

Humility (X): Everything is Received

I. *"For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? ..."* 1 Corinthians 4:7

- ♦ A person is very proud and not humble because he does not realize that everything he has is actually received.

1. King Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel 4:28-37

- ♦ In Daniel 4:30, King Nebuchadnezzar said, *"Is not this great Babylon, which I have built by my mighty power as a royal residence and for the glory of my majesty?"* Nebuchadnezzar's territory was indeed large, and Babylon was indeed gorgeous, but before he had finished speaking, God came down from heaven and said, *"Your kingdom has left you, and you will be cast out of the world to live with the beasts of the field."* And he became like a wild beast, and dwelt with the wild beasts, and **God made him understand that God reigns in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever he will.**
- ♦ Nebuchadnezzar stayed with the beast until the days were fulfilled, and he said, *"My wisdom is restored to me, and I praise God."* **He no longer spoke of my authority, but said, "His authority is eternal, and His kingdom endures to all generations."**
- ♦ Finally, he said, *"I have been established on the throne,"* which I did not earn, but was established by God, and *"the greatest power has been added to me,"* which I did not win, but was given to me by God. Therefore, *"Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, for all his works are right and his ways are just; and those who walk in pride he is able to humble."*

I hope that each one of us will understand from this story that: **"Lord! I have received everything, and what a man I have become today! I have done nothing, and nothing is by my wisdom!"**

- ♦ There is a sister who tried to learn humility. She noticed that when she is with others, she usually will lead the topic and really like to express herself. However, because she is trying to learn humility, she tried to not speak up anymore. **Nonetheless, she realized that even if she tries not to speak it is still in essence pride. Then she realized that pride is not about whether you do something or not. It is our nature as the descendent of Adam.**

Why are you proud? Because we do not know that everything we have is actually received. For example, if you are quick and others are slow, you

will become impatient; if we are smart and others can't learn anything, we will treat them with contempt.

- ◆ There is another brother who also really pursues the Lord. However, he still kept the value systems and perspective from the world. Therefore, he implicitly becomes proud of his nice job and decent salary, and he cannot help but feel contempt towards the ones with low income. Therefore, he kept repenting for that until God changed his perspective. Afterwards, he realized that the change of our lives in Christ is the only thing that is worth envying, and the life of Christ inside us is the only thing that is worth people's respect.
- ◆ The whole world is in the hands of the evil one, and what he is doing today is blowing the poisonous vapor of pride into the world, so that all the world seeks is the pride of this life.
- ◆ Anything that we are boasting of, can be just like King Nebuchadnezzar, just becomes nothing in a blink of an eye. Even though he is the king of Babylonian, from God's perspective, he is no different from a wild beast. He is as poor and as miserable as a wild beast. So God showed him, while the proud words were still in his mouth, God told him that *"this kingdom is gone from you."*

Brothers and sisters! If we know that everything is received, then we will not look at others with disdain, impatience, and contempt. This is very obvious in San Jose, because this is a high-tech place. Why is the divorce rate particularly high in this high-tech place? Because everyone is proud, and proud people find it hard to get along with each other.

- ◆ High technology requires high efficiency, and everything must be fast. If you are more competent than your boss in the company, you can act arrogantly at him! This is the kind of image that Satan is bringing to the world, and it is taking shape more and more. **But today the Lord Jesus Christ is going to get a group of people who are so much like the Lamb, full of the humility of the Lamb, but full of the power of the King of kings.** Just like King Nebuchadnezzar, after he was disciplined, he praised God and began to be humble, and he understood that everything he had today was only because God established him and gave him. He said that those who act proudly, God can lower them to humility.
- ◆ Another example, some people used to be famous artists in China. But after they came to the US, he could only try to sell their paintings on the street. So no matter how famous you were in the past, once you change countries, everything becomes useless. Many people among us have similar experiences.

- ◆ Someone may be the chief officer of the surgery department or the head nurse, and they even have maid servants at home in Taiwan. But once they come to the U.S., they cannot get a license because their English is not good enough. So they can only work as a servant at others' houses. If we humble ourselves, this is also a very noble profession, but if we do not know that everything is received, we often see that there is a distinction between noble and poor professions. Such people will have great frustration when they come to the U.S., and will easily get depressed. We used to be so proud of ourselves, and we had been so successful for so many years, and then we changed our environment and all the things in the past became useless. What do we have to boast about? What do we not receive?

What you brag about in one country becomes nothing to brag about in the other country, and this is especially true when we go to heaven! We need to learn the perspective of heaven and the values of heaven. What you boast of today on earth, you will be ashamed of in heaven. We need to know the reality of the things that we are chasing after!

