

Poverty of Spirit #1

by Leonard Ravenhill

The poverty of spirit is not just a lack of material wealth, but also a lack of spiritual wealth, such as character and integrity.

Duration: 1:02:32

Scripture: Matthew 5:3, Luke 6:20

Topics: "Christian Life", "Humility", "Poverty of Spirit"

Description

Leonard Ravenhill emphasizes the concept of 'poverty of spirit' as a fundamental aspect of true Christianity, illustrating how Jesus exemplified this through His life and teachings. He contrasts the first Adam's failure in a perfect environment with the last Adam's triumph in a hostile world, highlighting that true character is revealed under pressure. Ravenhill challenges the audience to reflect on their own spiritual poverty and the importance of humility, stating that true riches come from a relationship with God rather than material wealth. He encourages believers to embrace their identity in Christ, which is rooted in humility and dependence on God, rather than seeking validation from the world. Ultimately, he calls for a deeper understanding of what it means to be 'poor in spirit' and how this leads to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Transcript

While I was thinking about this this week, a new thought came to me. I don't have the years, I've read this, I guess you've read it many times too. That here Jesus is laying down, again we call the Manifesto of the Kingdom.

But in doing this, he did three things. He put himself on exhibition, because whatever he taught, they would expect it to be worked out in his life. And he put the church on exhibition, because this is what the church collectively is supposed to do.

And thirdly, he put us on exhibition as individuals. In other words, I think Jesus is saying to the people who are listening there, and saying to us, this is your checklist. If you want to know what a Christian is, here it is, it's all summed up in this.

And if they don't comply with what is written here, then question their Christianity, question their Christian life. Again, I'm tremendously impressed with this idea that came to us last week, that in the first book in the Bible, we have the first Adam. In the first book in the New Testament, we have the last Adam.

In the first book, again the man reminding ourselves that he was put into a perfect environment. There wasn't a flaw in it, there wasn't a flaw in him. And it seems from what record we have, that the first time that man was tested, he collapsed under the pressure.

In the case of the last Adam, the Lord Jesus, he came into a totally hostile atmosphere. And he wasn't just tested once, he was tested in all points like as we are, and yet he triumphs in every one of them. The first Adam sailed in one, the last Adam triumphed in every one of them.

The first Adam, God was disappointed in him, and in the second Adam, God was delighted in him. Sometimes people say, you know, I've got to watch my reputation. Well, if you have, you're in awful trouble.

I left my reputation as a cross with my sins. Reputation is what men think we are. Character is what God knows we are.

And if your relationship with God is right, it doesn't matter a hill of beans what anybody says about you. They could take the front page of the newspaper tomorrow morning in Baton Rouge, and say you're an adulterer, and a thief, and a liar, and a shady person, and you ought not to lose a wink and sleep over it, and ought not to cause you a grey hair. But after all, that's merely man's opinion.

It's got nothing to do with character. Now, I do not think that when Adam was put into the garden, he was a perfect person. And I think you understand this in saying that his nature was perfect, but his character wasn't developed.

You say something about a certain person, oh, he has a nice disposition. Disposition, she has a nice disposition. True.

There are strange things in dispositions. I know people who are unsaved, who are much nicer than lots of Christians. I think a little girl, I'm refuting this, sang a praise one night.

She said, Lord, make all bad people good, and all good people nice. I'm not wanting to pray that publicly, and I haven't the courage. But anyhow, there it is.

Dispositionally, we're so very different. But in character, you shape your own character. You make your own character.

To some people, you say, no, what? Did he say do it? Yes. Listen, he'll do it. If he has to stay up all night, he'll do it.

François told me to do that. Well, I hope he does. But, you know, he's let me down about four times, so don't build up too high on that.

Now, what is that? It's a revelation of character. The Bible again says, he that is faithful in that which he believes. Is faithful also in much.

Why did a little boy, if you like, just a boy say, well, I'll go out and fight Goliath. Well, what do you mean? What do you mean? Look at the crowd there. Look at all the enemies who lined up there.

And all your brothers are there. The king is there. His son is there.

And don't you have any nerves? I mean, you know, first time publicly, you go on to a platform. You didn't know your knees were so friendly. And you shake and wobble a bit.

No, no, I'll go do it. I mean, do you want to get rid of Goliath? Well, I'll do it just before going to lunch. But everybody's terrified.

Well, what's given you this super confidence? Well, one night I was on the hills of Bethlehem. I happened to be playing the 23rd star of my heart. I'm having a great time.

Suddenly I heard a roar and there was a lion. And I went out and destroyed him. Another night I was busy there and I heard a noise and there was a bear.

I went out and killed him. And he's saying in essence, look, if I can be a hero when there's nobody there to applaud, I can surely be a hero when there's a whole gang watching. You see, just as you say about a man, he is not a martyr because he's burned at the stake.

That doesn't make him a martyr. It reveals that he was a martyr before he got there. That man made a deal with God somewhere up the road, years and years ago, and said, Lord, this is where I assign my life and everything.

Now, when it comes to the issue, you're ready for public manifestation. And this is what David says. And he says, all right.

There came a lion. I ought to go to get somebody. Go on, boy, get him, get him.

I did once more. There's nobody there to cheer me on, but I did my job. And if I can take care of sheep like that and there's nobody to applaud, in other words, again, in the secret place, God says, what you do in the secret place will one day be shouted from the housetop.

