

The Spirit of Jesus 4: The Path to Greatness

I. QUICK OVERVIEW

A. Poverty of Spirit

“1 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: 3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Mt. 5:1-3)

“Though God is the one that causes growth as the Scripture notes, it is through being trained in righteousness by the Scriptures, to live life by the Spirit, and do the works of the Father. This happens when faithful teaching is matched with faithful practice.”

“The calling of Elisha is very similar to our own. He has a definitive moment where he goes from merely a farmer to something altogether different upon receiving a divine calling from God. Elisha does what every disciple is called to do, he forsakes his former life and pursues the man who called him.”

B. Mourning and Meekness

“4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. 5 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” (Mt. 5:4-5)

“To Mourn: to lament, to grieve, to feel the frailty of our weaknesses. But not just to feel them, but we do this before the mighty hand of God and the word of God. It’s coming to an understanding of when we’ve missed it.”

“Gentle and lowly is who He is, and we want to be like the Son. Jesus was almighty God, He knew how much power He had, but He submitted Himself into the hands of man whom He created. What kind of meekness is that!?”

C. Righteousness and Mercy

“6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. 7 Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.” (Mt. 5:6-7)

“We can see a lot of God’s traits and characteristics based on how He relates to His people, Israel.”

“For us to be merciful, we do have to receive it. Just as we received the gift of salvation we also receive the gift of mercy.”

14 Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

D. Purity in Heart and Peacemakers

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (Mt. 5:8)

“Jesus alone is the one who makes us pure in heart, it is not something that we can achieve by good works or by our own strength. His blood is the only thing that can wash us clean of all guilt and bring us to a place of purity and holiness.”

“In order to walk in purity, we have to actively flee anything that is defiling or impure. It is not enough to just resist temptation or tolerate evil without engaging in it, we have to actively flee from every passion and desire that is not of Jesus. The only way that we are able to resist temptation and pursue righteousness is by submitting ourselves to God and drawing near to Him.”

Sydney also goes on to make the point that “Purity in heart” isn’t simply just having clean hands and a pure heart in the sense of sin. It’s being purified of anything that inhibits or stands in the way of you being fully devoted to something. That helped me a lot!!

E. Blessed are the Persecuted

“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:13-16)

“The Lord allows us to live in an adversarial environment in order to: create mature overcomers and also reward them.”

II. SALT & LIGHT

- A. Stay salty. This is a principle that requires much practice. Remaining as the “salt of the earth” and the burning ones requires much diligence and discipline to maintain and continue to bear fruit in every season. “Salt enhances the taste of everything it’s added to.” As temples of the Holy Spirit we walk as our Spirit is in continual dialogue with the Father and with authority in Jesus as intercessors wherever we go. I found myself in an employment situation amongst non-believers where I have experienced much criticism but also much notice was taken of my work ethic, demeanor, and the love I walk in. The broken-hearted, the hurting, and the oppressed tend to flock towards those that are quick to love, create safe environments, and walk in humility.

In 2019, I was the Operations Director for a Logistics company in downtown Houston. This job environment was wild. I mean WILD. We had an active professing witch upstairs in accounting, I personally endured lots of verbal abuse from my direct supervisor and regional manager, and several oppressed office mates. Now in my position and the crazy hours that we were working in this season, I had every reason to be upset and discouraged by the working conditions, but I endured. There was an unreal supernatural grace for this time. I entered the office every morning at 4am, coffee in hand, full of joy, and ready to work. Surrounded by negativity and upset employees, something about the joy of The Holy Spirit attracted them to me and created some friendships that still remain cherished to me today.

***“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet.
Matthew 5:13***

***Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.
Colossians 4:6***

This instance in Colossians is a possible reality for each of us. I believe that we can all get to the point where we're in such continual dialogue with the Holy Spirit that we will know the mind and heart of God for the people and relationship we steward.

“[Matt] 5:13 Or "Salt that has lost its flavor is foolish." Both Greek and Aramaic use a word that can mean either "good for nothing" or "foolish." If salt that has lost its flavor is foolish, then salt that keeps its flavor is wise. Rabbinical literature equates salt with wisdom. After speaking of salt, Jesus speaks of lighting a lamp. It was a common practice in the time of Jesus to put salt on the wick of a lamp to increase its brightness. The "salt" of wisdom will make our lights shine even brighter.” (Eduard Schweizer, The Good News According to Matthew, Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1975. W. A. Elwell and P. W. Comfort, Tyndale Bible Dictionary, Wheaton, III.: Tyndale House, Tyndale reference library, 2001, Lamp, Lampstand. 797-8.)

