

Humility (VIII): Humbly Leaning on God

I. Humility Is Seen in One's Humbly Leaning on God

1. 1 Corinthians 2:1-4, Paul emptied himself

- ♦ Paul said, “... *know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.*” We know that Paul was a disciple of Gamaliel, a man of great learning, who knew the whole law, but he said that this was nothing, but he only knew Jesus Christ and His crucifixion.
- ♦ Paul was in fact a man of courage and straightforwardness. He used to persecute the church and take the decrees and arrest the Christians, but he said, “*I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling.*”
- ♦ **Paul's humility was especially manifested in the fact that he was a man who relied humbly on God, not on his rich learning, and not on his eloquence.** Paul led them, not with wise euphemisms. **The proud man was very good at using wise euphemisms, very skillful, very methodical at convincing others or refuting others.** Pauls is not like this. He said, “*my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.*”

When will the power of God be revealed? Only when I realize my weakness and my nothingness.

- ♦ Oftentimes, because we are too powerful and use our natural wisdom and intelligence too much, God's power cannot be manifested. The Chinese church in North America is the best example of this, **although it has the most masters and PhDs, it is full of problems, but the indigenous people in Africa have little learning, but the power of God is often manifested there.**
- ♦ I heard that it is especially difficult to be a pastor in North America because there are so many masters and doctors there. You have to make them feel knowledgeable or entertained. If they know what you are going to say after listening to a few sentences, they will leave. Therefore, the pastor is under great pressure, and he must desperately try to have more learning and knowledge, and he must use wise and euphemistic words in order to face the believers.
- ♦ **Natural ability, intelligence, and wisdom are the greatest hindrances to God's work.** Many pastors and preachers often have many miracles and wonders manifested in Africa, but when they return to their own churches in America, **they are not manifested because the whole church and the believers are too little dependent on God.** Sometimes believers become the pressure of the pastor, and the pastor keeps trying to please the believers. **The Corinthian church was a church with all kinds of knowledge and gifts, but Paul did not use plausible words of wisdom among them.**

- ♦ Some people say that to preach the gospel to the intellectuals in China, because they are very intelligent people, you must know all kinds of science, archaeology, history, and the connection between Chinese culture and the gospel, and let them know from all aspects that there is a true and living God. In fact, when you face this type of person and argue with him using what he knows, you will end up debating with him. Do not talk in plausible words of wisdom, but only know Jesus Christ and him crucified.

2. It is easy to lean on our experience rather than God

- ♦ The woman of Song of Solomon, she leaned on her beloved in every way. She kept on leaning on the Lord, and the power of her beloved was manifested in her.

Therefore, whether we are preaching, leading worship, leading meetings, serving as hostesses, serving as organists, evangelists, or visiting, **we should not rely on our past experiences and think that there is no problem, I have already been trained.** Instead, we need to come to the Lord with an open heart and ask Him to do the work, “Lord! Teach me what I should say during my visit.” If you often rely on the Lord this way, He will be able to do the work. This is how a humble person would behave.

- ♦ A truck driver from the Philippines took seven attempts to pass his driver’s license test. Because he was good at driving, but he didn’t know that some of his habits and techniques were violating the rules and laws of American traffic. We too, **with our natural wisdom, are violating the laws of God’s kingdom.**
- ♦ For example, cab drivers from Taiwan almost always have to take the U.S. driving test several times before they pass it, because too many driving skills are absolutely forbidden by the American examiners, like his overtaking skills may be the reason for not passing. **If we are naturally strong, knowledgeable, and sophisticated, God blocks the proud, and we will encounter God’s blockages everywhere. But a person who is humble, modest, and dependent on God is often blessed by God.**
- ♦ **It is easy to rely on our experiences, and our past experiences often become a point of stubbornness and pride for us.** For example, **if others do things differently than I do, we keep telling them to change, to be like me, and if they don’t accept it, we get upset** and even say, “Fine! If they don’t listen to me, forget it! I’m not going to do this ministry anymore.” Or we don’t listen to what others tell us, thinking, “What do you know?” Because we are so experienced, we don’t listen to others with an open mind.
- ♦ **Pastor Miller said, “The previous revival is often the biggest obstacle to the current revival” because we feel that the Holy Spirit did this in the last revival, so I know I should do this for the Holy Spirit to be poured out. We will not humbly rely on the Lord. But the Holy Spirit often does new things.**

God loves to do new things. Unless we often pour out our past experiences and successes, and we are willing to humbly rely on God, to look to Him, and to ask Him, it will be very difficult for God to do new works in us.

- ◆ Sometimes we have had some failures, so we know that this must fail, but in fact not. Another person who is doing the same with different motivation and mentality would succeed. Sometimes you fail not because you do it in a particular way, but because you have the wrong motivation inside.

Therefore, the humble person shows that he is able to empty himself, **often forgetting his past successes or failures**, and trying to lean on God with an open heart every time.