Now, supposing it starts tomorrow morning. All you did last week in secret, would you like the neighbors to stand around while Gabriel stands on the rooftop and shouts it all out? Every deal you did, business deal, a conversational deal, over the phone, any other way, would you really like it to be manifest? You know, that's what God says, one day this is going to happen. But again, going back to the fact that when it came to pressure, when it came to a situation, we don't know how long Adam had walked with God, but it must have been very wonderful when God came down, again in the cool of the evening, and he talked with him.

And they walked together. A perfect man in a perfect environment made a perfect mess of it. Jesus comes down into a hostile world again, with the greatest military machine in the world on one side, the greatest system of slavery existing, it's, I don't know anybody tabulated it, but it's reckoned historically there were at least 6 million slaves in the day when Jesus was on earth and never preached against slavery, neither did John Baptist.

As a matter of fact, Paul is good at saying, look, you go back to your slave master and be a beacon to him. Now, true enough, Christianity abolished slavery, through Wesley and a few of the old guys there in England, even before it was abolished under the American regime. But, by the same token, this is why Jesus comes.

And again, from the very day he entered into the world, you say, you know what happened to me? I had it a lot smoother before I was a Christian. Well, good for you, I'm glad you did. It's a good sign really, where

God wants you, if you're getting beaten up on one side, and butted it on the other, and somebody else has become a thorn in your flesh, and somebody else is putting you through hell as it were.

That's a very good sign. I think you're going to make it. Only I've got news for you, it's going to get worse up the road, it's going to get more stormy.

But you see, from the moment Jesus entered the world, he'd hardly got out of his mother's womb. What happened? They passed a law, that all children under two years of age should be born. Well, the wise men had come, and Jesus was somewhere round about that age, the wise men came, they travelled maybe a year or more, and so for safety, let's get rid of all the boys, just the boys under two years of age.

From the moment, before he could walk or talk, he had enemies. A whole nation on top of him. And the last thing on the cross he had enemies, and in between he had enemies.

He had enemies in the synagogue, he had enemies outside of the synagogue, he had enemies everywhere he went. We used to think of him, in the old days, very old days, is this thy world a friend to grace, to help me on to God? You see, if you and I are only walking with God once, the world is going that way, and we're going that way. That's what it was in the New Testament, the church was going one way, the world is going the other.

Now they're so close together, you can't tell one from the other hardly. I don't think the church is any longer a thorn in the side of the flesh of the world. I don't think when they legislate in Washington, where you were yesterday, so forth, I don't think they consider the church, I don't think they do anything, not a bit of that.

Who worries, the church hasn't much money, she hasn't much power, you can push them around as you like. But it wasn't so in the early days, it wasn't so in the case, when Jesus came into the world. And again, I see him as a hero, hero.

You see, here's what happened. God was disappointed in man, he failed. He failed God.

And somewhere in the councils of eternity, when God opens the records, we're going to find that one day, Jesus sat down with his father and said, you know what father, I'd like to go down to that muddy old, dirty old world out there, and I'd like to prove that a man can live in the flesh, and overcome every temptation that's possible, and I'll come out a winner. You know, that's a fantastic thing when you think of it. If Gabriel had said it, it would be wonderful, if Michael the Archangel had said it, it would be wonderful, but here is very God of very God, equal with the Father.

Again, you don't think of the Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Spirit is not the junior partner in the garden. You don't think of them.

Father, Son, a descending scale, but rather this way, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, equal in every way, in glory, majesty, in honour and so forth. And one of the partners in the Trinity says, I'll go down to earth, I'll get wrapped up, as Wesley said it, he laid his glory by and wrapped him in our clay. Have you ever been away from home for a long while, not just a little trip to Washington, but a long while, and said, you know, it's nice to get away.

Oh, it's so nice to go back. Kay, I don't know where Kay went, but Cava went to the White House. She decided not to buy it, and so came back here.

And I guess when she came in here, she said, oh, you know, the White House is nice, but I like my house, you know. Well, how often do you think, when Jesus got up against hostility, and even his disciples let him down. Good night everywhere he was let down.

He reveals on one occasion in John 17, he says, Father, sometimes my heart aches for the glory I had with thee before the world was. He laid his glory by, he wrapped him in our clay. I don't think Amarish Shaw wrote the hymn, I think his son wrote it.

Down from his glory, ever living story, from heaven to earth he came, and Jesus was his name, born in a manger to his own estranger, a man of sorrows, tears, and agony. What condescension, bringing us redemption, when in the dead of night not one faint hope in sight, God, gracious, tender, laid aside his splendor, stooping to woo, to win, to save my soul. He didn't come to earth to be a hero, he didn't come to show us a new system of living, in one sense, he came to redeem us.

O loving wisdom of our God, when all was sin and shame, a second, that really, a last Adam to the fight and to the rescue came. O wisest love, that flesh and blood, which did in Adam fail, should strive afresh against the foe. The same flesh and blood, in that sense, God limiting himself, and Jesus living that perfect life on earth and he said, I'll go back, I'll go to the earth and I'll live the life that Adam should have lived and I'll show you what can be done.

Now again, only one temptation and Adam went down. In a perfect environment, Jesus in a hostile environment, not with one temptation, not for one day, but for 40 days and 40 nights, battling it out there in the wilderness. Talking about proving character here, he's tempted at all points, flesh, tempted as a man, tempted on sex, tempted mentally, tempted physically, every possible way of temptation.

He was tempted in all points like as we are. You wonder that a little later, when Jesus was, in fact before this, when Jesus, when he was baptised in the Jordan, you weren't concerned about the testimony even of those right about him, but there came a voice from heaven saying, this is my beloved son. And the second time that happened was on the Mount of Transfiguration.

