

Pride & Humility 3

(7/6/25)

Please turn to *Luke 14:27-33, Romans 12:3-8*.

LAST WEEK:

- Our big promotion will come at the Second Coming.
- We'll be raised from the dead into eternal life!
- We will be exalted onto a literal throne as Priestly Kings!
- We will help Jesus judge the nations and fallen angels!
- Until that time, we're still in our first coming.
- A servant isn't greater than his master.
- Jesus first time here He never obtained great riches and was never elevated to a position of political power.
- The world hated Him and the result of said hatred was persecution, false accusation, attempts to destroy His reputation, betrayal, imprisonment, a terrible beating, and death on the Cross.
- Jesus said the world would hate us too...and it does.
- We cannot expect that the same world that crucified the One Who came to save it would choose to bless us.
- What of Christian celebrities? One's who've become famous, written a bunch of books, and are financially prosperous?
- HOW IS THAT WORKING OUT?
- We're still in our first coming. Just as Jesus carried His cross before the Resurrection, we pick up our own crosses, deny ourselves, and follow Him.
- We cannot allow our pride to believe that we can have our best earthly life now along with an even better one after we're raised.

TODAY. If you were listening to last week's sermon and feeling like I was **trying to keep you down**, a tight lid over your head, I'm not. By all means, ask someone to lay hands on you and **give you "a double portion" or to "increase your faith."**

Before you do that, ***let me tell you a true story.***

My dad used to go fishing for 2-3 weeks every year in the wilds of Canada and I used to beg him to take me. When I turned 15 here's what he said: *"you're old enough to come with me now but understand this: we don't fish for a couple hours then go back to camp. We're on the water by 8 and don't end until 5 whether they're biting or not. Where we're going there's no running water, no electric, no restaurants, and we sleep in a canvas tent. We'll be*

seriously roughing it: can you handle that?" He wasn't trying to discourage me, he was warning me of what lie ahead before I committed.

As a young Christian I **passionately pursued the spiritual gifts**, especially that I might prophesy. Let me quickly go over the two I went after the most:

1. **Words of Knowledge**: knowing something (about an event or person) you couldn't possibly know. Ex: Jesus knowing the woman at the well had had 5 husbands and was now living unmarried with another man.
2. **Words of Prophecy**: being able to accurately predict the future.

When my spiritual juices get flowing, **I get words of knowledge about people to the point where I become afraid**. You heard that right.

Sometimes the Lord **reveals secrets people are hiding**, just like Paul taught the Corinthians, and I don't always know what to do or say. I may not have the boldness to submit this to said person so I remain silent. Other times I have and sometimes that goes well, and other times it doesn't.

As I proved Biblically in a previous sermon series about the prophetic gifts, **the Lord does NOT only choose to reveal things about others that are positive and comforting**. Sometimes He wants me or you to act as the Christian delivering a correction or warning.

When that's the case, the prophetic gift seems more like **a heavy burden and not like a blessing**.

- You can offend and hurt people, even though you didn't intend to.
- You can permanently damage your relationship with them, or theirs with the Church in general.

What I'm telling you is there's a **price to pay when asking for the supernatural gifts** listed in 1 Corinthians 12. In our excitement to receive them, are we truly counting the cost ahead of time?

[Luk 14:27-33 ESV] 27 Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. 28 For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? 29 Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, 30 saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' 31 Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? 32 And if not, while the other is

yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. 33 So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

Moving highly in the supernatural gifts bears with it a

cost. I get as frustrated as anyone else that miracles aren't happening today like they did in the first century. I don't have a firm answer as to why, but allow me to speculate based on the verses I just read to you. Perhaps the Lord knows we aren't willing to pay the price. Maybe He's protecting us because He knows we can't handle it.

A person getting consistent words of knowledge about others, especially dark and revealing things, becomes a pariah in the church.

I've met prophetic people who've been persecuted and disliked b/c of this that their hearts are shattered and they isolate themselves from the church. Some become bitter, resentful, and lonely people. Why? *Because they can't pay the price.*

What does anyone of us believe would TRULY start to happen if one of us moved mightily in healing? Or miracles?

