God reveals itself so powerfully that in that moment we learn what we had never before understood from the word! It is as if we were reading something new, because the word of God is renewed with each reading, at each moment of life; the same verse adapts to infinite situations with God's provision for each one.

So, why not read the bible, the verses, even if you are in a passionate preaching that doesn't want interruptions? For a biblical text in a preaching will never be something unimportant, and it will NEVER be just the beginning of a human explanation, as Malafaia said: "even the text is not the most important thing in the explanation, but it is the beginning of the explanation" (referring to Psalm 115).

The entire biblical text, from Genesis to Revelation, is always essential! Its reading is essential for a perfect understanding of what God wants to communicate to the people who are there precisely to hear what he has to say about their life circumstances. No man, however learned by heart the biblical texts, will ever be able to supply the spiritual needs of God's people; Remember: people of God! People of

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God need God, his word, his providence, his help. Men in the service of God must be aware of this. Everything that concerns God must be above anything below God. Therefore, the biblical text is the best explanation, in itself, and the most important thing in the explanation, contrary to what Malafaia intended with his words without biblical basis. In fact, he did not mention that the word of God is the absolute truth that by itself reveals itself to the faithful listener who receives it in his spirit without further explanation because it is received through the Spirit of God. Explanations of biblical texts may be necessary, but they will always be secondary to the voice of God in the “heart” of man.

Frame 17 - Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*” at 39:11m

Você tá confundindo riqueza com prosperidade. Riqueza é possuir bens!!!

Source: Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Many, therefore, think of prosperity only as financial, professional, social status, etc. They confuse prosperity with material wealth: acquisition of goods, large sums of money, professional advancement, etc. Malafaia cites only the term “wealth”, leaving out the meaning of materiality, and confuses material wealth with prosperity. There is, for example, the fact that a person is financially rich and not prosperous, and a poor person financially is prosperous. Prosperity involves wealth, yes, but immaterial wealth that may or may not generate material wealth; prosperity does not depend on materialities to exist. Here's a simple outline on material wealth and prosperity:



Riqueza material ≠ Prosperidade:

Riqueza material = bens, propriedades móveis; ascensão profissional, posição social, abundância de dinheiro = “prosperidade financeira”.

Prosperidade = sabedoria, discernimento espiritual, dignidade moral, equilíbrio emocional, pureza sentimental, paz interior.

This Bible verse summarizes the explanation above: “Beloved, I pray God that you may prosper in everything and be in health, as your soul prospers” (3 Jhn 1:2).

The confusion about the true meaning of the term resides in the misunderstanding about its origin, which involves an erroneous attribution of values; for example, someone thinking that they are prosperous because they received a promotion at work and a consequent salary increase. This is not prosperity; this is the result of other people's recognition for the services provided and also a natural economic tendency in the professional scope that may be linked to the skills performed that present constant development in that particular function. Prosperity, in turn, reveals itself in the satisfaction resulting from those achievements that provide a feeling of contentment capable of providing stability to the inner being.

In the specific case of Christian people, prosperity is understood in this light as a result of obedience to God's teachings regarding issues of behavior and actions that reflect honesty and trustworthy character. That is, a person who goes to church assiduously, gives tithes and offerings, fulfills all his ecclesiastical obligations, is concerned with pleasing his leaders, but is not present in the bosom of the family, does not give money at home, does not offers to help their family members, does not fulfill their various domestic obligations, does not care about pleasing their spouse or children, falls into the condition of someone who does not correspond to the justice of God, since this is not achieved by works, but by a contrite heart (Ps 51:17).

How, then, to receive the expected reward from God, such as prosperity, considering that the term itself means “to achieve what you hope for”, according to the etymology of the word [from the Latin “pro” = “in favor” + “spes” = “hope”], if that person did not

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do what God expected of him? How can a person be rewarded for something he didn't do? Therefore, giving in the church will not always mean receiving prosperity back if other more important actions, such as assisting the family, are relegated to the background, contrary to what is written: "Learn first to take care of your own family" (1 Tim 5 :4). That is, if you do not obey God who is pleased with those who are pleased with him and with his word, there is no way to have prosperity; you can, at most, have material wealth, lots of money, acquire lots of goods... – “Ah, but that's all a person wants!”. But is that the “all” a person needs? Note: “Soul, you have many goods in store for many years; rest, eat, drink, indulge. But God said to him, Fool, this night your soul will be asked of you; and what have you prepared, for whom will it be? So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God” (Lk 12:19-21). One day, when she realizes she has everything and nothing, she will understand that she never had prosperity! Then, perhaps, it will be a little late. Awake, O thou that sleepest in the words of pretended masters!!! God is pleased with those who seek him and rewards them according to his will for which, whatever they receive, they should be grateful to him.

More than teaching about prosperity theology, basing itself on biblical verses through biased interpretations, every “man of God”, in the broadest sense of the expression, must live up to the real meaning of the scriptural text regarding the notion of the transformation of people's lives in the ontological sense of which it is understood, and it must be clarified, that material riches may or may not be obtained, but there will certainly be inner riches that will provide all the best that a soul needs, which is not equivalent to monetary gains. Metanoia has nothing to do with transforming people's economic condition.

Frame 18 - Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*” at 40:55m

Sempre deram migalhas, sempre pensaram que podiam enganar Deus, a igreja e o pastor (...) As atitudes de um cristão em relação ao dinheiro determina [*ipsis verbis*] a qualidade da sua vida espiritual porque é impossível separar dinheiro de certas



virtudes fundamentais da vida cristã.

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

“God, the church and the shepherd,” Malafaia said. Would this be the trinity of Prosperity Theology of which Malafaia is a part?! Would that be possible?! The expressions allude to a play on words with potentially persuasive arguments that cause an exchange of meanings. And maybe this goes unnoticed for some, or they prefer not to understand. In one of her articles on tithing posted on her website, Malafaia says that not tithing demonstrates materialism and avarice; that this amounts to an attachment to money that demonstrates an exacerbated materialism and even avarice, a sin of idolatry, summoning Colossians 3:5 in defense of its interpretation.

See, therefore, what this verse actually means, considering the variables of the term “greed” as “greed or covetousness” in different biblical versions. The denotative meaning of avarice refers to an extreme attachment to money, a preoccupation with collecting more money, lack of generosity, stinginess; that of greed refers to an incessant pursuit of profit, immoderate ambition for goods and riches, a fervent and permanent desire to possess or gain far more than is necessary; covetousness refers to an inordinate desire for power, material possessions, money, status.

- a) Be content with your pay (Lk 3:14).
- b) Do not covet high things, but accommodate yourselves to the lowly (Rom 12:16).
- c) I learned to be content with what I have (Phil 4:11).
- d) Keep yourself free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God himself said: I will never leave you, I will never forsake you (Heb 13:5).

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It seems that these verses are not suited to prosperity theology, at least not often heard in churches that advocate it. The contentment dealt with in the above verses is precisely the behavior that God commands his faithful ones. Contentment reveals faith in God who supplies all needs. Contentment exempts you from the rush to receive what you need. Therefore wait on the Lord (Ps 27:14). Contentment doesn't pressure you to make big offers to earn much more.

However, how can one express contentment if one hears all the time that it is necessary to give more in order to receive even more? It is urgent that the churches faithful to God develop the treatment of the renewal of the mind by the word of God in order to extirpate the evil of the greed from which the beggars of tithes and offerings suffer.

It is no longer even the case to talk about tithes because this designation has already been supplanted by the term offerings precisely because of the pejorative meaning that tithe has been suffering, being passed over in the background. So, speaking more specifically about the offerings in the way they have been handled, they fail to correspond to the purpose of God whose words in the mouths of greedy leaders are avoided at all costs so as not to divert the needy and needy flock from monetary contributions. So they only look for verses that talk about giving money and giving in abundance to ensure even greater gain. Those who have, give and those who don't, also give. However, "Whoever has will receive more; but whoever does not have, even what little he has will be taken from him". (Mk 4:25)

Recalling Malafaia's words - that not giving the tithe demonstrates materialism, avarice, attachment to money equivalent to the sin of idolatry -, one can see the other side of the coin whose effigy portrays the non-receipt of tithe, which causes an expectation of loss on the part of those who propagate an idolatry disguised by the word of God. Hence, the vehement insistence on instilling in unsuspecting (or even self-seeking) minds the lack of subordination to God which will consequently limit blessings. Thus, one moves from the theology of prosperity to the theology of fear.



All of this reveals an obstinacy for the very ideas that do not correspond to God's ideals - evangelization for salvation, which has nothing to do with financial prosperity - or for the very thoughts that do not correspond to God's thoughts: "My thoughts are not like your thoughts. thoughts" (Isa 55:8).

Malafaia continues his speech saying that there are rich people who do not fear God and are miserable:

Frame 19 - Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*" at 41:31m

Vai ver a vida deles, vai ver o que está por trás da cortina (...) Aos 42:59m – Eu conheço história de crentes ricos que não dão dinheiro, não dão oferta, e da noite pro dia perdem milhões, crente na igreja!, porque nunca contribuíram, sempre deram migalhas, sempre pensaram que podiam enganar Deus, a igreja e o pastor.

Source: Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Job was God-fearing, he was rich, he tithed, and overnight he lost millions! "The Lord gave, the Lord took away; praise his name!" (Job 1:21b), said Job.

Interestingly, Malafaia creates a trinity in which he acts as an integral member: "they always thought they could deceive God, the church and the shepherd" – that is, he puts himself on an equal footing with God and the Church!!! This reminds us of the Santa Vó Rosa Apostolic Church, whose founder puts herself on an equal footing with God, the Holy Spirit, Jesus, and she as the Consoling Spirit, forming a quaternity – the fourth person of the Trinity who will come with Jesus to snatch his Church!!! And no member in that cult realized such absurdity that it revealed itself in pride, vainglory, ostentation of divine power - man-god who boasted of a non-existent and impossible condition. This attitude characterizes an action of division through which the fidelity between God and the organization is divided[11] which, in the case in

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question, above all, does not seem to refer to the pure, holy and immaculate Church of Christ, but to the physical church led by a religious man, as it refers to the church where tithes are received or, more specifically, where they are no longer received according to the highlighted context. And the membership of that church, in addition to not paying attention to the authoritarian behavior of their leader, did not perceive the threatening tone of his words, understanding that they should obey him, because, otherwise, they could suffer some kind of punishment - theology of fear whose leader holds power over unsuspecting believers.

That is why believers are always warned to pay attention to the words spoken and heard because they penetrate the mind and heart, and can cause great spiritual damage by leading to misunderstandings about the position of a religious leader before God. It is necessary to observe what goes between the lines that normally are not perceived, remaining only in its superficiality. A believer who is a believer needs to have spiritual discernment to differentiate terms, phrases and intentions, and refute them when perceived as an affront to the glory of God since the Lord does not share his glory with anyone (Isa 42:8). Visibly, Malafaia went too far in her words for what she should recant with God immediately while there is still time (Isa 55:6). And as for unwary believers, if they do not yet enjoy the proper and necessary spiritual discernment, he urges them to ask God immediately. Malafaia and his followers manifest an urgent need for correction by the power of God so that on that day (Mt 7:21-23) the Lord may recognize them.

In addition, as for the Malafaic understanding of rich believers who do not give money, do not offer, and who lose millions because of it, because of this “sin against the shepherd and his church”, one wonders against this contradictory statement: how many believing people who are not rich also suffer various losses?! Could it be that they went through all this because they never contributed financially to the church or because they gave crumbs?! Paradox without cause! It is written that God wants mercy and not sacrifice (Hos 6:6; Mat 9:13; 12:7). And how many false converts make donations with the main objective of receiving more in return and as a mere external ritual in order to please their leaders at the expense of the obedience

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they owe God, such as prioritizing mercy – loyalty, true consecration and sincere conversion – over of sacrifice?

The Lord knows all things. Who can search the ways of the Lord, the thoughts of the Lord, the purposes of the Lord (1 Cor 2:16)? Could it be that the events in people's lives would not be God's providence for the achievement of his purposes, such as losing to gain or losing something so that the glory of God is manifested as happened with Job?

Therefore, the words of shepherd Malafaia do not match the sacred text since his biblical understanding is distorted, and, arbitrarily, points his finger literally (to the TV, those who happen to watch him, accusing them) at the servants of God who do not live up to the teachings in the churches where he preaches his prosperity theology.