And I remember many years ago reading a sermon that God said, this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. And he said, I just lifted my hand and said, Father, if it pleases you, it surely pleases me. If he satisfied the heart of God, he ought to satisfy your heart.

I don't care what the craving in your heart is, you find it all in him. In him dwell all the fullness. He's the personification of the Sermon on the Mount.

Out of him everything is your flow. You see, we mentioned last week again about poverty. Now there are many areas of poverty.

There's physical poverty. Some people are born terribly distorted. I saw a boy the other day, I thought what a brave guy.

I don't know, he had some disease that just disorganised his body. And one of these little independent guys that didn't want crutches or somebody with him. You know, when he moved, he needed about two yards each way.

He slithered and he slobbered like a frog. And he had a smile on his face, a distorted face. And I thought, bless you boy, you deserve a medal for, you know, for daring to go like that on your own path.

Physically impoverished. Some people are mentally impoverished. I hate to see women smoke anyhow.

And I hate to see pregnant women smoke because when a woman is pregnant carrying a child, she retards that child physically and she retards it mentally for seven years. When she smokes, carrying a child. And every time I see a woman, see some young women sometimes, we only come to town once a week.

We don't like to contact civilisation so much. So we come to town about once a week and I see these young girls in a shopping centre without anything on and there they are, look as though the baby will be born before they get off the thing and smoking away and I think, you poor clown. Handicapping that child.

The founder of the Salvation Army, William Booth, said some children are born damned and they proved the case that one woman was so heavily intoxicated in the days before they'd had artificial feeding she actually fed that child liquor instead of milk. And he said the children are born damned. It was the same with some of the gorgeous girls that came to team challenge, got messed up in drugs and everything else.

Beautiful girls and they'd taken drugs until the day before they came to team challenge. The child is born with a habit. Don't tell me, I feel like saying to all these youngsters smoking, excuse me, you're going to have a baby, yeah it's coming in a month, you don't love it, you hate that child, I'll call my husband, well, wait a minute, don't call your husband, I'm just telling you you don't love that child.

Why not? You wouldn't be smoking now if you did. They see this chronic selfishness, these habits that lay hold of people are so terrible. Now there's poverty of body, you can't always help that, there's poverty of mind.

I'd have been born with a much higher IQ if I'd had my choice but I didn't have any choice in it. I chose the best parents I could but apart from that and a child should always be careful what parents he chooses but apart from that I had no choice in my IQ. You see, so there are some poverties that you can't help.

You may be born in poverty, you don't have to stay in it necessarily. You may be mentally poor but you don't have to stay in it necessarily. You may be physically poor, you may or may not get out of that.

You may be socially poor and you may choose to stay in it. Now I'm not thinking for a minute that the hippie kids are right but there's one thing I like about them, I like the contempt for materialism. I honestly do.

Because I've talked with some of the richest kids in the country who said goodbye, kissed daddy and mummy goodbye, didn't like them. They said we'd never have any home lives, that's why. They've got big sneaky automobiles at home rusting that daddy bought for them.

They say look, I used to take the, as they say, I used to take the dolls out that we used to swim naked and nude or anyhow we wanted, we drank. Dad and mummy went to Europe for a month, daddy and mummy went somewhere else for a month. Never saw them, I never saw them.

Can't remember my mother ever putting her arms around me and hugging me and saying I love you, this, that. The nanny did it in the house. And I've seen those kids' thunder noses.

They live in three-storey high mansions some of them. Some of the daddy's, vice-president of Coca-Cola, one who was daddy who was vice-president of Frito Potato Chips. Don't want anything to do with it.

I'll tell you what, money didn't make our house happy in antiques and gold chandelier and all the rest. Now I'm not speaking in contempt of all of it, I'm saying that this, you've got to have your priorities right. And if you don't have them right, you can't buy that attention back.

A lady came to me, I was speaking in a conference. Here's a young boy, about six foot two, his hair was down on his shoulders, backwards way, I thought it was a girl in slacks. And she said, I wonder if you'd get my son on the side and talk to him.

So I said, which is his son? She said, that's a lovely look. And he turned around, marvellous face, lovely looking face. What's your problem? I don't know, he's turned hostile and he doesn't want to come home and we have beautiful home and cars and servants and everything else.

I said, well, I'm not so sure I can repair in 30 seconds what you've been tearing down maybe for 20 years but I was sure of it and I got him on one side. He said, I'm not interested in going. Never had any parents.

Dad thought all he had to do was go away and give me 50 bucks to spend for the weekend and give me 100 and let me go here, there and somewhere. I'm not interested in it. And he said, I've heard so much quarrelling.

I've heard my father angry at night over the phone. What do you mean you didn't get those bonds for me? What do you mean I didn't do it? It was eating him out. Now I said, I've got to make a choice between being eaten up by a materialistic world and living poor and living in a commune.

I'll take the commune. I'm not saying they're totally right but again you see that you've got to set your values right for sure. Now if you read this version, Matthew 5, it's not too rough.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. But if you read Luke, you'll find it's pretty jagged. He doesn't say that at all.

He says blessed are the poor. Reading the same sermon. Now listen to what it says.

Blessed are ye who hunger now. It says in the 6th chapter of Luke in verse 21. Blessed are ye that hunger now for ye shall be filled.

Blessed are ye that weep now for ye shall last. And then verse 25. Warned to you that are full ye shall be hungry.