- B. This passage below gripped me in the prayer room. ***“so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”*** This simple fact that your works and faithfulness unto the Father can cause others in the house of the Lord to give thanks and glory to the Father. I've decided to make it crucial to my personal and corporate prayer life to give thanks and glory to the Father for those around me and in our city that steward the word of the Lord so well and bring great delight to Him.

This is also applicable to many of the ministries that affect our everyday lives through content and social media. I think all of us have been greatly impacted by different churches and leaders we've followed and kept up with. It's important that we see these faithful men and women, faithful fathers and mothers, and turn it into thanksgiving. Making sure our hearts remain pure in it as well not to glorify the man or the ministry, but to thank Jesus that He operates in and through them.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

- C. A key to remain salt and lights of truth to the world, is to keep with repentance. Being salt and light doesn't mean being perfect. It means to invite the grace and mercy of the Lord through confession, repentance, and renouncing any and all agreement with the enemy and the ways of the world.

Sin - To do what is right in your eyes, but wrong in the Lord's

Transgression - To do what is wrong when you know it's wrong

Iniquity - Generational wickedness

It is vital that we are correctly informed of the differences of these three and be diligent to repent when needed. Transgression is alleviated more and more as we continue to grow up in the Lord, knowing His ways, and knowing His word. The fear of the Lord is our cure to sin. Iniquity is mostly overlooked in the church. There are far too many in the Bride that are walking through life carrying the iniquity of their fathers and mothers. You will come to find this will not bear good fruit and will often make life difficult and make the path to cyclical sin very easy. But, this is something that with HS and if available, a leader in your life, you can repent of all the wickedness and renounce every wicked agreement your ancestors may have willingly or unknowingly come into.

We say “the cycle ends with me” and that we'll do better than our family and ancestors but fail to actually do the work of repentance. Repent and turn back to God. RETURN TO THE LORD. Commit your family to the Lord.

For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, “In returning[c] and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.” But you were unwilling, 16 and you said, “No! We will flee upon horses”; therefore you shall flee away; and, “We will ride upon swift steeds”; therefore your pursuers shall be swift. A thousand shall flee at the threat of one; at the threat of five you shall flee, till you are left like a flagstaff on the top of a mountain, like a signal on a hill. (Isaiah 30:15-17)

III. GREATNESS

- A. Greatness comes from a life truly abandoned to the Lord in obedience. Obedience is brought forth through The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord. And the fear of the Lord comes when we are intimate with Him. When we have spent the time to know and have a right view of The Man on the throne (EAT OF THE SCROLL).....you fear Him.

- B. Greatness in the Kingdom is cognitive recognition and response to the understanding by the Spirit that: every fiber of my being is created unto and for Him. He created you and I all for Himself, so we obey The One who knit us together.
- C. Think about the frequency and tonality of your voice, crafted that way simply because that is the voice He wished to hear. The colors and shades of your eyes, created so He could look into them. Every fiber of your being was created FOR Him. Specific qualities that He alone would find perfect delight in.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:17-20

- D. **THE FEAR OF THE LORD.** What is it?? I’ve heard it put several ways.
 - 1. It’s the “I fear what He’ll do if I disobey Him.”
 - 2. “I fear not being with Him”
 - 3. “Reverential Awe” - Chris Reed
 - 4. “The Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” I KNOW NOTHING
 - 5. Fear of dishonoring Him

I like all of these descriptors personally, but they are not to be confused with natural fear. No, it’s much more Holy than that. ***“And His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.” (Isa. 11:3)*** We fear Him because we love Him. I dare to say that with many other things in God the fear of the Lord is less to be explained and more to be experienced. Trust me, when that Man on the throne speaks forth commands and decrees towards you, and you hear Him, you will fear Him. And this closeness and fear of Him only comes through intimacy by obedience. When He speaks a decree straight from His throne and you knowingly disobey, it is to tell Him that He is wasting His words. Disobedience defiles love. So let’s obey Him. He’s gracious enough to speak to us and declare to us His commandments.