How to lose to win? Or how to lose to the glory of God like Job? Everyone has their reasons for receiving gains and losses from God, and this is not about giving offerings or not giving offerings, for giving offerings - depending on how you give, with what heart - may or may not please God, but that does not work his righteousness; it is not because someone makes offerings that he is free from the evils of the earth. If so, he would never get sick and live forever.

And why does the shepherd enter on an equal footing with God and the church?! It seems that the believer must fear the shepherd!!! The values are inverting. Most shepherds today do not imitate Jesus: Jesus did not boast of being equal to God:

Tenham entre vocês o mesmo modo de pensar que Cristo Jesus tinha: Ele tinha a natureza de Deus, mas não tentou ficar igual a Deus. Pelo contrário, ele abriu mão de tudo o que era seu e tomou a natureza de servo, tornando-se assim igual aos seres humanos. E, vivendo a vida comum de um ser humano, ele foi humilde e obedeceu a Deus até a morte — morte de cruz. (Fp 2:5-8).

What leader, shepherd, reverend, bishop, apostle, or anyone who holds his ecclesiastical-religious title regardless of due submission to God, strives to imitate Jesus in his humility? Which one? Who?

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Frame 20 – Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 43:42m

As atitudes de um cristão em relação ao dinheiro determina (ipsis verbis) a qualidade da sua vida espiritual porque é impossível separar dinheiro de certas virtudes fundamentais da vida cristã tais como... generosidade... dar ofertas é tão espiritual quanto cantar hinos, dar glória a Deus...”

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

There is a Kardecist spiritism motto, “Outside of charity there is no salvation”, which typifies salvation through works: alms visible to all, tithes and offerings out of obligation, imposition, fulfillment of the position and/or for petty reasons such as seeking rewards. Works doesn't save anyone! We learn of God from the sacred text that salvation is by grace, and the reward is according to the will of God: if he will, he gives; if he doesn't want it, he doesn't give it, regardless of what anyone does in his name. In that sense, when someone gives church offerings for self-interest such as becoming worthy of divine favor to receive even greater blessings, such as “Give \$100.00 and receive \$10,000,” is that offering spiritual or a legalistic practice or a bargain with God?

The Pharisee was legalistic. Note his heart in this chapter entitled “The Pharisee and the Tax Collector” in Luke 18:9-14:

Jesus também contou esta parábola para os que achavam que eram muito bons e desprezavam os outros:

— Dois homens foram ao Templo para orar. Um era fariseu, e o outro, cobrador de impostos.

O fariseu ficou de pé e orou sozinho, assim: Ó Deus, eu te agradeço porque não sou avarento, nem desonesto, nem imoral como as outras pessoas. Agradeço-te também porque não sou como este cobrador de impostos.

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Jejuo duas vezes por semana e te dou a décima parte de tudo o que ganho.

— Mas o cobrador de impostos ficou de longe e nem levantava o rosto para o céu. Batia no peito e dizia: Ó Deus, tem pena de mim, pois sou pecador!

E Jesus terminou, dizendo:

— Eu afirmo a vocês que foi este homem, e não o outro, que voltou para casa em paz com Deus. Porque quem se engrandece será humilhado, e quem se humilha será engrandecido.

Any legalistic practice or bargaining attempt is condemned by Jesus, the Owner of the Church. Who has respected the Owner of the Church? Or who has overpowered their criteria of salvation, blessings and judgment by the law of sowing? When is an offering spiritual? When one does it out of spontaneous generosity (Mk 12:41), and not forced or out of constraint, obligation, or to show service and the like. “This man, fixing his eyes on him, and greatly afraid, said, What is it, Lord? And the angel said to him, Your prayers and your alms have come up in remembrance before God” (Acts 10:4).

As I read this verse, I judged myself, making myself guilty for not always giving alms. But what is almsgiving? Is it giving R\$1.00 or R\$2.00 to a beggar on the street, to a street child? Or is it pitying those who are in need? This compassion is not limited to money, food, and other expenses with the person, but mainly to the generosity of the heart, of wanting to help because you care, because if it weren't, it would be like the rich who give a lot of money, but don't give an ounce of love and they don't even have the slightest concern for the other since giving money is already a big thing, it's already doing your part. “The angel answered, Your prayers and your good works have gone up as an offering before God”. (Acts 10:4)

Sometimes it is thought that alms are just money and food given to the poor, but there are poor people with other needs who can be helped with the love that God puts in every heart. This love encompasses all that is good: wanting to see the other happy, not wanting to hurt him, not taking pleasure in his misfortune, doing



everything possible to make him well - praying for him, interceding for him, thinking about him fondly, being true to him. All of this reveals this love that comes from God and provides the much-desired peace for both of us through the response of the Lord of our lives. The true alms is the one that comes from the heart to fill all kinds of needs, being able to materialize or simply remain in a spiritual state that, often, only God knows. God fills his children with his love, giving them peace and joy.

“You don't give alms?! And what did you do yesterday, harm yourself to help another? Is what your friend is doing not the same as what you are doing? How are you not giving alms?! I have seen all of this of you and it has come to my memory. I enable you to do that which I approve”. By the revelation of God to the mind, it is understood: if the Lord does not approve (certain alms), the Lord does not enable to do it. And therefore he does not because he is not enabled by God to do so. That's why you stop doing it. This has to do with divine revelation, not human revelation; comes from God and not from man. When someone doesn't do something about the church, God knows it and knows why because it comes from him. Offerings are sacrifices that are not always convenient according to Isaiah 1:11a,13a,e,16c,17a-c. When does God reject them?

O Senhor Deus diz: Eu não quero todos esses sacrifícios que vocês me oferecem. Não adianta nada me trazerem ofertas, pois os pecados de vocês estragam tudo isso. Parem de fazer o que é mau e aprendam a fazer o que é bom. Tratem os outros com justiça; socorram os que são explorados.

In other words, God makes it clear that the people must be helped and not exploited. There are many pure believers in the faith who have been exploited in the name of God with a view to gain of any kind, especially the financial corresponding to the profits from tithes and offerings - which for them is above the well-being of others; they are therefore concerned with monetary benefits to the detriment of the salvific issue that corresponds to the salvation of souls for which Jesus commanded the gospel to be preached. Contrary to this order, the mercenaries of the Kingdom who commercialize the Christian faith only aim at the synonyms of abusive profit within



the church: favours, advantages, perks, privileges, rewards and other related benefits.

For example, when there is a pandemic and the order is for no one to leave the house, some bad servants may arise guiding the people as follows: “They are telling no one to leave the house because of the pandemic caused by the virus, but the truth is that they want to stop the Church, they want you to stop coming to church because then the devil will take over your life; they want to do away with the church. Don't listen to the devil's voice! Let's fight them. Let's go to church yes because God is greater! Nothing will happen to us.” And so follow their biased arguments that go against two biblical truths:

1) “You shall love the Lord your God . . . with all your mind” (Lk 10:27). What does all understanding mean? Understanding means reason, that is, without fanaticism. This kind of preaching reveals irreverent fanaticism because it despises God's teachings about being a rational believer who is not carried away by recklessness, for it will kill you and the false well-being of fools will lead to destruction (Pr 1:32);

2) “Every soul is subject to superior authorities; for there is no authority that does not come from God; and the authorities that there are were ordained of God. Therefore, whoever resists authority resists God's ordinance; and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves” (Rom. 13:1, 2). When disobeying the authorities' orders to stay at home, as illustrated, what are church members doing? Both leaders who hold positions under the designation of shepherders, reverends, apostles, bishops, missionaries and their followers do not follow divine exhortation. Leaders follow their own understandings which generate erroneous advice to be passed on to their followers. These, in turn, listen to the voice of those at the expense of obedience to the voice of God. In this way, they become followers of men, believing that they are followers of God. “My people don't care about me and that's why they're being destroyed. And you priests do not care about me either, and have forgotten my laws”. (Hos 4:6)



The self-interested behavior of some Christians is at odds with the behavior of faithful Christians: the widow gave two small coins of little value, but it did not go to the man; she went to God, that is, she was willing to be obedient to what she believed in—God's law at the time (Lk 21:1-4). This differs from when something is given to the man – to the priest, for example – with a view to some return whatever. This is a Pharisaic attitude, for its basis is pleasing to men while that of Christians is pleasing to God. Who is the Pharisaic and who is the Christian? Both are subjects who submit to the service of planting: “I will serve”. Consequently, they become worthy of the harvest of the respective fruits. Therefore, there is no way for the subject to plant thorns and want to harvest apples; there's no way to plant gall and want to harvest honey! Thorn with gall, a mixture that denies the sky. (Mt 27:29,34)

You hear about a scandal here, another there, about one church or another whose administrators embezzled amounts received in tithes and offerings, amounts that are even laundered. Values are washed away, but the soul is not. Because of their avarice, they fail to respond to the actions of Jesus who washes the Church with water and purifies her with her word, ridding her of any stain or defect, making her blameless. The Church is every baptized and regenerated Christian: “He did this to dedicate the Church to God, washing it with water and purifying it with his word. And he did this that he might also bring near to him the Church in all her beauty, pure and perfect, without spot, or wrinkle, or any other blemish” (Eph 5:26,27).

However, one wonders: would they divert or wash the widow's offering or wash it to learn to give more?!

There is a difference between making offerings to God through worthy men, with an eye toward God, and making offerings to men in the name of God, with an eye toward human interests. So, how are these offers made, with what thought or intention? It is as if God asks, “Which do you think is better: making offerings to please the man who is not worthy or to please me who is worthy of all worship?” God is fair. God is faithful in His word: “*Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*”. (Gal 6:7)

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There is still another point to consider: if the Lord says a thing, that thing must be obeyed. To help without conditions is to lack prudence; just remember the parable of the virgins--the five wise and the five foolish (Mt 25:1-13). Jesus did not tell this parable by accident. He did it in order that we might learn from him, lest a worse evil befall us; for example, giving offerings without having money, counting on God's provision that will arrive after doing so; or taking money off your credit card to give tithes and offerings; or borrow; or using any other means other than your own source of income is crazy advice! And those who follow him become just as mad for laying aside the reason and prudence with which God instructs them. Jesus never directed his disciples to do this, but warned them thus: "Whoever does not have, even the little he has will be taken away" (Mt 13:12b). But why will it be taken from you? Because they listen to the voice of prosperity theologians instead of listening to the voice of God, because they don't have their hearts turned to God.

In a conversation with God, a sister worried about wanting to help a needy brother, and going through financial difficulties, cried for him with infinite pity in her heart:

– God: Remember what I said earlier: Help him because he needs it, but don't pity him because he doesn't deserve it. (Understanding: do what you can do; act as far as you can, don't go over your budget, don't take from where you don't have, be prudent.) He planted bad things and keeps planting and will plant even worse things. And it won't change and it will keep getting worse.

– Sister: Is it the Lord himself who is speaking?

– God: And you don't believe what I'm saying?! Make not my word common; I'm the one talking.

Immediately, she remembered this verse: "And a voice came to him, Arise, Peter! Kill and eat. But Peter said, Not at all, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common and unclean. And the voice said to him the second time, Do not make common with what God has cleansed" (Acts 10:13-15). Even to help someone, wisdom is needed, and it comes directly from God to us when we seek him before listening to different

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“shepherders”, believing that his words are true and guarantee of prosperity in any area. If actions are not guided by God's instruction, they will never generate good results.

Read the bible before blindly trusting the words of certain shepherders just because they have fame and money, seeming to be the best examples of how to achieve prosperity. Examine verse by verse, cross-reference the verses to know if things really are as they preach, for the bible itself explains itself when we read it in spirit and in truth, i.e., with the heart turned to God, free from any lusts. “Now these from Berea were more noble than those from Thessalonica, for they received the word with all eagerness, searching the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so” (Acts 17:11). Act like the Bereans: analyze your words against the sacred text to make sure they match it. Examine all things to see if they really come from God (1 Thes 5:21).

The true servant of God does not commit pharisaical acts. For example, the Pharisees exalted Corban (an offering to the Lord made in the temple) above core values such as zeal for one's parents:

Vocês, porém, ensinam que alguém pode dizer a seus pais: Não posso ajudá-los. Jurei entregar como oferta a Deus aquilo que eu teria dado a vocês. Com isso, desobrigam as pessoas de cuidarem dos pais, anulando a palavra de Deus a fim de transmitir sua própria tradição. E esse é apenas um exemplo entre muitos outros (Mc 7:11-13).