Warned to you that laugh ye shall mourn. Now what are you going to do? You see, here you turn the thing right round. Blessed are the poor.

Well don't get too worried about that because you see, you've got something coming. You've got the riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Blessed are you who are so independent you say, well I don't need the church this, that and the other.

Wait a minute. It puts the emphasis on the now. Wait a minute.

Those of you who weep now, you're going to laugh afterwards. Those of you who laugh now, you're going to weep afterwards. Those of you who are hungry now are going to be full.

Those of you who are full are going to be hungry. We live in a model universe. You can't upset its balance.

Nobody can. Again I've said this before I guess but I say it again that I don't know of course. I don't know how you pray.

But many times when I pray I thank God for the incorruptible Holy Ghost. Those are the exact words I use. I say thank you Lord for the incorruptible Holy Ghost.

I spoke at the full gospel businessmen's convention in Denver a few years ago. I only got there once but I preached my heart out. And I said to them one night when the anointing was on the meeting I said look if you fellows could buy the Holy Ghost every man on the platform was a millionaire, a multimillionaire except David Wilkerson a man of seven.

I said if you put your checkbooks up and you drive I'll give a million. I'll give two. I'll give five.

You buy the Holy Ghost up and say he's the director he's the chairman of full gospel businessmen. But I said gentlemen I want to tell you this. He still says to you what he said to everybody else your money perish with you.

He doesn't say you'll perish because of your money. He says your money will perish. And remember you brought nothing into this world and you'll take nothing out.

Now there's a conflict all the time we're human beings we're going to be human you better make this up I hope we'll stay human till we die. And there are so many levels in our personality where Satan can tempt. In one area it won't worry a man if you talk poverty and riches.

In another area he's full of ambition in another direction. You see a man is tempted when he's carried away and he's on less the world than God said. Now there's poverty of spirit but there is a voluntary poverty.

I guess you've got favourite chapters in the Bible haven't you? Some of them you duck into this oh I like John 15 oh I like the Psalm 90 the 91st Psalm you know. OK very good. One of my favourite chapters let me just read a bit and see if you figure where it is but this is one of my favourite chapters and it's by one of the greatest men that ever crossed the bridge of time.

Let me read to you what he says here. Got in the wrong section for a moment. Alright.

He says of us giving no offence in anything that the ministry be not blamed but in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God in much patience in afflictions in necessities in distresses in stripes in imprisonments in tumults in labours in watchings in fastings by pureness by knowledge by long suffering by kindness by the Holy Ghost by love unshamed by the word of God by the power of God by the honour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left by honour and dishonour by evil report and good report as deceivers and yet true as unknown and yet well known as dying and behold we live as chastened and not killed as sorrowful yet always rejoicing as poor yet making many rich as having nothing and yet possessing all things now this disagree if you wish and I've never tried to brainwash you I'll speak my convictions if I'm going to die in a minute from now but these are my convictions here you're to make of your choice where you're going to be rich here is a man who doesn't have a penny and he says I'm poor but I'm making many rich if ever there is an illustration of a man God filled and remember that when he's at the end of the journey and he's lived if he'd had 10 lives he couldn't have packed more into them and yet when he's founded churches and he's been through hell itself and he's still saying after all the miracles he's raised the dead and done everything else and he still thinks that I may know him and the power of his

resurrection you see there's no such thing as a one baptism of the spirit that's going to last you from here to Timbuktu or eternity I don't believe that at all there is one baptism true baptism into the body of Christ when we talk about the baptism the baptism of the spirit is into the body of Christ the baptism of Christ he shall baptize you Christ shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost but there are subsequent anointings again the greatest preacher in my judgment maybe America ever had certainly the greatest revivalist and we're not revivalist anymore we're evangelist God pity us but the greatest revivalist we ever had was Charles G.

Finney and he said he had such now nobody ever preached to him about the baptism with the Holy Ghost he was a lawyer brilliant lawyer I read somewhere he was 7 foot 4 and I'd like to have seen a preacher that high watching him about 3 inches high in my judgment but he was 7 feet 4 and I'd like to have seen him and he had a brain like a razor's edge he was brilliant some people said to him one day we're praying for you he said don't bother we were praying in the church pray me he said don't bother oh you must be in bad shape don't bother to pray for me he said no you never get any prayers answered so I've no hope in you anyhow pity rough on them wasn't it he said you don't get your prayers answered don't bother to pray for me but when he became a lawyer and pardon me when he got saved he said he was walking over Boston Common I preached in that famous church on the corner of Boston Common they call it Brimstone Corner Harold Ockingay was pastor at the time now remember coming out from there and thinking of Philly walking when it was more barren than it is now and he said I had repeated baptisms I just felt somehow I'd burst with the glory of God that came over me and they were endowments of power they were fire anointings that he got tremendous inward and inward call it what you like impulsion compulsion of the spirit of God that came over him and made him do the things that he did but again you see poverty Paul said I'm poor but I make many rich you see I've no children I've thousands of spiritual children I have nothing material but I've laid up treasure in earth the church at this time was the outscouting of the earth you see again in this manifesto as I call it of the kingdom blessed are what are poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted well you know what that word blessed means Mr.