The same thing that happened to Jesus and the Apostles. **When they were moving in healing there was no rest for them.** Hundreds if not thousands of people began to throng them from all sides whenever they made a public appearance. They were treated just like celebrities with adoring fans. Everyone would surround them, reach out to touch them, yell, shout, cry, plea, jostle, and compete with each other to get a piece of the power they had.

That's exactly what would happen in the modern age **if someone began to move in healing or miracles**...especially now with social media where words gets out must faster and farther than ever before.

Is there anyone in here who believes you could handle that? I'm not suggesting you can or can't, I'm earnestly asking. People waiting in your driveway for you to come out, people following you when you went to the store or work. People always having their cell phones on recording everything you do or say. People crying out for you to lay hands on them, their kids, or a loved one.

I had a SMALL taste of that back in 2005 when I went to Nigeria and it was scary and exhausting at the same time. I preached to a crowd of nearly 1000 people and did an altar call at the end. I'm used to American audiences and was not prepared for the level of passion and enthusiasm of the Nigerian people. They didn't just "come forward." They RAN forward, grabbed me, and began to pull me into the middle of them. They grabbed my feet, ankles, knees, arms, hands, neck, my head! They literally pulled me in different directions.

I was scared and helpless. My “rescue” only came when the staff hosting the event rushed forward and had to physically insert themselves. Even with them there, people were still grabbing me and begging me to pray for them. I recall one woman with a toddler whom she was holding forward desperately for me to pray for.

At the end of that day I was exhausted and overwhelmed. I just wanted to go back to my hotel room and be alone. I literally prayed for God to not let that happen again: there was nothing pleasant about it.

If one of us laid hands and saw consistent healings, word would get out quickly and said person would be a celebrity, be thronged by crowds, and have little privacy.

Saints, **we wouldn't be living the lives we are now:** going to work, hanging with our families, doing activities, having alone time...we'd give up all that and ***that's not as easy as it sounds.***

The next thing that would happen if one of us moved in miracles is the same thing that happened to Jesus and the Apostles: **religious folk start saying you're channeling Satan.** I've seen it happen multiple times.

You start moving in the supernatural consistently, **people get scared and I mean those IN the Church.** I've been called a cult leader by people right here in Addison for the mere fact that I believe & teach in the gifts including speaking in tongues. I recall one woman whose son I used to play with as a kid said Gateway was a cult. As a kid I was in her house, eating sandwiches she served for lunch, spending time with her son...but she heard there was “strange things going on here at Gateway” and next thing you know I'm a cult leader and she's telling people to stay away from me.

The supernatural scares the daylights out of most people. You begin to move in the gifts you will be the object of FEAR...***from other Christians.*** Their fear will inspire them to say the same thing they did about Jesus: “*He has a demon!*” Moving in the power of Satan, leading people astray. Among some your reputation would be destroyed.

Pastor Dennis Bennett was an Episcopalian minister in the early 60s in a small town in CA. His church was small, attendance dropping fast, and was dying when he first stepped through the doors. He gets Baptized in the Holy Spirit, starts speaking on tongues, & seeing miracles. The church filled up, people were getting Saved, healed, sanctified, and baptized in the Holy Spirit themselves!

Praise God! Hallelujah! Dennis Bennett is, to this day, given the title of the person who began the Charismatic Renewal which is why some Christians refer to themselves as Charismatics.

YET as soon as his Anglican heads found out they called it the devil, defrocked him, and kicked him out. TO THIS

DAY there is a significant subset of Christians who call charismatics the devil, false teachers, and false prophets.

I ask again: are we willing to pay this price?

A third thing that happens when a person begins to flow mightily in the gifts is JEALOUSY. Most jealousy comes from the leaders in a church or ministry and yes: that includes the Pastor. Tell you a secret: **we love being “the guy” at church. The one everybody looks to, listens to, comes to, and submits to. We love it.**

Some rising star begins getting attention, respect, admiration...we get territorial. We'll find some reason to move that person to another church, area, or ministry. Someone other than us starts moving in the gifts? God help them. Especially if they're part of a denomination.