No! Of course! They would gain nothing by taking care of people in need or teaching others to take care of them. If an action wasn't profitable, if it didn't offer advantages of any kind, "why do I do it?!" In fact, the offering that was for the Lord was for them, who enriched themselves at the expense of the faith of others; as for the infidels in the skin of the faithful, this offer became a pretext to escape from certain obligations such as neglecting the responsibility of care due to parents. In this sense, this offering became a religious exercise against the word of God with the consent of those who acted as representatives of his people; indeed, an abomination in the eyes of God. Both the givers of the offering and the receivers despised God's teaching on

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filial piety so that such religiosity violated God's command to honor one's father and mother.

Those such and such persons as they, at that time and at the present day, overcome the law of love and mercy which is above any contrary legalistic practices in favor of their own wombs. "The Lord delights more in doing what is right and just than in offering sacrifices to Him" (Pr 21:3), but they do not emphasize this teaching because it is not profitable for them. That is, they manipulate the word of God at will for their own benefit.

In Luke 21:1-4, the poor widow placed two small coins[i] in the temple offering box. Who would value such a tiny offer?! Jesus. Who can say that he follows his example to the letter, valuing an offer that is worthless in the eyes of man? If the theology of prosperity is biblical, as advocated by its interested parties about giving abundantly to receive even more, what about Jesus' reaction to the offer given by the widow? Did Jesus not know this theology? Yes, he is omniscient!!! He knows the intentions of men. At the time, this terminology as understood today did not yet exist, but what concerns it has always existed in the heart and mind of man, something that Jesus knew because he knows each of his creatures, for he probes their thoughts that lead to acceptable or reprehensible actions. Prosperity is a divine gift that is independent of human actions, as it is known that God gives and takes according to his mercy and justice. Therefore, Jesus knew and knows that it is not how much a person gives, but how, with what heart, with what intention, he does it.

This illustration of a biblical fact was recorded so that everyone who reads it knows this, that God looks at the heart, the worthy intention, praiseworthy before him. The two coins that the poor widow offered to the temple (and not into the pocket of the priests, who, moreover, would not even want it for their "apparent" worthlessness) were much more valuable to God than the denarii offered to the temple, or rather, into the pockets of the priests. In other words, prosperity theology that emphasizes "giving more to receive more" is not in line with God's thinking; therefore, it is not biblical!

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4.3.4 THE TRUE VALUE OF A COIN TO JESUS

The denarius was the main currency at the time of Jesus. This was the currency under whose value denoted the large sums offered for the realization of the bargains traded between priests and **IN**fidels who provided for their business, i.e., the wealth of the priests and the profits and advantages of those who offered them - a corruption within the temple of God! Such insincere offerers who had infiltrated the temple of the Lord were approved by men (religious) but disapproved of by God. His self-serving offer did not please the Master of the Temple, the Lord of genuine faith.

Figure 1 - Tiberius Denarius



Source: *Las monedas que conoció Jesús*, 2017.

The lepton was the smallest coin at the time, equivalent to 1/128 of a denarius:

Figure 2 - Pontius Pilate's Lepton



Source: *Las monedas que conoció Jesús*, 2017.



Why did Jesus, in testifying to the widow's small offering, exalt her instead of praising those who gave abundantly? The Lord valued the humble offering of the poor widow because she offered with her heart and not with a selfish mind that aims to gain far more than what she gives, that already offers expecting the return, that offers not out of faith, but out of greed. In the eyes of Jesus, an offering of the heart, an offering of love, is above the abundant offerings of ambitious religious who are not concerned with the well-being of others, but with their own womb. He blessed her for her selflessness, for her dedication, in the midst of all her hardships. The two lepton offered by the poor widow denoted the immeasurable value of a holy offering, worthy of the Lord. So much so that God speaks, and it seems that certain people choose not to listen. God says that what pleases him is not sacrifices, burnt offerings, offerings, but a broken heart, true worship, obedience, mercy. Read and see if it's not true:

“Ó Deus, o meu sacrifício é um espírito humilde; tu não rejeitarás um coração humilde e arrependido” (Sl 51:17).

“Os verdadeiros adoradores vão adorar o Pai em espírito e em verdade. Pois são esses que o Pai quer que o adorem” (Jo 4:23).

“Porque eu quero misericórdia e não sacrifício; e o conhecimento de Deus, mais do que holocaustos” (Os 6:6)

“O que o Senhor pede de ti, senão que pratiques a justiça, e ames a beneficência, e andes humildemente com o teu Deus?” (Mq 6:8).

“O que é que o Senhor Deus prefere? Obediência ou oferta de sacrifícios? É melhor obedecer a Deus do que oferecer-lhe em sacrifício as melhores ovelhas” (1 Sm 15:22).

Therefore,

a) What is the point of offering large sums in offerings or even not having to give and thinking that it is a great sacrifice to take money from your credit card or take out a loan to offer or tithe in churches? This is a way of decimating faith and, consequently, the pocket!



b) What is the point of offering large sums in offerings in churches if you don't have humility before God to recognize your dependence on him, and not on the false promises of false shepherders who promise abundance of money if you give money in abundance? This is a way of decimating faith and, consequently, the pocket!

c) What is the point of offering large sums in offerings in churches if they do not offer God true worship that implies obedience to his voice and not to the voice of men who speak lies in his name, proclaiming financial prosperity to the detriment of the spiritual virtues of which is God pleased? This is a way of decimating faith and, consequently, the pocket!

d) What is the point of offering large sums in offerings in churches if they do not practice justice and goodness that are equivalent to knowing God in obedience to his word that exhorts not to become a servant of mammon (Mt 6:24) and not to have love of money because that love of money is the root of all evil; that is, it is not money that is the root of all evils, but love, attachment to it, as because of it doing improper things, committing acts of impiety, failing to do good without seeing to whom, and so many other attitudes that displease God and that are disapproved of by him. "The love of money is the root of all evil. Some people, by coveting money, departed from the faith and tormented themselves with many sufferings" (1 Tim 6:10). This is a way of decimating faith and, consequently, the pocket!

They should pay more attention to these Bible verses: "Do not hinder the action of the Holy Spirit. Stay away from all forms of evil. May God make you pure and completely devoted to him". (1 Thes 5:19,22,23)

In all this it is seen that the mercenaries of faith make use of a bad exegesis about the law of sowing in which:

a) They emphasize that the greater the supply, the greater the harvest;

b) They emphasize the abundance of the offering with the greedy vision of receiving even more.

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What does this have to do with the kingdom of God?! Everyone who reads the Bible with the faithful intention of putting into practice exactly what is written, even when facing great difficulties to do so due to the weakness of his humanity, is a worthy believer and approved by the Lord, for God looks to the man's heart and knows exactly what goes into it. Who is faithful God knows that he is faithful; who is not faithful God knows that he is not faithful. That's simple. Therefore, there is no large offer that can cover up the evil intentions of the heart. God is not mocked! — what a man sows of it shall he reap (Gal 6:7). God cannot be deceived, for he is omniscient and sees the depths of the soul that man himself does not know: “Then Peter asked, 'Ananias, how did you allow Satan to fill your heart, so that you lie to the Holy Spirit? and keep for yourself a part of the money you received for the property?’” (Acts 5:3).

What is the difference between Ananias and this type of offerer in the present-day church now spoken of? None, for each one's problem lies in the evil intention of seeking profit in one way or another. But God searches the motives of the heart and gives to each one according to his deeds.

The ecclesiastical strategy to achieve earthly prosperity causes it to fall to the side of financial materiality, making it ephemeral, and contradicting the whole meaning of prosperity from the biblical perspective. Deprivations and difficulties that will never cease to affect a person, Christian or not, that often take away his peace, it is as if they did not exist for the talkers of the theology of prosperity, a subject so important that it is neglected in the Church of Jesus whose main objective falls into oblivion in favor of profitable entries in its midst.

Who cares about preaching like this: “Are they ministers of Christ? Me even more: in dangers among false brethren; in work and fatigue, in vigils, often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting, often, in cold and nakedness. In addition to external things, the care of all the churches oppresses me daily” (2 Cor 11:23-28). Who cares to convey these words to the Church so that it knows the perseverance of the apostle Paul in the midst of so much adversity in order to inspire him with the same gift and the same attitude as a form of spiritual prosperity? No, this kind of preaching brings peace and



comfort to Church members in terms of faith, but it is not profitable in terms of cash offerings. That is, the focus of the Church of Jesus has been changed by those who see it as a money-making machine.

However, they should pay more attention to the sacred text in 1 Thessalonians 5:19,22,23 so that a) they do not hinder the action of the Holy Spirit, b) they avoid all forms of evil and c) God makes them pure and completely devoted to Him.

Asaph the Levite was not at all comfortable with the prosperity of the ungodly man in the face of the privations of the people of God as we read below, but, similarly, this same ungodly man stands up in the Church of Jesus with a righteous face - wolf devouring sheepskin pockets, robes, titles, and everything else that resembles the usurping Pharisees of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, in the end, Asaph himself realizes the misery of the unfaithful to God through his righteousness: "I understood what will happen in the end with the wicked. You put them in places where they slip and make them drop dead. They are destroyed in a moment and come to a horrible end" (Ps 73:17-19).

Frame 21 - Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*" at 47:36m

Em todas as épocas da existência (da história) humana, toda a adoração a Deus foi o oferecimento de alguma dádiva em reconhecimento à soberania e à misericórdia de Deus. (...) A oferta é uma semente que honra a Deus.

Source: Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

What offering is this shepherd talking about?! Cash offer "only"? And who doesn't have money, how do they do it? Do you borrow money to give in church, failing to practice the word of God that makes it clear to our understanding that we will lend to many, but not borrow? "You will lend to many nations, but you will borrow from no

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one" (Deut 28:12b). Or should we not have enough money to get money on our credit card to give at church? Does he not remember the verse that says who is an offering to the Lord? It is written: "Offer your bodies to God. Let them be a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God" (Rom 12:1). And the offer of "lip praise", doesn't count?! "O Lord, accept the offering of praise from my lips, and teach me your ordinances" (Ps 119:108).

If it's to talk about offerings that please God, why not quote these verses so that God's people know all the ways to offer to God besides monetary donations?! Why not indoctrinate the people of God with all the verses pertinent to the revealed truth and will of God, according to the theme of the respective preaching, and not just verses separated from the general context of a certain chapter with the intention of emphasizing petty interests based on the word of God to appear righteous, correct and approved by God, when in fact it is nothing like that?! The only acceptable worship is the offering of one's entire life to God. And that implies unconditional worship, for God remains God regardless of anything in the life of the faithful believer. God is God regardless of circumstances. Remember Job. May the Lord enable every believer to have unshakable faith.

"Blind! For which is greater, the offering, or the altar that sanctifies the offering?" (Matthew 23:19). When the offering is valued above the Altar of God, there is room for a true denial of the divine person, since the Altar of the Lord is precisely his representation. And how does this overvaluation of the offer take place at the expense of the recognition that God is above the offer? When one fails to have communion with God by neglecting the most important commandments of the law such as justice, mercy, faithfulness, benevolence, and being humble before God (Mt 23:23; Mic 6:8).

The vanities of the givers of offerings:

How many givers of offerings in mega temples and also in humbler churches are filled with vanity because they gave their offerings, large or small, for the

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shepherd to see more than for God to see, but they do not practice God's justice when they afflict their spouse in the interior of the home where the congregation does not have access, failing to practice the oath made on the Altar of God that he would take care of that spouse?

How many givers of offerings in mega temples and also in humbler churches are filled with vanity because they have given their offerings, large or small, for the shepherd to see more than for God to see, but they do not practice mercy towards a brother who needs financial or food relief or forgiveness for any fault committed or any other care that would please God, remembering what Jesus said: "I was hungry and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in; he was naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to see me" (Mt 25:35,36). However, they act like the priest and the Levite, those men who called themselves men of God, but who manifested nothing of God, for they failed to assist fallen man in the way they passed, and, if it were not for the good Samaritan, the man would have died (Lk 10:30-37).