John Westbury has a new testament if ever you can still get them and it's a very good translation but he uses the word and most people copied him afterwards he takes that word blessed and he changes it and puts it out and puts the word happy in it's place which is very good now you say but wait a minute happy are the poor in spirit yeah that's true happiness we used to sing a hymn that I loved very much when I was a kid he was poor to give me treasure he was slave to make me king he was hated without measure heavens left for me to bring you see this is the only way in after the first two of these beautiful beatitudes the first two are really negative blessed are the poor and then blessed are they that mourn and the others are all positive they are all about being filled they are all about

a heart that is indwelt by peace and love and joy and so forth and so on now you can call this Warren calls it the heavenly octave there are some who break it down and say there are nine beatitudes there are others who say there are twelve beatitudes twelve is a sign of perfect government the city lies four square there are twelve gates in the city there are twelve elders the walls are 144 by something else and something else which is all twelve multiplied make it up of twelve break it up as you like I don't care it's a string of priceless pearls but then again what do you find in a group here we are a group of people do I say well David this is your beatitude blessed are the pure in heart Sue this is your beatitude blessed are the meek Kay this is your beatitude blessed are they that

mourn are they distributed among us or is every beatitude supposed to be in the life of every believer well that's what I believe now you come in this house what if you came in the house and you walked through

and you said this is a oh I've never been in a house like this twelve bathrooms all in a row and no one had to sit that would be an oddity wouldn't it or you went in and you said well I walked through here and all they have in this house is six kitchens that's a funny house I thought there would be a lounge I could rest in or something no bedrooms are funny oh well all the bedrooms are in the house next door and all the kitchens are over there you don't expect that you expect it to be fully furnished oh this is exactly what God says of us we are to be fully furnished unto every good

work you know in the gifts of the spirit it says that God gave he gives to one this gift and he gives to the other gift but he never says that about the fruits of the spirit the fruits of the spirit are all in one individual the gifts of the spirit not necessarily so now we are living in a day when of course lots of people throw the baby out with the bath water the gifts are not for the day well you tell me the day they finish I challenge you to find a theologian in the world that can tell you when the gift is finished you say well I don't think the gift of tongues is for the day anything out of the word of God your name will be taken out of the book of life but how do you take it out you do what they did in the old testament they cut some part of the word of God out one man was it who's

the old boy I've forgotten his name took a pen knife and cut it out no you cut it out by silence you can cut it out by never teaching it by never preaching it by never uttering it I just read a book part of a book this week in which a man said well of course it's absolutely clear that the prophets and the apostles ended with new testament days now I don't mind a man having his convictions as long as he's logical right through and scriptural but if he's neither I'll fight him verbally at least if not physically not physically but verbally I will if he says there are no apostles then there are no evangelists because they're in the same list if he says there are no prophets then there are no teachers because they're in the same list now if you're going to throw the whole lot throw the whole

shebang out but don't you come finicking around and say well I believe we need apostles I believe we need evangelists I'm sure we need teachers and I think we need it but we certainly don't need apostles and we don't need the prophets no come on you see if you do that you make an awful big hole in the word of God for the liberal to come along and say well brother where you finished disbelieving the bible that's where I take up so why don't we tear that whole book out between us you're making an awful awful lot of leeway for him now the scripture is quite clear as far as I again as I see it here where where the these each of these beautiful beatitudes if I'm going to be an all rounded Christian as God wants me to be then I ought to be careful in again reading this word because the word of

God certainly is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword as it's said very often almost facetiously well the bible is a mysterious book it comforts the afflicted and it afflicts the comfortable you may go along for so long and read the word and you enjoy saying I'm reading so and so this is great and then say oh wow so somebody stuck a pen in you boy that boy that scripture really hit me today I'll have to sit down and think about this or call Marianne or call brother Jack and see what he thinks it certainly becomes alive well that that's the very purpose of the word of God at times it will soothe us there's no comfort like this in fact if you're going to find it it's blessed are they that mourn a bit later on for they should be comforted you see we like the comfort but

would you choose mourning in order to find the comfort there's a marvelous in fact the whole of Isaiah is a fantastic study I think I sometimes wish I had some better commentaries on it I haven't got anything I haven't got any real good commentaries on the book as far as I can see anyhow but I like parts of Isaiah some parts more than others maybe but particularly that part where it says that God will give us the oil of

joy for mourning and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaven and it is pure nonsense I think when Jesus sat down there and the Greeks had their big ears they were going like this and the Romans were saying do you think he really is going to rule the world and everybody says he's a new king that's coming and the Jews were saying he says he's the son of God you think

of that miserable mousy crowd looking at him every day and hanging on every word and ready to jump on him for anything he said and Jesus bravely goes through with the most outrageous thing they'd ever said blessed are the poor no blessed are the kings and the rulers and the folk that have a thousand slaves blessed are the poor in spirit you don't get anywhere being poor somebody will wipe their feet on you a fellow Christian said I don't mind wiping my feet but don't rub too long well that's what hurts isn't it when you say Lord I'm humble and the Lord says well I'll try it out and somebody comes along and you say boy that's enough but when they keep rubbing rubbing rubbing rubbing rubbing you say well can't you kind of ease off a bit you know and if they keep rubbing and rubbing you find

if there's something there all right don't you but you see this is a strange market isn't it it's absolutely the antithesis of all philosophy and reasoning and so forth that men in the world have blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven blessed are they that mourn hey come on that's silly that's a paradox happy change the word not blessed but happy are they that aren't happy and mourning oh come on they don't go together well I read it to you did you pick it up a minute ago when I read that in case you've forgotten in the second chapter fourth chapter is it the sixth chapter in second Corinthians where he says sorrowful yet always rejoicing how can you be sorrowful and always rejoicing well there are two different sides of the same coin how can you be happy and