- E. Intimacy is spelled O-B-E-Y. Love is spelled O-B-E-Y. Faith is spelled O-B-E-Y. GREATNESS is spelled O-B-E-Y.
 - 1. Obedience takes practice. One practice I have been reluctantly (or more struggling to do) is obeying road laws. Which doesn’t sound overly spiritual, but as a voice in my life reminded me, “it’s good to practice obedience.” Now I’m annoyed that I get convicted and have to stop at the stop sign in my neighborhood.

2. Ask The Holy Spirit more questions. A reason we could be struggling in obedience is we do not entertain continual dialogue with the Holy Spirit. It's as simple as "What do you want me to do right now Holy Spirit. What are you thinking? What are you doing here in this place?" Odds are He has a lot to say in response, but how would you know if you do not practice asking and then listening for His response. Ask also for more of the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord, as well for the church and the nations. The major thing missing in the American church is the fear of the Lord. We. Do. Not. Fear. Him.
3. "Slow obedience is still disobedience" When He speaks. We should be very expedient in our response. The value too comes from the fear of the Lord.

There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

Isaiah 11:1-3

My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding; yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

Proverbs 2:1-5

Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones.

Proverbs 3:7-8

Praise the Lord!

I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation. Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them. Full of splendor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever. He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and merciful. He provides food for those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever. He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the inheritance of the nations. The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy; they are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name! The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding.

His praise endures forever!

Psalms 111

F. The fear of the Lord precedes wisdom. And wisdom further informs the fear of the Lord.

G. **KHOP**

A friend (Carissa Ortegon) was in Seoul, South Korea with the *Korea House of Prayer*. While there she connects with the lead pastor's son and asks him, "How long did it take you to go 24/7 & what did it take!?"

He replies, "We waited until the word of the Lord came. When the word came, we went 24/7 the very next day."

And concerning commitments and vows to the Lord in their prayer room. There are 2 options:

- 2 year commitment
- A lifetime commitment

H. **TO TEND AND TO KEEP:** Being great in the kingdom is connected to us walking in obedience to the commandments of the Lord and not only our obedience but inspiring others in their obedience to Him. This not only connects to great commandment but even the first commandment seen in the garden. Which at its core is to steward the presence of God in our lives and in our community.

This is the original intent. This was not simply an agricultural assignment given to Adam & Eve in the garden.

"This divine commission from the Lord isn't about agriculture alone; it's about the prophetic destiny of humanity. "Tend and keep" is an important phrase because those same words are used throughout the Bible when referring to the priesthood of the tabernacle or temple. The authors of the Bible Project tell us more about the meaning behind "tend and keep." In "Were Adam and Eve Priests in Eden?" they explain the truth revealed in these two important words. The article declares that the garden was a temple and "humanity served as God's royal representatives, or priests." It goes on to describe the glory of our created purpose:

In Genesis 2:15, humanity's work is described in priestly vocabulary:

"... and Yahweh Elohim took the human and placed him into the garden of Eden to work it and keep it."

These two verbs in Genesis 2:15 are packed with significance, as they portray the ideal vocation of humanity.

The Hebrew word 'abad (עבד) can be translated as "to work," "to serve," or "to worship. It is a common verb and is often used for cultivating the soil (Genesis 2:5, 3:23, 4:2, 12). However, the word is also commonly used in a religious sense of serving God (Deuteronomy 4:19) and in priestly texts, especially regarding the tabernacle duties of the Levites (Numbers 3:7-8, Numbers 4:23-24, Numbers 4:26)

The second Hebrew word, translated as "to keep," is shamar (שמר), which is commonly used for a priestly service of worship, as well as in legal texts of observing religious commands and duties (Leviticus 18:5). ...

These two verbs abad (עבד) and shamar (שמר) are used together as a phrase to refer either to Israelites serving and guarding/obeying God's word, or, more frequently, of the priests and the Levites who serve God in the temple and who guard the temple (Numbers 3:7-8, 8:25-26, 18:5-6; 1Chronicles 23:32; Ezekiel 44:14).

Excerpt from "King of Zion" by Blake Schulze

The LORD God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it.
Genesis 2:15