2. In the book *The Final Quest*, Rick Joyner sees a vision of a homeless man and a man who is passionately serving at church.

- (1) The man who is passionately serving at church

- ◆ God said, The first person grew up in a good family, the whole family knew and loved God, and he graduated from a good seminary school, and he grew up in a very prosperous church. I gave him one hundred percent love, but he only used seventy-five percent of it.

- (2) The homeless

- ◆ God said: The second one was born deaf, he was abused and lived in an attic until he was eight years old. He was found and sent to one institution after another, but he was still abused. He grew up in this environment, and eventually became homeless on the street. I only gave him three percent of love, but he summoned up everything he had to overcome his anger, so that he would not hurt the stray cat. Then God gave him a gospel booklet through someone else, and after the homeless man read it, the Holy Spirit opened his eyes and he was converted. He loved God very much, was very faithful. He was so poor, but he spent more than half of his earnings to buy gospel booklets and distribute them on the streets. So God said that he was faithful to what I had given him, and he overcame everything to become more like me. He was filled with gratitude when he found

a thick cardboard box on a very cold night in which he could hide himself and sleep.

- ♦ God said, **many of my people now live in houses that even kings in the past would envy, but they never give thanks nor cherish. This homeless guy knew how to enjoy and cherish an apple more than others to enjoy a feast. Brothers and sisters! God does not look at what you do now or what you have, but how much grace God has given you, how much you have received, and then how much love you have used.**
- ♦ Some people might have a better ear to hear, but then they will lose patience with others who don't. I ask the Lord to make me see people with His eyes, so that from within I respect each one more, not by how much he has achieved, but by how much worse I might be today if I were to receive so little grace as he received. So brothers and sisters! **We need to understand, what do we have that is not received? Then we have nothing to boast about, and no reason to look down on others.**
- ♦ Some people's hearts cannot tolerate the unholiness of others because they themselves are holy; they cannot stand the lack of understanding of others because they themselves are mature and understanding; they cannot stand the lack of love of others because they themselves are compassionate and loving; some people cannot stand how others can commit such sins, so they will never accept such people again, thinking that they have failed so miserably that they can never serve God again. Why? **Because we think that we are too holy, that I have never sinned, that I am holier than him, that I am a step above him, but we do not know that I have received more grace than he has,** that we may have grown up in a Christian family, with godly parents, in a good church, so there is no temptation, no opportunity to sin. For the ones who grew up in an environment that is not as good, even though they might sin terribly, eventually if they return through God's grace, they usually have more humility from God and can better keep themselves in humility throughout their lives.

Brothers and sisters! If others commit some sins that are not acceptable from our standard, it may be because we are so proud that we do not know that I have received just a little more grace from God.

- ♦ God said to Joyner, **"A merciful heart can remove the veil from our hearts faster than anything else." "Wisdom is seeing with My perspective and not judging by appearances."**

God said, "If you had my perspective in the past to recognize that homeless man, seeing his pitiful upbringing, and brought him back home and trained him, he would become a huge blessing to many many churches." These were the most shameful moments and the most terrifying words that Joyner heard in his trip to heaven.

- ◆ Brothers and sisters! We don't need to be like Joyner and become so shameful when we are in heaven. If we ask the Lord to give us compassion and a godly perspective on people now, it is likely that the people around us that we disdain, despise, feel impatient towards, maybe the ones God will use in future, and God may use you to help them now.
- ◆ **How can we have the perspective of God? The humble man can have His perspective, for our God is a humble Lamb,** and humility is expressed in the fact that he knows that everything is received from God, and that what makes him different from others is only the grace of God, so there is nothing to boast about! May we truly don't have any boasting, contempt or any attitude of disdain inside us anymore, but knowing that, God, you have given me such great grace that I should tremble with fear.

If I notice any shortcoming at church or in any groups, that means God wants us to volunteer ourselves to supplement those roles, not for us to complain or criticize others. When we volunteer ourselves, we should also not despise others, feeling that others are not as thoughtful as I am.

- ◆ On the contrary, if I always feel that others are better, smarter, more capable, more loving, or more able to serve than me, I should not have low self-esteem either. I need to know that God makes us differently. God gave them something, but God also gave me something else! Maybe I don't have as much gift to serve, but I can worship or intercede for them. I can still faithfully intercede for everyone at church! Many people on the thrones in heaven are intercessors. It is not about whether you are a designated intercessor at church or not, but God sees you as an intercessor. Many people on the thrones in the future are the nameless ones. They might not be noticed by others, but they faithfully used any grace that God gave them. They faithfully used any love that God gave them. God sees them as kings and conquerors. When Joyner saw the homeless one seated on the throne with the honor of a king, he was greatly astonished.