then he says happy are they that mourn you know I got in all kinds of scrapes when I was a youngster I got into scrapes never did my sister said I was in them anyhow but anyhow I got in scrapes and I got chastised sometimes and you know and I'd go and cry in a corner or feel unhappy or walk in the garden and then sometimes mother would say Ben come here and she'd give me a hug and a kiss you know I used to think sometimes boy I'm going to get into trouble again I enjoyed that so much you know I figured that that hug and that kiss and that consolation my mother gave me she didn't give me too much if I wasn't in trouble but she knew my point where I you know I was going to break my heart and sorrow too much as kids will and she'd say come here you shouldn't have done this and I'd say she'd

minister that tenderness sometimes the only way that you can really manifest the true comfort of the Holy Spirit is get beaten up by the devil because we take everything for granted you've got some poor kid now his daddy bought him a car for graduation and you'd hardly believe this it's terribly cruel and I'd hardly like to mention it but he didn't have white wall tyres isn't that awful I mean just a new car without white I mean you're embarrassed to drive the thing or as a woman said we're going to buy our daughter a Cadillac and her father says no no silly extravagance like that we're just going to buy her one of those new Chevy's you know that's punishment things are so relative as I said the other day to somebody you think things are hard we're the best fed and the softest people in

the world even today it's almost strange it makes you almost creep you know as far as we know there's no real big war in the world you'd better watch out there must be one coming you see if you talk to the man in the street he'll try and fool you that the natural the normal state of mankind is peace interrupted by war do you know what the truth is the normal state of mankind is war interrupted by peace and all you have to do is dig into history and discover it the normal condition of the world neither at enmity against each other as well as at enmity against God now I say again going back a minute there to the poverty blessed are the

poor in spirit Paul says he's poor and yet he's making many rich you know some of the it doesn't have to be this way and I'm not digging at anybody I don't

care a hill of beans if you've got your secret millions stashed away that's not the point I'm saying this that when it comes down to the facts and history you find very often that the poorest men have been the most influential men in the world many men died in poverty to produce for instance the miracle of lighting and so forth Madame Curie spent all the money and the neighbours said what she's crazy tipping pitch black at the end of the garden what she did I don't know she's after some but we thank the Lord she did it I suppose because she and her husband mainly she produced x-rays and you read the story of many of these men who are out of dire poverty and it is certainly too in the spiritual realm making money out of the things of God is comparatively as modern as a supermarket never

used to be that a preacher died with anything at all if he died with enough to bury him you thought he was rich their one delight was that they fed they fed they inspired and prepared other people you take Spurgeon Spurgeon could have died rich I suppose he put his money into orphanages he put his money into a Spurgeon's college in London Wesley could have made a fortune and died rich he turned all his money back into building Methodist churches producing Bibles producing hymn books and building orphanages just exactly what the Master taught he literally did that they lived on that very level but nobody doubts they were the richest men they were rich intellectually they were rich spiritually you see again it depends on what you are shooting for standing right here when he was here but the

Dusty said one day if you want to be rich well get ahead that's not difficult pretty easy to be rich that's not the point but it depends how much time you are going to give to being rich spiritually rich as the head of your clan head of your home head of your group head of your family true riches the other riches are comparatively easy to get particularly in a set of like ours for which we are grateful there is nothing outstanding about it do you know last year one of the toughest years in American history I read the other day there were 5,000 new millionaires last year would you believe it in one of the hardest years that we have had in our history 5,000 new millionaires don't argue with me argue with the press report if you disagree comparatively but nobody suggests we are rich morally

this afternoon and I am not thinking merely of the stock market I am thinking the greatest poverty we have this afternoon is the church of God in our nation where spiritually are poor poor poor we are in rags while we have riches we are morally poor again this summer there is going to be nudity on the beach it is already this guy said on fire island we spent the other day he said start naked on the beach an Englishman he said we are a bit nervous for the first hour there but we we had all our clothes on before the afternoon kids used to go when we were in New York where are you going today kids used to say I am going to fire island don't tell anyone go out to the southern beaches in California around San Diego has lengthened its nude beach three hundred yards another thousand feet because

the given area is over packed on a Sunday with people they don't go to church anymore anywhere else these are only signs the signs of poverty we think the signs of affluence because all the big cars are lined up but this is what eats the heart of a nation out its not material wealth that builds a nation you can only build a nation up to a certain point materially but if its rotting on the inside morally and spiritually the house is going to fall down you can't bolster it up brother if you stick girders of selling gold up you will not hold a nation you know what because God says so that's why not this crazy preacher righteousness takes over the nation sin is a reproach to any people and Paul says I am very calm she is very much aware that he is a poor man do you remember the church in the

revelation that said I have rich and increased in goods well who is the odd judge who has got the highest steeple that there is and she was rich and increased in goods the socialites went there and God turns it round and says thou art naked and wretched and blind and poor and miserable poor she is the most influential church in the circuit but God looks at it from another angle now as I say again you know whether you are poor in spirit it is easy to find out whether you are poor in spirit you say well of course I have a bit of this world's goods and that's fine I am not arguing against that I am concerned about your spiritual riches you say well I am I think I am pretty poor I know I am poor I tell God everyday Lord I am just nobody but let somebody stand on their toes and see if you are