3. John 15:5-6, The life of the branches and the vine

- ◆ Jesus speaks here, *“Apart from me you can do nothing,”* and today we received some training and felt we can do it on our own, and that is our pride.

Brothers and sisters, **when you think you can do something and do not lean on Him with an open heart, pride begins to come out, and this is the thermometer that tests us.**

- ◆ Once, when someone wanted to beat Paul, he said that he was a Roman citizen and that you could not beat him without questioning him. But he did say this on another occasion. He must have been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to say that he was a Roman citizen so that he would be beaten and then sent to prison in order to save the family of the jailer.

Paul was so open-minded in his dependence on God. If we were him, we would have thought, “No! This is the cry of Macedonia. It is not God’s will that we are locked up. I must tell the citizens of Rome, so that I can get out and work for the Lord.” But Paul didn’t. God didn’t want him to speak, so he didn’t. He was beaten and imprisoned, and he was beaten so badly. **This is humility, walking in the footsteps of Jesus, not daring to do or say anything, but totally relying on the Lord.**

- ◆ God often tells us to fight the unsure battle and to trust in Him with an open heart. The whole Bible talks about this. And when you are questioned, do not be forewarned of what you will say; in due time I will tell you, and the Holy Spirit will guide you. **Jesus said that you should not take money with you when you go out to preach, because He doesn’t want us to feel confident in our missionary work because our pockets are full of money, and not to trust God with an open heart.**
- ◆ Of course, this does not mean that we should not have plans for our lives, **but** that even our plans should be made in dependence on the Lord, not by setting Him aside and making our own plans.

4. 1 Samuel 17:41-49, David humbly relying on God.

- ♦ Goliath was a proud and arrogant man, who relied on his shield and his tall body, and on powerful weapons, but this young man who came to challenge him was like a child in his eyes, and Goliath belittled the young man by not carrying a sword or a gun. So Goliath became restless and cursed David by pointing at his god there.
- ♦ David said, *"You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts."* And he said in verse 47, *"and that all this assembly may know that the LORD saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is the LORD's, and he will give you into our hand."* **A humble man knows that the victory or defeat of a battle is in the LORD, and it is in His name that I will trust.**
- ♦ There were so many tall men in the army of Israel to face Goliath, yet they were afraid, and no one could defeat him. But to a man who trusted God with a humble heart, God defeated the enemy in such a simple way—by throwing a stone in his forehead and killing Goliath—which our mind cannot understand.

In the heavenly way, God prepares His people for the way of victory, that is relying on God in all things with an open heart, and God often defeats the other side suddenly in ways you would not expect.

- ♦ God has painted this picture for us to see. Are you going to be proud and arrogant like Goliath? Or are you going to be humble and lean on God alone like David? Two ways of living: God tells us that the one who humbles himself and leans on Him alone will win because when you are humble, it is God who will fight for you; but when you don't lean on Him humbly, but try to convince and defeat the other side by your eloquence and words, you will always be in a battle of words.

II. Conclusion

- ♦ Humility is not weakness. Humility is full of the power of God. When you humble yourself and lean on the Lord with an open heart, God becomes your wisdom and intelligence, and He teaches you what to do. And when you lean on yourself, you get worse, but when you let go and lean on God with an open heart, you are humbled. The Lamb, who is called the King of kings and the Lord of lords, reigns on what you care about and what you fight for. So you must first humble yourself as a lamb and lean on Him with an open heart.
- ♦ Ask the Lord to help us to be willing to trust God always with an open heart, which is true humility. Humility is to rely on God with an open heart, to rely on God with fear and trembling. You don't have to tremble every day, but you have to know that unless I rely on God, I can't do anything! I must realize that I have nothing, I can do nothing, I am nothing, and I can't face this without the Lord! I

can't face this without the Lord! If I am always so humble, recognizing my own weakness, recognizing that I am a created being and that I must rely on the Lord who made me, that is humility! **Therefore, humility is a practical action in life. A humble person will naturally rely on God in everything in life.**

Humility (VIII) Assignment

1. The Corinthian church was a church of all knowledge and gifts, but what was Paul's attitude in shepherding them?
2. Have you ever listened to someone and thought you knew what they were going to say? If so, did you then continue to listen carefully to what the other person had to say?
3. When you preach the gospel to others, what aspect of the truth do you favor?
4. Is there an area in which you are particularly experienced that you often forget to rely on God?
5. When you go to a new place, do you look at the map before you go out? Have you ever gotten lost because of it?
6. When you are working with someone and they do something that you are experienced in, if they do it differently than you, do you keep asking them to change to your way? Would you not take it personal if this person did not want to change?
7. Have you ever been a little stubborn about something, not taking what people say or suggest seriously?
8. The victory or defeat of the battle is all about _____.
9. Have you ever relied on the name of the LORD alone and He fought and won for you?
10. Scripture memorization: 1 Corinthians 2:1-4, John 15:5.