

Call to Obedience #486
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Searching for the Bottom

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First, let us observe the obvious. Everything has a bottom—except for the triune God. By the word “bottom,” I mean that everything has a beginning, a foundation, a base upon which it is built. Second, the bottom of something is generally hidden—its beginning is often lost in the sea of forgetfulness. Naturally speaking, seeking for the bottom of something is not a popular sport. Instead, we like to look at those things which glitter, or at those things which stand out high and strong, or at those things which give us instant or quick gratification.

But Jesus was a “bottom man.” He was intrigued by bottoms; He was fascinated by bottoms; He preached about bottoms and the beginnings of all things. His interest in things that are at the bottom is reflected in these following words of His: *Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock* (Luke 6:47-48).

The interest that Jesus had for things at the bottom is also seen in His answer to the question: “How then shall we live?” He gives it to us in the Sermon on the Mount. Here He makes the first Beatitude the foundation of everything else by saying: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven* (Matt. 5:3). In other words, you have to go through being poor in spirit in order to fulfill the rest of the Sermon on the Mount. Indeed, that makes the Sermon on the Mount look like an upside-down pyramid.

Yes, *blessed are the poor in spirit* (the humble) is the foundation when it comes to living, growing and prospering in His kingdom. Without that poverty of spirit (humility), all other attributes of the Sermon on the Mount are out of reach. And following are three excerpts from my daily devotional book, [Abiding in Christ](#), on this subject of humility without which Christianity will not work.

HUMILITY: the Key to Revival

God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (James 4:6). This verse tells us what God assists and what God resists. It tells us who God can work through and who He cannot work through. This verse reveals to us to whom God gives a tail wind and to whom He gives a head wind.

Since God is against the proud, you will never find the Holy Spirit in any person who has pride in his heart. Likewise, the Holy Spirit is hindered in His work in any church that takes pride in her accomplishments, growth, doctrine, denomination, mission, or educational programs. A church may call the finest evangelist and the best musicians to hold revival meetings, and everything may be planned to the highest standard of excellence, yet pride will prevent revival. Pride *always* prevents true revival. Pride in the midst of all this excellence will be as a fly in a glass of milk, making it unfit to drink.

Oh, how we need a baptism of humility. How we need to clothe ourselves with the apron of humility just as Jesus did when He washed the disciples' feet. Men take pride in religious accomplishments, in their bloodlines, in their heritage, in physical strength and in good deeds. We must not have pride in anything, because *pride goes before destruction...* (Prov. 16:18), and Paul said *that no flesh should glory in His presence* (1 Cor. 1:29). Remain humble, and you will find the Lord helping you all the time and in everything.

HUMILITY: a Garment of Excellence

Again, Peter said that we must *...be clothed with humility...* (1 Peter 5:5), and that means we must be meek. We must give God all the glory. We must realize that whatever good we have or do is by the grace of God.

Those who are clothed in humility have the favor of God, the power of God and the blessings of God. They have strength to do what God wants them to do. They are the ones whom God is working through to accomplish His eternal purposes.

The hands of pride cannot hold on to the gifts of God. The hands of pride are weak, and this is why destruction follows wherever there is pride. The proud cannot hold on to the revelations of God. They cannot hold on to prayer and endure. They fail in the Gethsemanes of life.

Joseph was a man of great humility. Because of his humility, he was able to hold on to the Lord, the dreams of the Lord and the revelations of the Lord. In the end, this humility brought Joseph into a position of great favor with Pharaoh and with his brothers who had once despised him.

The power of God is with those who are humble. The blessings of God are with those who are humble. The wisdom of God is with those who are humble. The kindness of God is with those who are humble. The compassion of God is with those who are humble. The revelations of God are found in the hearts of those who are humble, and the hands of those who are humble are indeed the hands of God. Clothe yourself with humility, for it is indeed the garment of excellence!

HUMILITY: an Ornament of Grace

By humility and the fear of the LORD are riches and honor and life (Prov. 22:4). Humility is the way to all that God has prepared for us before the foundation of the world. Humility will never fail. Humility is not a loser. Humility can be kicked around, knocked about, abused, slandered, shot at, falsely accused, spat upon, pressed, pierced through, crucified and buried. All of that can happen, but humility will never die. It is indestructible. Each time, it will rise up to resume its journey where it has left off.

Humility took Joseph from the pit to the palace. It took Moses from being an arrogant court official to being the meekest man on the face of the earth. It took Jesus from the throne of His glory into the deepest depth of servanthood. It took Paul from the self-righteous ranks of the Pharisees to becoming the chief architect of Christian theology.

Humility fights no battles, yet it wins all wars. Humility does not defend itself, yet it is never defeated. Humility seeks nothing for itself, yet it has everything it needs. Humility rests at the foot of the cross, yet it touches all of the universe. Humility in the hearts of men is what causes angels to wonder and God to smile. Humility draws grace, forbearance and forgiveness from the throne of God through prayer, and converts them into Christlikeness. Yes, humility is the garment of excellence but also an ornament of grace.

In summary, when we depart from humility, we lose our Christian foundation as Jesus warns us that a house without a foundation will fail in the storms of life, *...and the ruin of that house was [will be] great* (Luke 6:49). Rejoice in humility, embrace being poor in spirit, and you will flourish during every circumstance of your life.

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