How many givers of offerings in mega temples and also in humbler churches are filled with vanity because they gave their offerings, large or small, for the shepherd to see more than for God to see, but they do not practice faithfulness to God that is linked to fulfillment of his commandments as to love God above all things - which is equivalent to leaving everything else in the background -, and to the neighbor as himself: two commandments that summarize all the commandments (Mt 22:36-40). Do they practice this love? Do they obey this ordinance of God? When a person fails to give due and possible assistance to a brother in need or harbors hatred for him due to any offense suffered besides not forgiving him, he is not in obedience to God (1 Jhn 4:8), for, having in his hands or being able to do so, he does not: "Whenever you can, help the needy. Don't tell your neighbor to wait until tomorrow if you can help him today" (Pr 3:27,28).



How many givers of offerings in mega temples and also in humbler churches are filled with vanity because they have given their offerings, large or small, for the shepherd to see more than for God to see, but they do not practice the beneficence that implies helping others without meaning, without seeing to whom, free from personal interests as in not “giving with one hand and showing with the other”, as it is written: “When you help someone in need, do it in such a way that not even your closest friend know what you have done” (Mt 6:3); or free from selfish interests, such as valuing resentments that inhibit forgiveness, which place themselves above the good we can do for others: “We who are strong must bear the weaknesses of the weak and not please ourselves. Therefore, let each one of us please his neighbor in what is good for edification” (Rom 15:1,2), following the example of the self-denial of Christ and also of the apostle Paul: “Imitate me, as I also, of Christ”. (1 Cor 11:1)

Doing good things to show service or showing up as well as failing to do good things for selfish reasons such as wounded pride, letting oneself be contaminated by the poison of others, does not reflect a trustworthy help to others, but an advantage for oneself, action for one's own benefit; therefore, this is not beneficence, however much it may serve others. These bad attitudes drive the Christian away from biblical standards because they reveal the person's desire to promote himself before leaders and other brothers, which is unbiblical, whatever the motivation - religious, political, ecclesiastical, etc. – because it diverts the focus from the biblical-evangelistic objective that becomes hampered by the lack of the spirituality necessary for the support of the church – the people of God in need – with regard to the financial sphere in which money is involved. Thus, a commercial environment begins to exist in the church and not a spiritual space dedicated to the practice of beneficence.

How many givers of offerings in mega temples and also in humbler churches are filled with vanity because they have given their offerings, large or small, for the shepherd to see more than for God to see, but they do not practice being humble before God because they do not recognize that God alone is worthy of all exaltation and praise. They act as if they were trying to take His own glory from God. “Don't

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think you're better than you really are. Rather, think humbly of yourselves" (Rom 12:3). The lack of humility presupposes selfishness, as it reflects a petty behavior that makes you think only of yourself and never of others, and worse, never of God! Because they say they follow Jesus, but they don't imitate his humble behavior in stripping themselves of their divinity to become an ordinary person:

Nada façam por ambição egoísta ou por vaidade, mas humildemente considerem os outros superiores a si mesmos. Cada um cuide, não somente dos seus interesses, mas também dos interesses dos outros. Seja a atitude de vocês a mesma de Cristo Jesus, que, embora sendo Deus, não considerou que o ser igual a Deus era algo a que devia apegar-se; mas esvaziou-se a si mesmo, vindo a ser servo, tornando-se semelhante aos homens. E, sendo encontrado em forma humana, humilhou-se a si mesmo e foi obediente até à morte, e morte de cruz! (Fp 2:3-8).

Said the preacher man:

Frame 22 - Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*" at 48:23m

Como é que nós nos atrevemos a não dar nada para o reino de Deus?

Source: Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Two questions: 1) Dare to give nothing: does this "nothing" mean money in the respective context? 2) What will be given to God?

Thus the word of God which is true answers him: "What shall I render to the LORD for all his benefits toward me?" (Ps 116:12). Is God talking here about "giving money" in his Church? A perfect exegesis of this verse proves that nothing we do or will do can surpass the benefits of God: money offerings, various material offerings, good works, sacrifices, a religious life, etc.; moreover, the text reveals that the only way to give to God what pleases him as a form of gratitude for the benefits received is to

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take the cup of salvation, that is, to recognize Jesus' vicarious sacrifice and the salvation he offers us.

Therefore, the faith that one receives from God is the only thing one has to give back to God in gratitude for the good he has done for him, and not money. Even in the Old Testament (OT), tithing, whose content was "food and assistance to the Levites" (Num 18:21; 28; 27:30,32), corresponded to the law, an obligation, a responsibility before God, however much it evidenced gratitude, and which, in the sense of obligation, ceased to exist with the arrival of Grace in the New Testament (NT). However, many religious leaders today abuse tithes and offerings, so what Jesus already predicted led him to utter the following exhortation: "It is written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer, but you have turned it into a den of thieves'" (Mt 21:13). Whoever takes the cup of salvation as David said – the man after God's own heart, and not just any religious man – always invokes the name of the Lord as a way of declaring his total dependence on him because he recognizes his Lordship over his life; no money can be above that. It must be recognized that, depending on its applicability, the biblical tithing can become an evil (Eccl 5:1) for both givers and recipients if it is not founded on Jesus and his teachings (Mt 23:23; 2 Cor 9: 7). It is necessary a serious and suitable clarification about tithes and offerings within the Church through studies committed to biblical truth.

God is pleased with the person who believes in him, when he believes that he is able to do much more than he asks or thinks (Eph 3:20), when he believes that there are no limits or impossible for him (Lk 1:37) and , therefore, does not depend on your offers to do something for her when she is a faithful believer. God is not pleased with the offerings of fools (Eccl 5:1), that is, those who believe wrongly, thinking that it is giving offerings that will please God without regard to the need to submit to His will and due worship.

You can give a money offering as a contribution to the kingdom of God for the question of conscience towards the needy, and also acting like the apostle Paul - who was an example for those who can work in the church without the "obligation" to



receive a salary, until he receives offerings, as the apostle Paul received. But who wants to imitate the apostle Paul? However, he himself said that it was for everyone to imitate him (1 Cor 11:1), without receiving a salary - but never with the thought that making offerings "in the church" (because it could be done in several other ways) pleasing to God, which no "professional" shepherd talks about) is acting with true gratitude, because giving money to the church, in large sums, does not mean that God is pleased with it, just observe how Jesus acts with respect to tithes and offerings in the temple and all that he says on that subject. He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the Churches (Mt 11:15), not what "religious men" say to the churches! The only thing they say to listen to and seek to practice is the biblical text which is the expressed will of God (Mt 23:3), the message to believe.

For all this, how can a preacher of the word of God ask:

–How dare we give nothing to the kingdom of God?!

Anything?! Does it have to be money? And if you don't have money, there's nothing left to give to God?! And the faith, which God gave to his children who practice it faithfully day after day, is it worth nothing?! As much as it seems biblical, this discourse is not biblical, because it presents scandal against which Jesus manifested himself: "Woe to him through whom scandals come" (Lk 17:1). It is necessary that every shepherd remember what God says about the scandalous (Mt 18:7) and turn from bad exegesis.

What, in fact, pleases God? Look:

Holocaustos e oblações pelo pecado não te agradaram (Hb 10:6). Tem porventura o Senhor tanto prazer em holocaustos e sacrifícios, como em que se obedeça à palavra do Senhor? Eis que o obedecer é melhor do que o sacrificar; e o atender melhor é do que a gordura de carneiros (1 Sm 15:22). O Senhor diz: Eu não quero todos esses sacrifícios que vocês me oferecem. Estou farto de bodes e de animais gordos queimados no altar; estou enjoado do sangue de touros novos, não quero mais carneiros nem cabritos (Is 1:11). *Ora, atentou o Senhor para Abel e para a sua oferta, mas para Caim e para a sua oferta não atentou* (Gn 4.4,5).

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Why did God not pay attention to Cain's offering? How many are in the church making offerings to God with the heart and mind of Cain? Why doesn't the shepherd of the church teach his members that before making offerings (or offering their sacrifices) it is necessary to cleanse themselves from their evil hearts and correct their sins, and only then go back to the temple and make the offerings? What is the use of making offerings to God with a heart full of hatred, bitterness, resentment against a brother? The right thing is to be guided to first seek to correct your mistakes and sins and, only then, to proceed with the offerings in the church so that they are approved and accepted by God; otherwise they will be mere formalities and a show of service, as it is written: "Your burnt offerings are neither pleasing nor satisfying, nor are your offerings acceptable!" (Jer 6:20).

But, no, they let the people offer it anyway, whatever emotional, spiritual, sentimental state they are in, as long as they make the offering in money. They erase from memory the verse that says, "Let a man examine himself" (1 Cor 11:28) before doing deeds in the name of God. What holiness, what praise, what obedience to God there is in this, in this bad behavior of shepherders who instruct the people to give money, and not to give their lives as a sacrifice, that is, to give themselves to God as He pleases, in obedience to his word, before making monetary donations, because giving money is easy, but giving the purified life, giving yourself to God through self-correction of mistakes and assumed sins is very difficult, and this would hinder the increase in monetary donations in the Church, considering the time of these self-corrections! What Pharisee shepherd would want to waste time on that?! Time is short and your pocket is in a hurry!

Awake, O sleeper, foolish people who learn from the shepherds the greed they preach and they themselves preach that it is not to be greedy. A real paradox: don't be greedy, give; but be greedy, give much to receive much more. Is this from God? Stop and reflect with a heart and mind willing to learn the truth about God's will in order to make offerings in the Church that belong to God—i.e., toward necessary causes like helping the poor, taking all money from tithes and offerings and distribute in food, health care and hygiene etc., and leave the question of church salary aside

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since thank God they already have a good job with a good salary; why not work in that original way in the church of the Lord Jesus? This is what he founded the Church for and not for other purposes aimed at personal gain and financial gain!

4.3.5 THOSE WHO HAVE EARS LISTEN TO WHAT THE SPIRIT SAYS TO THE CHURCHES!

Down with opportunism within the Holy and Immaculate Church of Jesus! Enough of offerings in the church that come to belong to fanatical religious men, who are so not for Jesus, but for other interests that have nothing to do with their proposal of salvation through his sacrifice. Ask a shepherd the same way you would ask a politician if they would work for no pay, if they would accept only a modest allowance (and that would be a lot!). What shepherd is willing to serve a church where there is no tithes or pastoral salary, like the apostle Paul, and offerings are publicly distributed to meet the needs of his needy people? Only a shepherd truly detached from the love of money! I know of at least one such church and its shepherd.

See the examples in the countries of San Marino and Sweden, whose politicians are the most frugal on the planet, as deputy Per-Arne Håkansson, from the Social Democratic party, told BBC News Brazil[12] in his office in the Swedish Parliament:

Somos cidadãos comuns. Não há sentido em conceder privilégios especiais a parlamentares, uma vez que nossa tarefa é representar os cidadãos e conhecer a realidade em que as pessoas vivem. Também pode-se dizer que é um privilégio em si representar os cidadãos, uma vez que temos a oportunidade de influenciar os rumos do país.

Valentina Rossi, PhD in history from the University of San Marino[13], says that the Diarchy system through which two heads of state are elected, who divide their responsibilities, both being captains-regents – the highest position in the country – is a tradition inherited from the Roman Republic for one to exercise control over the other so that power is not concentrated in the hands of a single person.



Meanwhile, in Brazil, in 2020, the salary of a federal deputy is R\$ 33,763.00 (Legislative Decree No. 276/14 - article 1)[14] in addition to countless other perks, and the people who voted for them are who pays the country's bills!!! Take that salary and pay a federal deputy the same as a Swedish or Samaritan politician receives. Will he accept? Will he manifest the gift of representing Brazilian citizens in all their needs deprived of this huge salary?! Will acting for this sole purpose, solely for the benefit of the people, be enough for them to remain in that role?

The same is true of many Christian preachers of faith in Mammon's money and not faith in the Gospel of Jesus. Take away the wages and you will find out who is a real shepherd and who is a real politician! Being a politician and shepherd with high salaries and millions of subscribers to internet channels where you get even more profits is easy! Take it all away and found a non-profit relief church where it is Jesus who appears and not the renowned shepherd of high social status (Jhn 3:30); take it all away and act, politically, non-profit. There you will find a serious shepherd and politician. It is said that a man is truly known when he is given power.