3. Herod, Acts 12:1-3, 20-23

- ♦ King Herod persecuted many people at church, killed James, and also captured Peter. But God did not do anything to him. But here in verse 22: *“The people cried out, saying, This is the voice of God, and not of man; and Herod did not give glory to God; therefore the angel of the Lord punished him immediately; and he was bitten by worms, and he died.”*

Brothers and sisters! What is important from God’s perspective? When we do not give glory to God, and do not know all that we have are actually received from God, and steal God’s glory, the ultimate result will be really terrible.

- ♦ Today we must realize that everything I have is received, so that we will respect others more, see others are better than us, and have more compassion.
- ♦ We need to always say to ourselves, **“Lord! What have I not received? I am better than others in some aspects, thank you, but it is only because of your grace, I have nothing to boast about.”** This will guard our walk with the Lord.

II. Conclusion

- ♦ Paul says here, ***“For who sees anything different in you?”*** Is it your effort? It is merely because God has given you more love, and God has given you more grace. ***“What do you have that you did not receive? If you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?”*** So when we boast there, ***“I’m not like him, I’m not like that,”*** it’s because we forget that everything is received. We forget that it is God who makes me different from others, and we really need His convictions. Ah! I received so much grace! Compared to him, I think he does not love the Lord, he is not spiritual, he does not have a loving heart, maybe in the future before the judgment seat, God says he is better than me, because he grew up in a bad environment, he has tried to restrain himself, **he has done his best to love God and love people, but I have not done my best to love God and love people.**
- ♦ Brothers and sisters! Don’t look down on yourself. Even if you are not as good as others, you are at least better off than this homeless man who was deaf and unloved since he grew up in a cold, dark attic until he was eight years old, abused. But once he came to know God, he was a desperate evangelist. Joyner thought God would have said the homeless man was an overcomer, and he must have saved many souls. But actually no, he only saved one person in his life, but he did the best he could. **Brothers and sisters! You don’t need to think that I am not as gifted as He is, or that I am not as good as He is in other ways. If you keep thinking like that, there is pride inside you. You did not realize that if this is**

all that God has given you, you can just use all your might to use these things to love God and love others. I can just use all the grace I received to love and serve, then it is regarded as A+ in God's perspective.

- ◆ Pray that the Lord would give us a divine perspective so that we would not feel inferior, nor would we be proud, but we would simply be truly humble before Him. He is the potter, and I am the clay. He will make me, the clay, into a small cup, and He will make the man into a good-sized vase with all the beautiful flowers on it, all made by the potter according to His gracious will. As the book of Daniel says, everything he does according to His will; who can ask Him, *"What have you done?"*
- ◆ Don't judge by appearance. Some people are used greatly by God, but inside they are fearful and trembling, feeling that they have nothing and really relying on God. Others are not used by God, but inside they are often disobedient and arrogant, feeling that they should be used more. **Brothers and sisters! God says that true wisdom is to see with God's eyes. Use that perspective to see ourselves and to see others. We are all made into different vessels by the Potter according to His will. We are just clay, and we are to have peace in that and thank the Lord,** like the homeless man who got a cardboard box to sleep in on a very cold night and thanked the Lord. But many of us are not like that. We are so used to living in a nice house that we never thank the Lord for the nice house, and we never thank the Lord for the comfortable bed I have. We are rarely thankful, and it is all because of our pride. **So a humble person is the most thankful: he gives thanks for everything received with so much grace and so many blessings. Thank you Lord!**

Humility (X) Assignment

1. Why did God cast King Nebuchadnezzar out of the world? What was the final outcome of King Nebuchadnezzar?
2. Are there things that you do not express your opinion and do not come forward to do, but in your heart you feel that others do not do as well as you?
3. Some people are slow to respond and slow to learn, will you be impatient or dismissive of them?
4. What do you boast about in your life? Do you realize that this is only what you have received?
5. Why was God more pleased with the homeless man than with the other person who was passionately serving in the church? Did this vision that Joyner saw give you any warning?
6. Is there something that you do so well that you can't stand others? For example, you are more loving, you are more holy, you are more efficient...etc.
7. Why was Herod bitten by the worm? Are there things that you have done well but you never realized that you should give glory to God?
8. What is the thing Joyner says he is most ashamed of in his trip to heaven?
9. Do you look down on yourself and feel that you are not as good as others? Do you realize that this is also pride?
10. Daniel 4:35: *"he does according to his will...and none can stay his hand or say to him, 'What have you done?'"* He is the potter, we are the clay. Can you accept yourself? Have you ever asked God "Why is this or why is that?"
11. In what area have you received the most grace and feel that you need to be thankful?
12. Scripture memorization: 1 Corinthians 4:7.