

Breaking the Spirit of Poverty



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For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich
(2 Corinthians 8:9).

This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles (Psalm 34:6).

But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity (Psalm 37:11).

*Blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk in obedience to him.
² You will eat the fruit of your labour; blessings and prosperity will be yours. ³ Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table*
(Psalm 128:1-3).

Whoever pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honour (Psalm 21:21).

Let them shout for joy and rejoice, who favor my vindication; And let them say continually, "The Lord be magnified, Who delights in the prosperity of His servant" (Psalm 35:27)

Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers (3 John 2).

Poverty is an Attitude of the Heart

Poverty is an attitude of the heart. It comes from within. It is a development of our hearts that comes from the responses we make to the difficulties in our lives. Two people can go through the same experiences and suffer the same conditions of life and yet come out entirely different people. One can succumb to these problems and become morose, moody and bitter. The other can come through these experiences and be a successful, happy and generous person. It is not what happens to you that matters, but what you do with what happens to you.

Poverty is a Closing of the Heart to Faith

Poverty of heart occurs because we close our hearts to faith in God and its outworking in our lives. It is a closing off of generosity and forgiveness. It involves a deafness to the needs of those around us, and a lack of sincerity in our dealings with others. We tend to lack compassion and understanding and tend to ride on the backs of other people rather than hearing their cries. The mean spirit that develops from this will always see the worst in people and fail to recognise the efforts they have made in caring and helping. It focuses upon their failures and rarely congratulates and encourages others in the achievements they have obtained. It is so easy to see what people have failed to do rather than what they have actually contributed.

Breaking the Spirit of Poverty

Breaking the “spirit of poverty” requires three types of actions. The first is to acknowledge the power of poverty in our lives that would see its expression in the following attitudes and their outworking in our actions:

- A lack of giving and generosity
- A mean spirit that has been brought about by fear
- Lack of concern beyond our own boundaries, beyond our own needs

- A lack of appreciation and thankfulness
- A lack of compassion and understanding.

We need to confess these attitudes to God and ask His forgiveness. We may also need to ask forgiveness of people whom we know we have hurt through these attitudes and actions.

The second is to stand against the powers of darkness through prayer and command in the name of Jesus Christ. This prayer breaks the shackles of poverty that have held us down and robbed us of God's blessing in our lives. We should pray like this:

I come against the powers of darkness that have imposed poverty in my life and I break the shackles of poverty in Jesus name and I command them to leave me now in the name of Jesus.

The third action we need to take so that poverty does not regain control of our lives is to develop:

- A spirit of giving and generosity
- A spirit of obedience to God and His Word
- A heart that expresses appreciation and thankfulness
- A heart that responds in compassion and understanding
- An attitude to God that results in our tithing to His Church and our giving to God's purposes in the world.

The greatest danger we face in remaining free from the spirit of poverty is to become afraid and close our hearts off from God's call in our lives. We need to take seriously these five things and not to leave any one of them untouched or undeveloped in our lives. They are a package deal. It is no good being a great *tither* if we lack compassion and understanding. That was the mistake the Pharisees had made in the days of Jesus and it cost them the kingdom of God.

At the same time it is no good being appreciative and compassionate, if you then rob God of the resources He needs to develop His Church and Kingdom on earth.

Times in recent years have not been easy for all of us. We have often been daunted by the unceasing turmoil around us and wonder what hope there is for our churches in the future. Well there is GREAT HOPE FOR THE FUTURE for all of us. But we have to change to encompass that hope. Our attitudes need to be transformed from the negative ideas and ways of thinking that have bound our lives in poverty in the past. In Jesus Christ God has set us free to be free indeed. Stretch your souls to encompass all that God wants to give to you and do for you so that you may be successful and profitable servants of our God.