Malafaia narrating a symbolic dialogue followed by a complementation:

Frame 23 – Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 51:52m

– Pastor, eu dou oferta simplesmente pelo ato de dar.

– Sim, trouxa, ok trouxa, eu respeito você trouxa. (...)

A bíblia faz uma analogia da oferta com a semente pra que você entenda que todo agricultor que planta quer colher. Você deve dar oferta na expectativa que você vai colher na sua vida (..) porque se você vim [*ipsis verbis*] com essa pseudossantidade, essa falsa santidade, você tá equivocado com essa sua plantação porque eu nunca vi agricultor dizer: ‘Olha, eu plantei maçã aqui, mas se não der, não tem problema, não; tá plantado aí’. É ruim, meu irmão, eu plantei



laranja e quero colher laranja, eu plantei oferta na casa de Deus e vou colher bênçãos materiais na minha vida e espirituais também.

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

It is written in 1 Corinthians 9:9-10, “In the Law of Moses it is written, ‘Do not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the wheat’. Is God interested in oxen? Or was it about us that he said that? Of course this is written in our favor! Both the person who plants and the person who harvests do their work in the hope of receiving their share of the harvest”. However, this does not mean that a person cannot or will not make his offers disinterestedly. It is credible that someone does something for someone else just out of a desire to do good without seeing who and without ulterior motives. Many people do this even out of love, with no interest in receiving anything in return, without seeking profits or benefits ahead.

In verses 11 and 12 it is understood as a right that he who works for God may receive some material reward; however, the apostle Paul makes it clear that he does not use this right in order not to get in the way of the gospel of Christ. Why “disturb” in the sense of harming? Because any kind of payment he received could become an obstacle to the spread of the gospel due to the negative judgment and bad impression that the followers would come to have and this would end up turning them away from the path of Christ. Knowing that his work in the kingdom was a duty that God had given him to fulfill, he saw no reason to receive payment in money or food, but he understood that his payment was the satisfaction of proclaiming the gospel without charging anything and without demanding his rights as a preacher of the gospel (vv. 15-18). He had his own profession which guaranteed him a salary to provide for his support and other necessities; he would never take advantage of Christian service or the position of a preacher to receive payment for his work. What shepherd today follows this example of the apostle Paul to the letter?

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Note 1 Timothy 5:17,18: “Elders who do good work in the church deserve double pay, especially those who work hard in preaching the gospel and teaching Christian. Worthy is the worker of his wages”.

God requires that ministers be paid for their work.

To those who preach the gospel, let them live by the gospel.

Providing ministers of the gospel with what they need is a God-given command.

Just as the priests in Israel were supported by their work, so the New Testament ministers were to be supported.

The text means the worker for God to receive, not the offerer to gain more because he makes offerings. In fact, this speech in favor of a large collection of offerings at the time of the offertory in services aims at the following: the more offerings, the more profits. In addition, the right guaranteed by the word of God to those highlighted above does not give them the right to take advantage of their right to keep asking for more and more offerings, forcing the delivery of tithes to increase their pay and distorting the biblical text to guarantee financial return.

In other words, a self-serving preacher is understood to mean this: "Make offerings out of interest in getting it back, not out of pure interest in giving without expecting a return". It is not about having the God-given right to receive the fruit of the planting, but prosperity theology specifically teaches giving with a view to return – this erroneous objective upsets the meaning of the biblical text regarding tithes and offerings that are exploited in such a way contrary to the expressed truth of God. The things of God must not be so, but give out of disinterested love, unselfishly; give with one hand without looking at the other.

Pseudo Sanctity?! False holiness?! (at 52:20m) – Malafaia uses a quasi-persuasion argument against those who offer disinterestedly, intending to force his listeners to believe that the good and true is to offer with a view to profitable return, and that the



believer who acts contrary to this understanding is pretended, false believer - distortion of meanings, antithetical proposition. It is necessary to be aware of his words that omit the real meaning they propose and confuse careless minds: "For as Eve was deceived by the snake's lies, I am afraid that your mind will be corrupted and you will abandon the sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (2 Cor 11:3).

How many give an offer without wanting anything back, for the simple fact that they want to help, without any interest, and then don't even remember that they helped, they offered?! How many do God's work, praising, teaching, preaching, without charging anything for it? How many literary ministers write for the glory of God out of the simple desire to transmit what they have received by divine inspiration in the hope of seeing the reader converted to Christ, and if earning from the sale of books is a mere consequence, but never the main reason? See what he said:

Frame 24 – Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*" at 53:06m

Não está aqui alguém que quer contar uma vantagem pra vocês; não está aqui alguém que quer contar uma coisa pra dizer que eu sou bam-bam-bam na área: Por favor, irmãos, *eu sei tudo de semente*. Tudo de plantação é comigo mesmo.

Source: Excerpt from the video "*Uma vida de Prosperidade*". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

So now it's someone's turn to answer that it's not bam-bam-bam either, and they can't say it's bam-bam-bam because, in fact, it does God's work without any financial interest. If he doesn't believe that people can do good for others without interest, it's because he doesn't do it himself. He doesn't believe that people can do good to others without interest because he doesn't believe in that possibility himself!



Therefore, he vehemently declared, "I know everything from seed". Do you even know?! Considering the different Bible versions for comparing two Bible verses, see what is written about someone behaving like a know-it-all:

Table 25 - Comparison between the highlighted verses in different versions

1 Timothy 6:4	1 Corinthians 8:1b,2
A21 – “É arrogante e não compreende nada, mas delira em questões e discórdias acerca de palavras”.	A21 – “O conhecimento dá ocasião à arrogância, mas o amor edifica. Se alguém supõe conhecer alguma coisa, ainda não conhece até o ponto em que é necessário conhecer.”
ARA – “É enfatuado, nada entende, mas tem mania por questões e contendas de palavras.”	ARA – “O saber ensoberbece, mas o amor edifica. Se alguém julga saber alguma coisa, com efeito, não aprendeu ainda como convém saber.”
ARC – “É soberbo e nada sabe, mas delira acerca de questões e contendas de palavras.”	ARC – “A ciência incha, mas o amor edifica. E, se alguém cuida saber alguma <i>coisa</i> , ainda não sabe como convém saber.”
NAA – “Esse é orgulhoso e não entende nada, mas tem um desejo doentio por discussões e brigas a respeito de palavras.”	NAA – “O conhecimento leva ao orgulho, mas o amor edifica. Se alguém julga conhecer alguma coisa, ainda não conhece como deveria conhecer.”
NBV-P – “é orgulhoso e nada entende. Esta pessoa tem um interesse doentio, provocando discussões acerca de palavras, que acabam em inveja e cólera, e que só conduzem à difamação, a acusações e suspeitas malignas.”	NBV-P – “Esse tipo de conhecimento traz orgulho, mas o amor edifica. Se alguém pensa que sabe todas as respostas, está apenas mostrando sua própria ignorância.”



NTLH – “Essa pessoa está cheia de orgulho e não sabe nada. Discutir e brigar a respeito de palavras é como uma doença nessas pessoas.”	NTLH – “Esse tipo de conhecimento enche a pessoa de orgulho; mas o amor nos faz progredir na fé. A pessoa que pensa que sabe alguma coisa ainda não tem a sabedoria que precisa.”
NVI – “é orgulhoso e nada entende. Esse tal mostra um interesse doentio por controvérsias e contendas acerca de palavras, que resultam em inveja, brigas, difamações, suspeitas malignas.”	NVI – “O conhecimento traz orgulho, mas o amor edifica. Quem pensa conhecer alguma coisa, ainda não conhece como deveria.”
NVT – “é arrogante e sem entendimento. Vive com o desejo doentio de discutir o significado das palavras e provoca contendas que resultam em inveja, divisão, difamação e suspeitas malignas.”	NVT – “O conhecimento traz orgulho, enquanto o amor fortalece. 2Se alguém pensa que sabe tudo sobre algo, ainda não aprendeu como deveria.”
TB – “este é cheio de orgulho e nada sabe, mas delira acerca de questões e contendas de palavras, das quais se originam invejas, brigas, calúnias, suspeitas injustas.”	TB – “A ciência incha, mas a caridade edifica; se alguém pensa que conhece alguma coisa, não a conhece ainda como convém conhecer.”
VFL – “essa pessoa está cheia de orgulho e não sabe nada. Ela tem mania de discutir e brigar por causa de palavras. E destas coisas surgem inveja, desavenças, insultos, desconfianças.”	VFL – “O conhecimento nos enche de orgulho, mas o amor fortalece. Se alguém pensa que sabe alguma coisa, de fato ainda não sabe como deveria saber.”

Source: YouVersion Bible. 1 Corinthians 8 and 1 Timothy 6.

So pay attention to all this text in 1 Timothy 6:3-10 (A21) under the heading “The dangers of covetousness”, pondering other titles in different Bible versions like “The

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false teachers and the dangers of riches”; “General exhortations and advice”; “False Teachings and True Wealth”; “The Love of Money”:

Se alguém ensina alguma outra doutrina e discorda das sãs palavras de nosso Senhor Jesus Cristo e da doutrina que é de acordo com a piedade, é arrogante e não compreende nada, mas delira em questões e discórdias acerca de palavras; dessas coisas nascem invejas, brigas, calúnias, suspeitas maliciosas, disputas de homens de entendimento corrompido e privados da verdade, que imaginam que a piedade é fonte de lucro. De fato, a piedade acompanhada de satisfação é grande fonte de lucro. Porque nada trouxemos para este mundo, e daqui nada podemos levar; por isso, devemos estar satisfeitos se tivermos alimento e roupa. Mas os que querem ficar ricos caem em tentação, em armadilhas e em muitos desejos loucos e nocivos, que afundam os homens na ruína e na desgraça. Porque o amor ao dinheiro é a raiz de todos os males; e por causa dessa cobiça alguns se desviaram da fé e se torturaram com muitas dores.

Frame 26 – Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*” at 53:39m

Se você obedecer os princípios que você acabou de aprender... [*ipsis verbis*]

Source: Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

Just learned from whom? Obey the principles you just heard from whom? Principles exegeted[i] by Malafaia man, enthroning the theology of prosperity. When biblical principles are not understood literally, there is a strong tendency to give them the most convenient interpretation.

Furthermore, in order not to be deceived by false prophets (Mt 24:24), the principles to which one should heed are: a) to guard against manipulators of the word of God, i.e., false prophets as preachers of false doctrines – those that have no biblical basis (Mt 7:15; Col 2:8), and b) learn to discern spirits. So, more important than bargaining with God for a robust financial life is asking God to give you wisdom and spiritual discernment that refer to the main gifts a Christian should seek from God. (1 Cor 12:8,10)

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The manipulators of faith lead the faithful to believe that "it is in giving that we receive", contrary to the biblical principle that God makes it rain on the just and the unjust and makes the sun rise on the evil and the good (Mt 5:45), have mercy on whom he will (Rom 9:18) and bless whom he will, regardless of man's actions. No one has to give in order to receive; if God wants to bless, he will do so unconditionally, for he is not limited to human whims as many church leaders are declaring: "I determine the miracle of financial prosperity in your life; tithe, give bountiful offerings, and you will see your financial success". What about the rich and millionaires who aren't Christians, don't believe in God, and don't give tithes or offerings in churches? However, it is written, "Do not be angry because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who causes artifices to come to pass" (Ps 37:7 - King James). Furthermore, who determines everything is God; no man has any power to determine anything that is beyond his limits. When man acts feeling like a god, determination becomes a heavy load that only Jesus can carry, freeing him from it (Mt 11:30). This human determination is very dangerous when it involves spiritual aspects. It is urgent to be very careful with this "I determine!"

4.3.6 WHAT COMES FROM ABOVE?

This renowned preacher in the media, who has the art of rhetoric, presented these principles with great ease, in an apparently indisputable way, based on the theology of prosperity that, by the way, is on the rise, but does not correspond to what comes from Above, i.e., of God. Because? Look:

1) Does the bible talk about prosperity?

Yea! Here are some verses: Ps 1:3; 23:1; 128:2; Pr 28:25; Jer 29:11; 2Cor 9:8.

2) Does the bible say that it is God who gives you strength and ability to generate wealth?

Yea! — Deuteronomy 8:18.

