

Joy in the Lord Part 2: Joy for the Helpless

February 12, 2023

Matthew 5:3

There is no one in the kingdom of God who is not poor in spirit. Verses 3-6 is the tearing down of human pride and raising up God's righteousness and renewal. Being poor in spirit is being "spiritually helpless."

>>What is the interaction between being poor in spirit and joy?

Joy of Helpless Glorification: a future sinless body and dwelling with the Father. I possess the Kingdom of Heaven (KOH) now. The KOH is the Kingdom of God which belongs to God and is coming to reign on earth. We are blessed now with an incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven, 1 Peter 1:3-4. A kingdom has a king, citizens, and land. Both spiritual and physical blessings are ours now and later (Matt. 5:5) (Eph. 1:3 (now) and Matt. 6:10 (later)).

Joy of Helpless Sanctification: The Beatitudes are not a list of things to do to receive God's favor. The Beatitudes (V3-12) are an outline of characteristics to pursue as a believer.

A) Basic description of spiritual poverty: authentic spirituality, completely impoverished, a deep understanding that God doesn't need us. We come as beggars and spiritually bankrupt.

B) Detailed description of spiritual poverty: desperate need: Is. 29:19, afflicted, bowed down, humble. Complete brokenness: Is. 61:1, broken heart, the shattered heart. Jesus came to heal the sick (Mk. 2:17). Requesting mercy: Ps. 10:12, ask for help. Understanding godliness: Ps. 25:9, God teaches the humble. Kingdom qualification: Ps. 37:11, Matt. 5:5, inherit the earth. Eternal separation: Ps. 147:6, the humble are lifted up, the wicked are cast to the ground. Future exaltation: Ps. 149:4, God beautifies the meek and afflicted with salvation. Trembling fear: Is. 66:1, God is God over all the heavens and earth.

Litmus Test for Spiritual Poverty: believing yourself to be spiritually worthless, rendered useless, spiritually handicapped, depraved, without good, Rom. 3:10, Ps. 14:3. It is coming face to face with God and realizing how wretched I am. I am dead (Eph. 2:1). Both righteous and unrighteous will bring glory to God on the Day of Judgement. Spiritual poverty: the tax collector of Luke 18:13, Paul counting all his previous' life as rubbish, Phil. 3: 3-8. What is our joy? That God has made us alive who were dead, by His grace and in love. God gave us spiritual poverty so He might turn to Him and receive salvation.

Joy of Helpless Mortification: mortification is to take down, crush, kill. For the follower of Christ, to change our behavior from pride to poverty. Not in false humility. We need to properly view God and ourselves, Is. 57:15. Peter realizing the greatness of Jesus in Luke 5:8. Paul saw himself as weak, fear, and trembling, 1 Cor. 2:3. Jesus sought the will of His Father, John 5:30, 14:10. Jesus' prayer life showed His reliance on His Father. All power for anything and everything comes from God.

How do I Strive to be Poor in Spirit:

- 1) Set a time for self-evaluation: consider your ways, Hag. 1:5, Ps. 119:59. What parts of my life are not fitting for God's presence? How impatient and frustrated do I get with others? What about my sharp tongue and selfishness and always wanting to get my way?
- 2) Change your mind: change thoughts while meditating on Scripture. Esteem others, do nothing with selfish ambition, Phil. 2:3. Be like the Father: Rom. 12:14, 16, 18, & 20. 1 Pet. 4:8, have fervent love for others and be humble when confronting sin, Matt. 18:15.
- 3) Repeatedly repent in prayer for not being poor in spirit.
- 4) Intentionally draw your mind to the glory of God. a) how does each text in Scripture point to the greatness of God? b) What attitude or words would give God glory?

Further Discussion and Application

Striving to be poor in spirit will be an effort that will require great changes in our lives. What will need to happen with our speech? What about our bad habits? How do we change our selfish desires in order to put on Christ and behave more like Him?

What increase in humility will be needed to overcome the sin of pride in your life? What will have to change about the ideas and opinions that you have about yourself? What things immediately come to mind while listening to this sermon? What needs to change about you as you listen to the Word of God?

Read Romans 12: 14-20. What attributes of God are on display in this passage? What attributes of yours will need to change to see and act in a godly manner to those outside of the body of Christ and inside the body of Christ?

How does fervent and genuine love for others allow us to cover the sins of others? How can we be gracious to those who are growing in Christ and learning truths of Scripture? How is God patient with us as we learn more about Him? How is the wonderful gift of repentance necessary as we walk through life and realize that we have so many faults?

John the Baptist was the greatest prophet, heralding the coming of Christ at the time of Jesus ministry beginning. John realized His need to decrease and for Christ to increase. This is also a pattern in life that we must see. How do we decrease? How does obedience to God and His Word properly align our hearts to be humble and become poorer in spirit?

What are some examples that we have seen in our church and in our lives of those who are poor in spirit? These examples would think nothing of their status or position in the church and demonstrate love by service to others? How can we imitate their behavior? Ask them why they do what they do?