let somebody let somebody offend you let somebody say something that is antagonistic now if there is nothing in you it won't come out as I said if you walk across this room with a cup full of water and you drink what comes out well oil won't come out water comes out what's in comes out what's in me will come out if there is anger in me anger will come out I have heard people say sometimes well it takes a second blessing to get the old tiger out of you but I was reading that famous Scottish preacher James Stewart that a lot of us know but another James Stewart maybe one of the most brilliant preachers in the world he was head of New College Edinburgh and a great authority on Greek and he says this don't talk to me about a man being saved if he still has a bad temper he isn't even anywhere

near being saved now I didn't say that he says that if any man is in Christ he is a new creation he is not patched up God isn't a tinker he is a creator when we were kids a man used to come round the street and ring a bell and mother said oh there is the tinker and he had a few pans round his shoulder and a few other things later he made some money got a donkey and cart but that's the way it goes you start in some way small and get a donkey and cart later but anyhow he had his donkey and cart and he would ring his bell and you would take a pan that was broken and he put a rivet in it and he put a patch on it and soldered the thing and so forth that was his job my mother she had some pans that had that many holes and things in you couldn't tell where one started and he said if any man be

in Christ he is a new creation he is a new entity isn't it wonderful that every baby that comes into the world is a new baby wouldn't it be awful if you could get used once you know you got one that somebody sent back because it yelled all night and so somebody else had to take it or something like that every baby that comes into the world is a new baby now the hazards of childbirth are so fantastic if you sat down you'd never have any they could be retarded mentally they could be this could be that there's a thousand different things that are wrong but you know the thing that always makes me happy is this that nobody is born retarded spiritually some children are born blind nobody is born blind spiritually if a man is the product of the atoning work of Jesus Christ if he's really born

again in Christ he can have been the biggest sinner outside of hell before that there's only I don't know that I like too much about teen childhood but there's one thing I liked about it you didn't have to tell those kids they were sinners you didn't have to preach at them and try and tell them you know you're gonna hell fire their problem wasn't knowing how sinful they were their problem was to get to believe that God could do something with a lousy wrecked up life such as they had I used to marvel at the kids that came but remember a woman that came in there with a string of degrees I looked at a brilliant woman I bet she got hooked on drugs her life was wrecked her marriage was wrecked everything was wrecked her body was wrecked her mind was wrecked but you know she got saved and began

to walk with God and in the space of a few months you'd hardly know she was the same person she was a new creature in Christ Jesus God had worked the miracle of his grace in her life and this is why as I say

Jesus here to me is saying the most extravagant thing I've ever said but he's saying it in front of all that hostility I know what you Greeks are thinking you talk about gifts of the spirit Jesus had them he said well the man said well what are you talking about he said well when you were under that fig tree I knew I knew who you were I knew about you you see some people don't have many gifts but they strut and tell the whole world they've got them other people have them and don't say much about them I mentioned George Fox before the founder of the Quakers that God told to take his

shoes off and walk through Litchfield with his hands up crying on to Litchfield our bloody city that man had discernment he had gifts of the spirit one of Wesley's men rode up a hill and he said I pursued this man and my old nag wouldn't go so well but I managed to get her going and it was a hurl you see she didn't want to go too fast and so he was trying to get her moving on and finally caught up with the man he said he turned round and he said you go back to the village and he said what do you mean he said you go back to that woman that you left in a certain time that was about 50 miles away who told you about that he said the Holy Ghost told me coming up the hill then what that's pretty risky if you go accuse a man of adultery and he hasn't done it he'll knock your head off but if he's

done it and you know God has told you you're as brave as a lion you go and tell that to that man you see here these days boy if you went down the road and say well my wife and I have been looking at your church we like it the stained glass windows and the choir robes are my wife's favourite colour we're going to join the church boy they lay the rug up and accept you with abandon particularly if you're a bit of money a bit of something else a social standing rather than gates wide open do you know the new testament was so filled with God that no man dares join himself why? because he was on exhibition look if you say that you're filled with God this is what's going to flow out of you love, joy, peace long suffering gentlemen this is God's standard now don't use standard with that

bunch because I'll tell you they're a terrible bunch when they pray they move earth and heaven really suddenly when you pray and the corporation has to repair the building well that's what happened when they prayed in the new testament church the place was shaken the tiles went off and the windows went out and everybody is scared to death well God isn't concerned what he shatters if he's going to free one of his children there's no expense account with God he says I'll get them out you pay the bill that's all there is to it but you see this was the poverty they had what you get on the day of Pentecost just after Peter and John went up to the temple at the hour of prayer why did they go? the people in the temple didn't believe a thing that Peter and John believed Peter and John didn't

believe a thing that the folk in the temple believed but they went to the prayer meeting at the hour of prayer why? there was a man sitting at the beautiful gate or the gate beautiful it tells you his age have you noticed how often the new testament tells you the age of men never women and it says he was about 40 years of age the man that sat at the beautiful gate of the temple and they carried him from his house to the temple and from the temple to his house everyday for a year that's twice 365 what's that 730 times in a year for 10 years 7300 times for 30 years 21900 times he was 40 years of age he had been at the gate of the temple you've got people in England I can remember going to London and see a man crouching at the gate of a church or somewhere and he'd go 5 years after he's

still there he'd been home once or twice but he was still there this man is carried everyday twice a day on his back he knows the time the swallows come he knows when they leave and they carry him for 30 years carried but never cured helped sure they gave him silver and gold but never healed ostentatious with the priest threw him a gold coin and the junior priest threw him some silver and he says Peter and John they

had a revival boy I bet they got a big love offering and they shout for all the people help me help me silver and gold little girl was listening to this you know phonetics can be difficult the teacher said here's a man sitting at the gate of the temple asking for arms and the girl said why did he ask for arms when he needed legs I think that's what a lot of us do we pray for