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The emphatic particle “is...that” means that it is God *who* strengthens and enables a person to acquire wealth and not tithes, offerings, alms, etc. That is, acquiring wealth depends on God's liberality in giving it to man, and not on man's liberality in giving it to the church or anyone else. Do you see how a word game changes the meaning of sentences? This is how prosperity theologians arrange their speeches, which are not preaching!

3) Does the bible say that the blessing of the Lord is what enriches?

Yea! — Proverbs 10:22.

Again the presence of the emphatic particle “is that”, meaning that the blessing of the Lord is what enriches the person and not tithes, offerings, alms etc. That is, for a person to become rich depends on God's blessing and not on human actions or resources. Malafaia used an entire cult to teach how to get rich at the expense of voluminous offerings when the Church of Christ should strive for the preaching of the Gospel and its sound doctrines for the spiritual edification of the faithful; The teaching of the Bible must never be replaced by any other means that detract from the divine purpose of salvation for all mankind. Scriptural truth in all respects and for all purposes is irreplaceable. There are no resources that can supersede God's means to give his people what he knows meets their real needs. This technique of “catching the eyes of the people of God” based on poorly explained biblical texts, such as the abundant reward through tithes and offerings whose true content is not properly taught in churches, is unchristian, unbiblical, and can lead to many to stray from the Way and to be deceived: “Woe to them! Because they walked in the way of Cain, greedy for gain they threw themselves into the error of Balaam, and were swallowed up by death in the rebellion of Korah” (Jud 1:11).

The issue in evidence here is with regard to encouraging an anthropocentric faith to the detriment of a Christocentric one, so instead of leading people to convince themselves of their sinful nature and seek regeneration to achieve salvation, they use churches as sources of income or of profits and advantages both financial and social

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status (when we talk about spiritual benefits it is only to soften the weight of this truth), leading churchgoers to the same interests, diverting them from the main objective for which Jesus gave his life ; this is relegated to a secondary plane.

4) When a person believes in the Lord Jesus and is transformed by the gospel, does that person prosper?

Yea! – Php 4:11-13.

The Bible says that he who loves God is prosperous, for he learns from him to be content in any situation, having much or little, being big or small. Being prosperous is not being financially rich. Having prosperity is not having financial wealth. There is a lot of confusion in the use of this term and its derivatives.

Not every believer will be rich in money, but he will certainly be rich in the abundant grace of God upon his life, for God promises to give to those who love and obey him and trust in him everything they need, that is, the required. It's not necessarily everything you want, but everything you need that can help with needs, that's prosperity. Prosperity theology advocates even use these words, but their practical application diverges from what they say because they always emphasize financial return.

How can prosperity be understood without being exclusively from a financial perspective? For example, instead of spending money on alcoholic beverages that only lead to traps, instead of investing money on addictions, on compulsiveness, on acts of momentary pleasure with lasting and harmful consequences like perverted sex or adultery, instead of engaging in useless things, a person, Christian or not, will prosper by acting contrary to these behaviors. Like this?

A person who invests his salary in profitable things, no matter how big or small, will be prosperous, because he is acting with rationality by investing his money wisely, without wasting it on futile or harmful things. This attitude opens the door to the path



of prosperity – assurance of inner peace, family peace, spiritual peace, emotional peace, peace in every way. This is prosperity!

So, if prosperity is something beneficial, where is the problem with prosperity theology? The answer lies in the question: Does prosperity theology preach biblical principles exactly as described? For example:

a) Does anyone become rich because he became evangelical, since many miracles are found in the gospel?

Many confuse prosperity with God's blessing, as if limiting biblical truth, for there are rich-poor and rich-poor. Was Jesus rich-poor or poor-rich? Was the apostle Paul rich-poor or poor-rich? The fact of being financially poor does not prevent a person from being rich in virtues, from being spiritually rich, so that he will be able to enjoy many gifts from God with few financial resources.

The measure of a person's poverty or wealth is not in his material possessions, in the goods he has, in his bank account, but in what he is, in what he does, and, even stronger, in how much he fears God. A financially rich shepherd who does not fear God since he does not explain the sacred text according to biblical truth, even with the aggravating factor of negatively influencing his listeners – sheep of the kingdom of God who can get lost in the middle of the fold – is a poor shepherd spiritually, poor in communion with God.

Unlike the apostle Paul who, in the midst of his financial poverty, influenced the entire world with his words of faith based on the truth of the gospel as it is, free from intentional exegesis. If he had to go through the sieve of prosperity theology, he would certainly be reproved for being considered a failure who didn't grow financially because he "made something wrong, didn't follow right what was taught in the church by the shepherd" who, by the way, is financially successful. "It's his fault and not the shepherd's, nor the doctrine received. He who did not know how to properly apply the teachings received".

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This is the rhetoric of prosperity theology speakers for those who cannot stop being financially poor no matter how much they give at church, no matter how much they take out loans to offer at church, no matter how much they withdraw credit card amounts to offer at church, no matter how much they take from their own salary to offer in the church amounts that they will need later, no matter how much they make vows to offer large amounts and fulfill them, no matter how much they obey the instructions of their shepherders to make offerings in the church. Is this what God teaches in his word? Does the word of God support the fallacious hermeneutics of prosperity theology?

b) Does someone become rich by giving the church a large cash offering, based on the argument that the more a person gives, the more he will receive?

If you give little, you will receive little; if you give a lot, you will receive a lot", as preached by many shepherders (pastors?!), unscrupulously taking advantage of the sacred text where it is written: "Whoever sows little, reaps little; whoever sows much reaps much" (2 Cor 9:6).

God repays, but one should not do things with this interest. May the receiving of God be something natural and not premeditated. May the person be generous and not calculating! That is why it is written, "The Lord looks at the heart" (1 Sam 16:7). What is the heart of prosperity theology adepts in the face of this biblical truth?

Understand the real interpretation of the sacred text in 2 Corinthians 9. Contributing is equal to sowing seeds: if you plant 3 seeds, you will reap 3 fruits. When planting or offering, a person receives more from God to be able to offer even more because God is pleased with his self-denying attitude, with total detachment, with liberality (Ps 112:9). This attitude reveals that the person has no interest other than helping those in need, helping the church to help those in need; receiving from God will be something natural and not based on the understanding that giving will receive. From the moment a person is going to offer, bearing in mind that he will receive even more,



he is no longer liberal and has become self-interested. It has already lost the virtue of disinterested offering, it has already lost the sense of liberality (2 Cor 9:13).

Liberality is not giving with the intention of returning, but giving without the intention of returning, so that it does not fit the malafaica orientation that “if you give liberally, you will earn even more; if you give a lot, you will gain even more” – the meaning of the conditional adverbial subordinate clause loses its virtue compared to the meaning given by the main clause. Where is the liberality in that? Liberality means generosity, that is, detachment from money that is revealed in the attitude of a person who offers something or an offering in the church “without expecting anything in return”; does not make an offer seeking greater financial return.

Therefore, the issue is not necessarily the financial return, but *the vision* of this return, the intention of this offer, the motivation to make this donation in the church. That's the problem!!! Where is there prosperity in that? Where is there detachment in that? Where is there liberality in that? In other words, misinterpretations of the biblical text are clear, in the face of erroneous and tendentious exegesis, very far from what the text really wants to mean. Do not fool yourself!!! The true Christian can ask God for the gift of discernment of spirits so as not to be deceived by false prophets, who use the word of God at will for their own convenience, usurping the true meaning of the scriptural texts.

c) Can church givers experience the multiplication of their money through bargaining with God?

Just because Jesus multiplied loaves and fish does not mean he has to multiply his money!!!

In this religious context, not of pure faith, but of petty interests, the miracles of multiplication (2 Kgs 4:42-44; Mt 14:20-21; 15:36-38) which many take advantage of to strengthen the theology of prosperity that so much defend with nails, teeth and fallacious arguments are never explained in the light of the real biblical purpose: the salvation of humanity by the power of God who, as incarnate Logos - Jesus, is the

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Bread of life (Jhn 6:33-35) that it ends physical, spiritual, emotional hunger – it gives life to the world that receives it as living food that satisfies all needs by faith. Needs are not vanities; are needs. This is what many are unable to understand and still rely on bad interpreters to deceive them about the true practices of Jesus, his reasons and his goals. Why, then, do they not teach this truth, that being in communion with God one has all that one "needs," nothing but what is necessary; what is necessary is what is necessary and with that one must be content (1 Tim 6:8); however, who is prepared to hear this truth and feel fully blessed by God?!

The truth is that if God wants to give more, beyond what someone already has, he will do it regardless of offerings or any service done in his kingdom with ulterior motives. Furthermore, God is not an insurance agent who is invested in for profit, nor is he a waiter ready to serve us at the snap of his fingers. God is not obligated to multiply anyone's money for making large or small offerings. God blesses whomever He wills regardless of His actions (Rom 9:18; Mt 5:45).

Finally, if someone is in the church with these thoughts of receiving and receiving more and more, whoever goes to church for blessings instead of going to seek the Owner of the blessing, in fact has no intention of being with God, but only to explore God. He who has these wretched aims has already received his reward (Mt 6:2)—those who make offerings to appear before “religious” men (those who claim to be servants of God, but are servants of the pocket; slaves of base metal, but not of Christ [1 Cor 7:21-23]) and those who make offerings with the paltry intention of raising profits on top of the offerings - and you cannot serve God with that mind and that heart, for that is not in keeping with the purposes divine, but with the idolatry of mammon (Mt 6:24).

Biblical faith is trusting God and not receiving gifts (Jer 17:7). Being blessed is a consequence of faith and communion with God.



Frame 27 - Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*” at 1:00:17h

Panhei um dinheiro emprestado (CDC) pra trazer pra igreja porque eu não tinha...
na campanha que nós fizemos aqui. (...) [Deus falou para ele:] A sua semente
frutificou na sua vida.

Source: Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*”. Silas Malafaia Official
(2018)

Argumentative answer:

First he says that after offering nothing good happened to him except a debt that lasted until the following year, and after some time it began to bear fruit, because only later did he learn that what is planted today has a time of maturation. That is, you will offer today, but he is not guaranteeing that you will harvest tomorrow; there is only promise of prosperity, but no guarantee of immediate prosperity. Don't have money to give? Take out a loan to do so, because in time you will reap the rewards. Although with him it happened differently according to the report of the second experience below:

Malafaia remembering an experience:

Frame 28 - Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*” at 1:03:25h

Mas lá no meu coração disse assim: ‘Dê a maior oferta que você já deu até hoje’. Tá amarrado, Satanás. Diabo, tu tá falando aqui dentro da igreja?! (ele ri) Capeta, sai!!! Aqui no meu coração: ‘Dê a maior oferta que você já deu até hoje na sua vida’. Eu falei: Não, não posso. ‘Você ouviu a palavra? A fé vem pelo ouvir e ouvir a palavra. Você pode crer. Você não tá apertado? Então essa é a melhor hora de você semear’. Vou fazer uma maluquice aqui. E aí eu fui me lembrar qual foi a maior oferta que eu já tinha dado no meu ministério e me lembrei que foi R\$100.000,00. Eu tô ficando maluco; a minha oferta tem que ser maior do que R\$100.000,00. ‘Uma vizinha disse: Você tem trinta dias pra efetuar a oferta’. Não,

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tem que ser agora. Peguei meu talão de cheque (...) R\$ 120.000,00; tinha que ser maior do que R\$100.000,00. Fui lá na frente, botei o envelope, o pastor orou. (...) Uma irmã me pegou pelo braço e disse assim: 'Eu e meu marido decidimos mandar R\$60.000,00 pro seu ministério'. Ela (a oferta) não demorou um minuto depois da oração. No outro dia de manhã, (...) eu abri o bilhete e tava escrito assim: 'Mês que vem, eu vou enviar R\$87.000,00 pra ajudar na compra da propriedade'. Em menos de doze horas (...) soma, irmão, R\$60.000,00 com R\$87.000,00 são R\$147.000,00 e o Espírito Santo falou ao meu coração: 'Isso é só o princípio'. Irmãos, em nome do Senhor Jesus, receba aqui essa palavra porque Deus quer fazer isso na tua vida. Deus quer que a tua semente frutifique." (1:08:47 – palmas, mas nem todos).

