

Blessed Are The Poor In Spirit

by Hendrik Joubert

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, must be the greatest preacher and teacher of all times. Could any words be more important than those uttered by the One **who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness?** (Romans 1:4) The One who with the authority from Jehovah declared: **"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."** (John 14:6)

Every word coming from His mouth should be considered with the utmost reverence. (Hebrews 1:1-2; 2:1-4) Yet the Lord did not fill football stadiums, but rather emptied them. (John 6:66-68) His words did not flatter the masses. The most effective and only Reverend to ever walk this earth was killed by those He came to save. Over the ages mere men have been manipulating His words by subjecting them to their interpretation in an attempt to *broaden* the way (Matthew 7:13-14) and arrive where they wanted to go, only to find out too late it is not where they were *convinced* they were going. **"Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?'²³ 'And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'** (Matthew 7:22-23)

Consider the significance of what we have come to know as the sermon on the mount, an actual lecture by the Son of God. What about the very first thing Jesus said when **He opened His mouth and began to teach them...: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."** (Matthew 5:2-3)

Man's ego is the single most dangerous obstacle in claiming the gift of salvation made available by a gracious God. The average person seems to have an instinctive drive to feel good about *self*, and many will have *interesting* ways to compensate for (self-imposed) feelings of inferiority. Our concept of *self* is just that, what we think we ought to be, and what we actually perceive ourselves to be. Unfortunately this image is dictated by the world, rather than the Bible, which contains our Creator's views. (2 Timothy 3:14-16) **Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.** (James 4:4b)

The most important opinion is that of God, what He thinks of "me." Nothing else matters. Whether people consider one's intelligence limited because of an absolute faith in God does not matter at all. Jehovah created us for His own pleasure and knows our purpose.

Herein lays the simple key of salvation by faith – accepting what God says without modification of any sort. Any tampering reflects upon the position of God. What man is superior in knowledge, or in power in order to pass judgment on God's Word in this way?

Recognizing our inferiority must be the most important step for man to take on his way to restoring his relationship with God; to become a citizen of **the kingdom of heaven**. The following principle voiced by James may be found throughout the Scriptures: **Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.** (James 4:10)

Instead of humbling themselves, most men usurp God's role by exalting themselves, often declaring themselves to be *anointed* spokespersons for Jehovah, while they seem blissfully ignorant of the fact that ***the faith*** was ***once for all delivered unto the saints*** (Jude 3) by means of the gifts of the Spirit, which stopped after serving that purpose. (1 Corinthians 13:8-13; James 1:23-25) Christians are to ***contend earnestly*** for this ***faith*** as they find warnings against false teachers, preachers, prophets, apostles and even christs in 26 of the 27 books of the New Testament. In this regard Paul writes: ***If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment.*** (1 Corinthians 14:37)

It is easy to have others in mind when we speak of these things...the Jews...Joseph Smith...Ellen G. White...those who claim to be Jehovah's Witnesses...the denominations – everyone except *me*, and *us*. How much of what you believe is based upon what you established by ***searching the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.*** (Acts 17:11; Romans 10:17; Romans 14:22)

True exaltation can only come from the Creator. In the opening statement of His personal sermon the Son of God proclaims: ***"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*** Exalting comes from God at the ***proper time: Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,*** ⁷ ***casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.*** (1 Peter 5:6-7) We need to humbly close our mouths long enough to hear what the Lord asks of us...