some things and we need something else we don't pray for the things we need and very often we don't pray for the things we do need oh this man must have some money Peter that's the man everybody was scared he was going at them saying you crucify them up boy I enjoyed that those old scribes and pharisees were trembling and the priest was terrified and that's the man that ran away from the girl's finger boy that's a difference isn't it a girl put up her finger and said you with him he said I'm not you're a liar no I'm not and he cursed and now instead of running away from the girl's finger everybody is scared of his finger he points the finger and said you crucify the lord of glory what happened well the spirit of god had invaded his personality and he was a god drunk man and a man who's

drunk he may only be five foot three but if he saw Cassius praying he said come on put him up he's prepared to do something when he's intoxicated and if a man is filled with god he'll do the same thing the thing may be as big as a mountain but it would make any odds to him if god has commissioned him if god has anointed him he says I'll take the whole thing Peter is filled with the holy ghost and he must have some money I mean you don't preach to a crowd like that and get no money he said give me some help Peter says listen son let me put it to you this way I have no purse but I've got power now the church has got the purse but no power silver and gold sorry I have not I may as well sit with you and beg silver and gold I have not but such as I have you see we could have turned round and

said you see this vast temple it cost millions you see the priest there in his gorgeous garments women have gone blind nearly putting designs in and that precious breastplate it was a fortune every stone is different every name of every tribe is on it and you know what son that whole bunch of them together can't do a thing for you you know they can't because you've been here thirty years waiting for it but I want to tell you something this is my buddy Peter and John you see Jesus sent the seventy out two by two and Peter and John go out together and Paul and Silas go out together and Paul and Barnabas he didn't send them out one at a time I don't believe any one man to have passed through church at least you need two men do you know why? because you can't give any credit to anybody maybe

as much one guy as the other we're idolaters these days it's all personality did you see so-and-so's program this morning did you see so-and-so's putting his stuff you don't find that in the new testament what did Peter say? well he said something that I think I've never heard anybody preach on it in my life I think it's very daring do you know he said look on us I think there's any church in town there say that today look on us don't worry we've got all you need don't worry it's dangling from our wrists and we don't carry it in a bag and we may not be the most impressive men but I'll tell you sir we've got what you need look on us and then when the miracle was done Peter says don't look on us as though we've done it you see there was no personality cult there's no building us up and say

well you know of course if ever you need anything like this always send for Peter and John I mean that is if we're not booked to a book for nearly five years but I mean if we could manage to come one night we'd drop in and see you it would be a great condescension Peter says listen I want to tell you something you know I think in his heart he was saying my god I'm glad for this hour this man's been here thirty years crippled and formal religion can do nothing about it and they say we sit in Moses seat and we have Abraham to our father you bankrupt blind poor preachers can't do a single thing I'm going to show you

something right now look sonny boy we aren't ordained by this bunch we're the outcasts the church is blessed usually when the church is an outcast I can imagine Peter saying boy

I'm going to see the glory of god manifested here and I've made up my mind I sat down and counted the cost that when god does this miracle nobody's going to put a halo on my head and worship me and thank thee for it and immediately he touched the man the man's ankle bones received strength and he leaped and he stood up and he ran down the central of the church and scared everybody to death well they used to do that in the old days I can remember early 20 years ago when I first came when I was commuting the Atlantic I've been in meetings where god would come down and before you were through folk would run the aisle and start weeping at the altar to get saved they don't do it anymore hardly but they used to do it and then the glory of god fills the temple Peter no I'm sorry I don't have any

silver or any gold and sonny on the cart you don't need it you're stacked a bit at home but you never get what you ask for now I've got what you need and it's not going to cost you nothing I didn't even sell him a healing club didn't I offer didn't ask him if he'd take the magazine for three months he just said Peter and John here we are I have nothing that's such as I have do you know what happened I've been ten days on my belly up there repenting seeking god and he's so filled me with his life that son if I touch you you'll think you've touched ten thousand volts of electricity and he touched up and as though it was galvanised alive he leapt and started leaping and praising and magnifying the lord do you wonder those are disturbances you don't get anything like that a miracle like that

without this but who did it a man that said silver and gold I have none I have nothing of myself I can't give you the material things you need but I'll tell you what you know he touched me you know it says what it says Peter lifted up his voice and then he touched the man and he lifted him up and then the man went and he lifted up his voice when he went through the I'd like to have been in that temple that day I'd have been conservative enough to shout hallelujah I'd have just jumped over the pew and said well bless god forever this old cripple has been at the gate showing how bankrupt the church is and here he is here we are we're sleeping and praising god well what did he get for it well he got thrown and sent to jail what do you think he got for it I believe before long that some of

the greatest antagonists to true I nearly said Pentecost but I won't use that word because it has a certain connotation that I'm not always think is healthy but let me say true New Testament Christianity will come back and it will get its greatest hostility from a lot of the fundamentalists not from Catholics and not from others it will get it from the stale stagnant religious Christianity of the day in which we live they'll pour contempt on it that god's going to send those kind of men but it's an awful price to pay isn't it but you see they'd live with somebody and after all as I said so often and I always enjoy saying it you may not like it but I enjoy saying it a man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument you see if you say you can't live that life they say

listen we've lived three years with a man who is everything that he preached in the sermon on the map he was poor in spirit, he was meek, he was lowly, he was humble, he was holy and he was a man and if he can live it you and I can live it now blessed are the poor in spirit blessed happy are they that mourn you you

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