Source: Excerpt from the video "Uma vida de Prosperidade". Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

In the first experience, he acquired a huge debt for having decided to make an offer based on a bank loan. The mind is already prepared for him who offers and receives nothing in return like him whose debt extended until the following year; that is, the listener will think: "Oh, if it happened to him, it will happen to me; I just persevere. Therefore, I will offer, I will do the same, take a loan...". However, in the second experience he got back 147,000 by the next day. What an example! Here is an oxymoron that prepares the heart not to receive and to receive. i.e., there is no guarantee of anything, as if all your prior speech could not confirm the profitable return it suggests. With him it happened right after the offer, and the next day it was left over, but with others it may be tomorrow or a long time later, or never, depending on whether the person is doing things right or not. In fact, did he do the right thing in both experiments? This is exactly what God requires of the offerer, to make a CDC - Direct Consumer Credit, to give a check whose account does not cover the determined amount "with the egg in the chicken", i.e., counting on something uncertain, in the expectation that later "God will provide" the account value? Wouldn't

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that be tempting God (Mt 4:7)? Whenever someone acts purposefully with the awareness that he is unable to meet a demand to which he submits, but nevertheless puts it into practice in the hope that God will supply it and will forgive his foray into the dark, he is tempting God. Could tempting God be synonymous with faith?!

God really works miracles, prospers, rewards. God is the one who knows all things; people just imagine. But it is certain that God acts with each one in a personal and special way according to his omniscience and justice. The experience with God will never be a "cake recipe". On this he seems to agree, for at 59:48m he says, "I'm not telling anyone to do this; I'm saying 'I, Silas Malafaia'". Therefore, nothing better than being attentive to the voice of God about how he will speak to your heart to make a certain offer in your church. However useful and instructive a testimony may be, it cannot be followed by another person as well, unless God reveals it to his heart.

You can't go around trying to imitate the success of others, because what works for one is not always good for another or what God said to you, will speak the same for another. Therefore, as much as he has assumed that this is his position, it is still inductive. The truth is that Jesus did not use an inductive method, but made people look within themselves and not at others. Malafaia protected himself by saying that he was not ordering anyone to do the same as him, but he could have done better, guiding the church to act as follows: "This is my experience, but you must listen to what God is going to say to your heart after this message of mine; don't just keep it in mind, no. Pray and listen to God's voice, for it may be that he tells you that he does not want you to offer money in the church, but that you have another way of offering your service to him in the church or even outside it in his name; for example, doing street work such as preaching, helping in hospitals, prisons, communities, etc. It is not known exactly what work God wants us to do until we receive directly from him, God himself, the direction we should go, the way to act, the right thing to do"

It is good that every testimony ends with the clarification that it is a divine response to a manifestation of faith; May it always be to encourage faith. Let each one seek God and receive from him instruction on what should actually be done in his kingdom and



in certain circumstances in personal life (Ps 32:8). Otherwise, everyone will leave a church wanting to do the same thing they heard and the result will not always be satisfactory because it will not always correspond to what was expected. From there to disillusionment and a consequent departure from God is a leap:

Quanto a estes pequeninos que creem em mim, se alguém for culpado de um deles me abandonar, seria melhor para essa pessoa que ela fosse jogada no lugar mais fundo do mar, com uma pedra grande amarrada no pescoço. Ai do mundo por causa das coisas que fazem com que as pessoas me abandonem! Essas coisas têm de acontecer, mas ai do culpado! (Mt 18:6,7).

Little ones: not only children, but also other followers of Jesus who were “weak in the faith,” that is, people whose faith was not yet strong and mature (1 Cor 8:9). The church of Jesus is full of people in this condition of spiritual frailty and Christian immaturity so that any disappointment arising from lack of understanding is reason enough to leave the church, not the physical building, but the spiritual church that corresponds to the Bride of Christ that it is sustained by faith and not by human resources.

About 2 Chronicles 20:20:

Frame 29 - Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*” at 1:12:07h

“Crede nos seus profetas e prosperareis”. Eu sou profeta de Deus para tua vida aqui essa noite. (...) vc vai pedir um dinheiro emprestado... e vai plantar na tua igreja (...) não vou dizer pra você que vai ser na semana seguinte... você vai colher.

Source: Excerpt from the video “*Uma vida de Prosperidade*”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

I am God's prophet for your life.

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What effect can this self-entitlement statement have on a listener? It is natural to feel constrained to obey the voice of your interlocutor, especially when it comes to a shepherd preaching the word of God within the church in the midst of a service. Naturally, the tendency of the listener in this case will be to seek to obey the shepherd in all his instructions for fear of becoming a rebel against the word heard because he believes that such instructions come directly from the mouth of God into the mouth of the self-styled prophet.

However, the false prophet always tends to blame his followers for his failures. They categorically state that the fault of not getting things is always the believer who doesn't believe enough, that his faith is weak, because the words and guidelines of the shepherd are always perfect. Malafaia's argument is interesting (at 3 and 6 minutes of the aforementioned video): "The only way for you to have a life of prosperity (...) not to be lacking and even to spare is for you to be liberal. 'Hey, shepherd, why doesn't it work for me? Why do I give an offer and it doesn't work?' Maybe you don't have the right attitudes; maybe that's the reason. Today you will learn what the offer really is. What are your attitudes? Maybe you're wrong here: you even give an offer, but your attitudes are not real and correct attitudes as the bible says in the act of giving and that's why you have no result. Are you ready, honey?!"

The usual rhetoric! The fault is always of the offerer who is "accused" of having done something wrong!!! Does Jesus accuse anyone? Who usually makes accusations?

Furthermore, a person knows when he has a call from God, and that is true; a personal experience that no one can know, only me and God, and therefore no one can refute it. However, this is something that a person does not boast of, filling his mouth to declare to the world that he is a prophet of God, that he has a divine calling, because whoever has it, God knows it and anyone understands without having to say anything. So why keep trying to instill it in the minds of others if it is something that happens spontaneously by the power of God?



Frame 30 – Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade” at 1:13:10h

Eu vou emprestar pra quinze de vocês, R\$20,00, pra quem quiser, pra cada um de vocês que levantaram a mão que tá desempregado, e quando essa semente frutificar, você vai me devolver. Eu vou emprestar pra vinte, quer? Então, vem. Não tô dando; tô te emprestando. Você vai plantar essa semente (palmas). Vou diminuir pela quantidade. Tome; é pra plantar. Você não é membro dessa igreja, então não dê isso aqui agora; se você é membro daqui vai plantar agora; se não é membro daqui, vai plantar lá na sua igreja. O capeta vai arrumar mil coisas pra tu gastar esses dez conto. To avisando pra vocês: o capeta vai arrumar mil coisas pra você gastar esses dez conto. Não to dando nada pra ninguém; to emprestando. E a quem eu to dando você vai contar o que Deus vai fazer no tempo de Deus, (palmas). Eu vou emprestar pra vinte, pra quinze. Você vai plantar essa semente (aplaudem-no ao dar dinheiro para a igreja). Não to dando nada; to emprestando.

Source: Excerpt from the video “Uma vida de Prosperidade”. Silas Malafaia Official (2018)

Argumentative answer:

If he encouraged people to borrow money, it would be commendable that he had the brilliant idea of lending money to his listeners himself. They were making this deal “with him, for him, the focus is on him” – Malafaia –, a pact, an agreement with him to give it back to him after the harvest; a deal with a man and not with God.

Se vocês emprestam somente para aqueles que vocês acham que vão lhes pagar, o que é que estão fazendo demais? Até as pessoas de má fama emprestam aos que têm má fama, para receber de volta o que emprestaram. Façam o contrário: amem os seus inimigos e façam o bem para eles. Emprestem e não esperem receber de volta o que emprestaram e assim vocês terão uma grande recompensa e serão filhos do Deus Altíssimo (Lc 6:34,35).

He lends money to the church so that it can plant and, after it bears fruit, return to it what he lent it. This in itself contradicts the above biblical text. Furthermore, it is a small and sudden strategic investment to reach a much bigger objective, something

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imperceptible to the naked ear. It is necessary to be attentive, which many prefer not to go to the trouble of doing: it is easier to remain negligent because you prefer to believe that you will do well in something than to activate and exercise the spiritual hearing that reveals the truth even if it is not compatible with a momentary expectation.

Yet contrary to the sacred text, “Thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; and thou shalt only be above, and not beneath, when thou shalt obey the commandments of the Lord thy God” (Deut 28:12,13), induced many of God's people to rise up and abase themselves before the congregation in order to borrow money because they were not guided according to this word of divine exhortation, placing themselves on the margins of the word of God. Even if there is sin or error in a believer's life, there is no need to expose yourself to anyone who cannot help but God. One offered to lend, but the exhibition was in front of many who had nothing to do with the business. The preaching he should have done, he didn't. “We are not like many who make the word of God an article of commerce, who deliver the message of God as if they were doing some business. On the contrary, it was God who sent us, and therefore we preach his word in his presence as messengers of Christ in sincerity and with the authority of Christ, knowing that God is watching us”. (2 Cor 2:17)

As it is inferred from the biblical text that faith comes by hearing, it is necessary to be careful with what is heard, since, through hearing, it is registered in the mind and in the heart which does not always have to do with the message that is proclaimed by the command of Christ (Rom 10:17). This can have harmful consequences for the spiritual life before God. What would it be like to listen to the voice of man over the voice of God? It would be to fail to receive the correct direction or guidance that reflects the revealed word of God, that is, an evangelistic discourse based specifically on the biblical text without human interventions since faith does not come from man, but from God. Argumentative tricks do not reflect the essence of God's word. However, the watchful and prudent sheep know the voice of the shepherd and



know how to discern it from a voice that sounds strange. (Jhn 10:14). Their spiritual ears understand what the Spirit is saying to them, so they are not confused.

5. RESULTS

Taking into account Christian doctrines, it is necessary to ask whether they are consistent with the teachings contained in the Holy Scriptures, based on the coherence of the arguments proposed in relation to the biblical texts; there must be a harmony between what is understood and what is actually written in order not to harm the preaching of the Word of God. If a teaching is based on a biblical text, even if its interpretation does not inspire confidence because it contradicts scriptural principles, the fact that it has a biblical basis alone is enough to support the words of its sender. It is true that the Word of God teaches great truths such as healing, provision for needs, faith, and the authority of believers, but it also requires that the Christian's mind be disciplined regarding the structure of the total teaching of Scripture, not separate contexts or verses from the Bible as a whole, as an application of texts out of context, which can lead to abuses regarding the great truths of the Word of God and this will cause serious problems. (GENERAL COUNCIL OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD, 1980, p. 9)

The results obtained indicate that the observed data present divergences between what is advocated in favor of Prosperity Theology and what it assumes as biblically accepted when, in fact, there are conflicts of interpretations regarding the biblical texts. There is a degree of disagreement between these two factors that reveals the interpretive difficulties of the texts studied. This implies the need to continue the analysis of this topic since it is not limited to the specific case of the video under analysis and the texts studied here.

6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Why is Prosperity Theology not biblically accepted? Prosperity Theology?! What prosperity is this theology about? It deals only with material prosperity, which



involves financial gains, wealth, and other similar achievements, to the detriment of moral prosperity - which involves character and personality improvement, emotional prosperity - which involves the wisdom to deal with circumstances that shake emotions, sentimental prosperity – which involves the mental disposition to manage feelings well through positive reactions. The biblical text, in its entirety, seeks to guide its readers in this sense of improvement of being above material values, because it is not material riches that dignify the person, but what he is and how he reacts to the inclement weather of life, something that no money in the world can provide anyone. As Rossi (2015) says, this type of theology produces a type of society in which the only values are convenience and profit, where people know the price of everything but do not know the value of anything, where things are loved and manipulated people. The Bible inspires people to apply the law of being over having, but Prosperity Theology runs counter to that principle.

Prosperity Theology is not biblically accepted because as described in Biblical Answers (2022) Prosperity Theology is a heresy that promises much wealth and material success to those who have faith in God; however, contrary to this statement, according to the Bible there are things much more important than material goods. This theology teaches that being a believer implies a commercial exchange so that if one invests in God, God gives back more. In addition to these words not being in harmony with the sacred text, they do not apply to the practical reality of a Christian's life, which is known to everyone. Among the various misconceptions found by Vinicius (2021) in Prosperity Theology, considering that prosperity is a priority of the gospel contradicts the biblical truth that the main message of the gospel is to present God's plan of salvation to humanity that is corrupted by the sin. The biblical text itself corroborates this truth when it emphasizes that if a man loses his soul, it will be worthless to gain the whole world (Mk 8:36). Thus, Vinicius (*ibid.*) says that if it is necessary for someone to go through earthly difficulties in order to gain eternal life, God will not prevent them from happening. Therefore, it is concluded that Prosperity Theology is an unbiblical theology.