I've studied past revivals and been a part of a few smaller ones in my lifetime. Whether the person moving in the gifts is from one of the five offices or not, as soon as he or she does WHAM! *Jealousy from other church/ministry leaders.* They're jealous that God chose someone other than them, jealous about the attention, respect, admiration, attention, and love offerings.

What does jealousy provoke someone to do? Same as fear: they call them devil, false teachers, false prophets, and charlatans. They dig up their past and try to find dirt...just like politics. They'll seek out former staff members, volunteers, or employees—see if they can find something to destroy the reputation of this “rival.” They'll hyper examine everything they say and do, and claim there's some biblical contradiction or lack of Godly character.

Look what Jesus says about this, talking of John the Baptist and Himself:

[Mat 11:18-19 ESV] 18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' 19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' Yet wisdom is justified by her deeds."

When both the religious leaders and the people saw Jesus performing miracles, *those that didn't believe in Him reacted out of fear and/or jealousy* and did their best to persecute, lie about, and even plot against Him.

The next price to be paid is on the body/health. I was once in a spirited debate with a Cessationist Christian friend of mine and remember: cessationists believe the supernatural gifts passed away in the first century. Here's what he said to me: *"many of these faith healers died of sickness and disease. John Wimber, Kathryn Kulman, Amy Semple McPherson, John G. Lake...if they had such great healing powers why did this happen to them? Couldn't they heal themselves?"*

I had no answer for him at the time, but must admit I've asked myself the same question. There's a fellow alive right now who's had some healing home runs. His name is James Maloney and he's seen limbs grow back, cancer healed, and even had one person's metal rod in their leg melt off and bone grew back in its place! Yet James suffered a stroke and one side of his face doesn't work and sags. He's never been healed of it.

There are stories of others with the healing gift whose bodies get sick and diseased, and they passed away. Why? It takes a toll.

There's a price to pay. All the above people my friend mentioned died early, some in the height of their ministry.

The last thing I'll cover today is temptation. If one or more of us started moving mightily in the supernatural that would draw great attention, admiration, and affection, and not all of said admiration would be ... "sanctified." Do we flow in the fruit of humility?

Or would we be tempted to become prideful? Part of the Charismatic Renewal of the 60's was the Jesus Movement in CA. A hippie fellow name Lonnie Frisbee got Saved and they made a movie about it a couple years ago. Actor Jonathan Roumie (plays Jesus in the Chosen) played Frisbee's role.

It started out great! Hippies were leaving behind all the drugs and free love and getting Saved! Frisbee was flowing in words of knowledge, then laying hands on the sick and they were getting healed! Attendance of his meetings grew and grew until thousands were showing up! Praise God! He was even invited to go onto a talk show that catapulted his fame ever higher.

Then it all fell apart and did so when Frisbee was arguing with his ministry partner, Pastor Chuck Smith. Smith's personality was the opposite of Frisbee and he often attempted to "temper" and "reign in" Frisbee when he thought he was going too far.

In the movie as they were arguing, Smith (played by Kelsey Grammer) says that Frisbee's actions were becoming a "danger to the movement." **To which Frisbee replied "I *AM* the movement!"**

You and I can sit here from the comfort of our pews and **shake our heads at his obvious pride**. We can chide him and say he should have been giving all the glory to God and stayed humble, and how could he possibly take any of the credit?

Yet how many of us have been in that position? We've never had thousands of people wanting us to lay hands on them, counsel them, pray for them, and give them a prophetic word. We haven't had the praise, adoration, and admiration of crowds all wanting a piece of what we have. Who see us as some shining light that they need to step into the shadow of.

At the same time we shake our heads as Frisbee's arrogance, let's ask: could we handle it? Would we be better or different than he was? Would we resist the temptations he faced, succeed where he failed?