It is easy to talk about Abraham's prosperity as Malafaia speaks in the video being studied at 38:20 m, and to want to enjoy material blessings and Abrahamic riches, but very hardly anyone wants to experience Abraham's experience when he received from God the order to kill his own son. (Gen 22:2). How many cannot deliver even a small commodity, a transitory good, let alone a being as precise as a child!

It's easy to talk about Job's prosperity, but hardly anyone wants to experience Job's experience of resisting and persevering in faith in God despite all the suffering and all the anguish and all the pain and all the loss he experienced.

Many preachers desire to have the respect and admiration of the prophets of God, the apostles of Jesus, the true men of God for the revelations and authority they received from him, as well as many others besides the biblical characters, but no one wants to pay the price they paid to be what they were (and what they are).

It is very easy to wish for the happiness that is now seen in someone's life, but no one wants to go through what he went through to get there.

Prosperity theology is concerned with talking about prosperity and the joys that come from it, but not the sufferings that precede it. Being a Christian naturally presupposes the acceptance of conquests, but also of painful experiences, because man will not live by bread alone, as Jesus Christ said, in whom every Christian should look up as the first example, in addition to being guided to give thanks for everything, i.e., for any circumstances of life (Mt 4:4; 1 Thes 5:18).

The rewards of planting can occur in relation to this present life, eternal life, or both. What the apostle Paul wants to emphasize with regard to the law of sowing is that Christ's believers give freely, which means not being tied to any kind of selfish action like giving in order to receive much more in return, which would be an act of covetousness, something that diverges from divine commandments. Therefore, he does not intend to manipulate believers into giving much in order to receive much more, but he intends to establish the truth that you reap what you sow and in the same proportion as regards the return of what you practice. This is not specifically

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linked to issues of giving money to the church, but mainly to what is done for the sake of the harvest in the kingdom of God concerning what is given or offered as the virtues described throughout the sacred text for the reaching of souls, and that doesn't just involve money, but spiritual, emotional care, through the voluntary donation of the word of God to the needy heart.

The true believer needs to give himself without reluctance, with good will, his offering being a volitional act (2 Cor 9:7), and not by pressure, constraint or compulsively under the carnal mentality that he has to give in order to receive. God himself is not pleased with such an attitude. How many in this moment of offer in the church do not have to give and feel constrained by shame, feeling of inferiority? How many have to give and do so solely for the sake of earning even more? How many do so out of fear of the biblical quotations from Malachi 3:11, Joel 1:4 etc, which many preachers in defense of the tithe take advantage of, who frighten the faithful with the threat that they will be robbing God, despising his commandments, if they do not? They do not properly teach about the difference in the application of tithing in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, a subject so vast and so rich to discuss the virtues and disadvantages arising from the way in which its practice is developed.

When money is contributed in the church under this bad orientation, it is an involuntary form of donation, of surrender, when your heart would like to do it in another way such as donating directly to the poor in the community, to a relative in need, but ends up giving there what he wanted to give to another, which would have the same effect before God; in doing so, you would certainly be doing God and pleasing your heart more than forcibly giving to the church to please the shepherders out of guilt or fear of condemnation—embarrassment elucidated in 2 Corinthians 9:7. The truth in all of this is that no Christian believing in Christ should succumb to the forged words of shepherders who distort biblical teaching on the issue of tithes and offerings for self-interest because they target the church as a source of profit. It is the voice of God that must be listened to and not the voice of religious men who are guided by traditions, religiosity and legalism. These things do not match the saving and liberating grace of Jesus who does not enslave the believer

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for fear of condemnation as insinuated by shepherders who resemble in some respects what God called Terror-on-all-sides. (Jer 20: 1)

What has been planted with the intention of reaping what? God knows the intentions of every heart (Pr 21:2; Rom 8:27) and is not mocked: he who sows to the flesh reaps what comes from the flesh (Gal 6:7-9). How is the sowing of evangelical shepherders developed, through speeches, corresponding to which doctrines? Many speeches are based on unbiblical doctrines such as prosperity theology that does not deal with faithfulness to the biblical text in terms of its true meaning according to its contexts, considering the differences in application concerning the times of law and grace; they intend to continue practicing the religious law of tithing to the detriment of the gospel of grace - the practice of obedience to the law as a consequence and not as a cause - with the vile purpose of material enrichment to the detriment of the spiritual.

However, whoever could teach correctly about these dispensations does not do so for his own benefit: the new takes advantage of the old in what is convenient, disregarding the principle of lawfulness in which not everything is convenient (1 Cor 6:12) as the tithe which is biblical, as far as the time of the law is concerned, but which is not appropriate in the time of grace, since Christ has already fulfilled the law in all senses, that is, in its ceremonial, civil and moral aspects. Continuing to preach the obligation of tithing is the same as crucifying Christ in all the services that carry out its lifting. Not teaching properly about tithing is the same as incurring the sin of omission by failing to do what the word of God instructs to do; they fulfill the ceremonial precepts of the law, neglecting to be faithful to the rules of God's love, justice, and mercy which are eternal, just, and indispensable (Mt 23:23; 2 Cor 9:7). Unfortunately, many show themselves to be obedient to Christ, but, in fact, they do not accept his words of blessing and, therefore, they are not healed and remain in error and sin, risking their own salvation and threatening the salvation of others who are unable to discern its teachings.



The Christian empowered by the grace of God perseveres in being pious through a good and useful speech whose virtue can strengthen and cure the believer of various evils, always willing to do what is appropriate according to the sacred text in its fullness based on wisdom, power and authority of God through the unceasing supplies of his grace. So, as true spiritual Christians whose attitudes faithfully correspond to divine ordinances, they preach the word of God to the needy, weak, bitter, as a medicinal act that no money can buy. Their various God-given gifts and ministries provide hope of abundant provision to believers in the life-giving gospel of Jesus.

God has grievances against his people who tolerate in their midst doctrines that diverge from his truth, leading his people to stumble into various kinds of sins: worshiping strange gods as images, attachment to mystical objects as protective amulets, greed for money within the church itself as collection of tithes and offerings to supply the leader's own pocket, sexual immorality such as fornication and adultery and similar actions (Apoc 2:14). Through certain actions they provoked the wrath of the Lord, and therefore a plague was poured out among them (Ps 106:29). Those who do not believe the message according to God's will for them stumble, who disobey it, who do not heed the word of God, for that is what they were destined to (1 Pet 2:7,8). God is God and from him emanates all power, so his justice falls on everyone who does good or evil. And it is necessary to understand that this justice is established according to the actions of each one who is responsible for their own actions (Ezek 18).

The servants of God who work in the church should keep the knowledge of God for the people to learn his laws, guiding them as suitable messengers of the Lord who announce his truth. However, they leave the ways of the Lord, leading many of his people to embark on evil paths, to fall into sin. They break God's covenant by disobeying him by inadvertently preaching his word, so that all break the divine truth as recorded in the Holy Scriptures. Thus, they do not accept reproof and, consequently, do not have the capacity to rebuke anyone who deviates from the word of God. (Mal 2:4-9)

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It is because of man's evil deeds that God sends his destroying angel, and not because he has failed to offer money in the church, but those evil deeds may punctually refer to offering with the interest of profit in return, of receiving more in return, and not as gratitude to God for what he has already received or for the disinterested feeling of helping others and thus being pleasing in God's eyes. All these things happen to people as object lessons to warn them against their practice, to serve as a warning to God's people, considering the end times according to the biblical text. (1 Cor 10:8-13)

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APPENDIX A – BOOKS OF THE BIBLE AND ABBREVIATIONS

Table 1 - Old Testament and New Testament Books

BOOKS OF THE BIBLE AND ABBREVIATIONS	
OLD TESTAMENT	NEW TESTAMENT
Book /Abbreviation /Chapters	Book /Abbreviation /Chapters

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Genesis	Gen./ Ge./ Gn.	50	Isaiah	Isa./ Is.	6 6	Matthew	Mt./ Matt.	2 8	1 John	1 Jn./ 1Jh n./ 1 J.	0 5
Exodus	Ex./ Exod .	40	Jeremiah	Jer./ Je./ Jr.	5 2	Mark	Mk./ Mrk.	1 6	2 John	2 Jn./ 2Jh n./ 2 J.	0 1
Leviticus	Lev./ Le./ Lv.	27	Lamentat ions	Lam./ La.	0 5	Luke	Lk./ Luk.	2 4	3 John	3 Jn./ 3Jh n./ 3 J.	0 1
Numbers	Num. / Nu./ Nm./ Nb.	36	Ezekial	Ezek./ Eze./ Ezk.	4 8	John	Jn./ Jhn.	2 1	Jude	Jud. / Jd.	0 1
Deuteron omy	Deut. / De./ Dt.	34	Daniel	Dan./ Da./ Dn.	1 2	Acts	Acts.	2 8	Apocaly pse	Apo c.	2 2
Joshua	Josh. / Jos./ Jsh.	24	Hosea	Hos./ Ho.	1 4	Romans	Rom. / Ro./ Rm.	1 6			
Judges	Judg. / Jdg./	21	Joel	Joel/ Jl.	0 3	1 Corinthia ns	1Cor. / 1 Co.	1 6			



	Jg./									
	Jdgs.									
Ruth	Ruth. / Rth./ Ru.	04	Amos	Am. / Ob.	0 9	2 Corinthia ns	2Cor. / 2 Co.	1 3		
1 Samuel	1Sam ./ 1Sm. / 1 Sa./ 1 S.	31	Obadiah	Obad. / Ob.	0 1	Galatians	Gal./ Ga.	0 6		
2 Samuel	2Sam ./ 2 Sm./ 2 Sa./ 2 S.	24	Jonah	Jon./ Jnh.	0 4	Ephesians	Eph./ Ephe s.	0 6		
1 Kings	1Kin gs/ 1 Kgs./ 1 Kin./ 1 Ki./ 1K	22	Micah	Mic./ Mc.	0 7	Philippian s	Phil./ Php./ Pp.	0 4		
2 Kings	2Kin gs/ 2 Kgs./ 2	25	Nahum	Nah./ Na.	0 3	Colossian s	Col.	0 4		



	Kin./ 2 Ki./ 2K									
1 Chronicle s	1 Chr./ 1 Chr./ 1 Ch.	29	Habakku k	Hab	0 3	1 Thessalon ians	1The ss./ 1The s./ 1 Th.	0 5		
2 Chronicle s	2 Chr./ 2 Chr./ 2 Ch.	36	Zephania h	Zeph./ Zep./ Zp.	0 3	2 Thessalon ians	2The ss./ 2The s./ 2 Th.	0 3		
Ezra	Ezra/ Ezr./ Ez.	10	Haggai	Hag./ Hg.	0 2	1 Timothy	1 Tim./ 1 Ti.	0 6		
Nehemia h	Neh./ Ne.	13	Zecharia h	Zech. / Zec./ Zc.	1 4	2 Timóteo	2 Tim./ 2 Ti.	0 4		
Esther	Esth 1/ Est./ Es.	10	Malachi	Mal./ Ml.		Titus	Tit./ Ti.	0 3		
Job	Job./ Jb.	42				Philemon	Phile m./ Phm./ Pm.	0 1		
Psalms	Ps./ Psal	15 0				Hebrews	Heb.	1 3		



	m./									
	Pslm. /									
	Psa./									
	Psm.									
Proverbs	Prov. / Pro./ Prv./ Pr.	31				James	Jas./ Jm.	0 5		
Ecclesiastes	Ecc1/ Eccle s./ Eccle ./ Ecc./ Ec.	12				1 Peter	1 Pet./ 1 Pe./ 1 Pt./ 1 P.	0 5		
Canticles	Cant	08				2 Peter	2 Pet./ 2 Pe./ 2 Pt./ 2 P.	0 3		

Source: Monica Conte Campello (2020)

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 - i. In Greek, **lepton** – the lowest value coin among the Jews at the time of Jesus.
 - ii. **Exegeted**: Any term into which the biblical context is injected with forced or intentional exegesis. Neologism created by Mônica Campello.

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