Have we truly thought about these things and counted the

cost? If God were to catch us up to Heaven and show us a prophetic movie of the future where we operate strongly in the supernatural, but end up:

- Offending many people and losing friends.
- Being called a devil and/or inspired by the devil...by fellow Christians. Being called a false teacher or false prophet.
- Being the target of fear and jealousy resulting in a loss of reputation, false accusations, and persecution.
- Potential loss of privacy, high demand for your personal time and presence, can't live "normal" life.
- Tempted by the fame, admiration, and even romantic attraction.
- Loss of physical health/shorter life.

If God showed us this movie saying, on the plus side, that we would truly heal the sick in a mighty way not seen in a long time...*but would also suffer ALL the things mentioned above: would we do it?*

I've been to many churches or conferences where the preacher says **God will bring you to great heights**, and that feels encouraging and uplifting. Yet if the same preacher talked about the cost, do you think he/she would be invited to speak again? Don't we need to do as Jesus said both the builder of the tower and the king sending an army do?

As I've gotten older I understand why Paul said the following the Romans, the opposite of what some famous preachers say:

[Rom 12:3-8 ESV] 3 For by the grace given to me I say to **everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think**, but to think with sober judgment, **each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned**. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ ***according to the grace given to us***, let us use them: **if prophecy, in proportion to our faith**; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Believe me when I say that I spent years of my young Christian life asking God for MORE than what I have now.

- I've begged God to increase my faith so as to remove mountains.
- I called upon Him to increase my prosperity...for the Kingdom of course.
- I've asked Him to let me prophesy to the nations and speak in front of thousands. Been there, done that.

Now I need to submit to God's will: what does HE intend for me?

- There are a rare few instances in the Bible where God asks somebody what they want.
- Yet there's an overwhelming amount of times when He tells us what He wants and expects us to operate within those parameters.
- Where He's already chosen what we'll do and for how long.
- Where He's already assigned the amount of grace and faith to us to accomplish what He wants.
- Moses didn't get to run the football into the end zone, he had to pass it off to Joshua.
- Lucifer wasn't content being who he was in heaven, he wanted to BE God.

Paul tells the Roman church NOT to reach for sky, but to realize the "measure of faith" that each of them has been given by God.

Jesus also said faith was measurable.... That there were different amounts of it from a little to a lot and likely everything in between.

Paul warns the Romans NOT to think too highly of themselves, that God has gifted us all differently, and we're to operate accordingly.

- Maybe you have can prophesy, but may never prophesy to more than 100 people in your entire life.
- Whereas Prophet so and so has a massive platform and reaches hundreds of thousands.
- Maybe your calling is donate a little because that's all you have, whereas a richer person was given greater prosperity so he could donate more.

Paul says to “prophesy IN PROPORTION to your faith.” One thing I will say is this: **it might be that the amount of faith already given to you is higher than what you've been operating in.** I know this is true for me: when my prophetic juices get flowing its amazing. I'll say to myself later: *“why haven't you been doing that more?”* Mainly because I've been ignoring it.

So yes its possible you can hear a good sermon or some anointed worship, **and walk into the faith God has given you that you may not have even known was there.**

Regardless, **if we choose to move into the supernatural we must submit to God**, operate in sober judgment like Paul said, and **Work with what He's already given us.** *We must approach His gifts with humility.*

I'll end with another true story. For years I begged God to preach in front of thousands of people. I wasn't content with my station here at Gateway and had my sights set higher...for which I'm sorry.

I bound, I loosed, I named, I claimed, and I declared. And nothing happened. Then I went to a conference and a highly prophetic man who didn't know me approached me and confirmed my prayers, telling me I would ***speak to an audience of thousands!***

I was over the moon! **I waited for years for the opportunity to present itself.** I even printed out a picture of a guy standing behind a pulpit speaking at a vast arena. I cut his head out, taped mine onto his, then put it on the wall in my prayer closet. A literal closet, BTW. I stared at it every time I went in there and declared this prophetic word to be loosed here on earth as it was in heaven!

It was a hot summer night in June of 2020 and I'd just gotten home from work. I was tired and just wanted to chill at home. I get a phone call asking me to lead a prayer walk in downtown Addison. I agreed and went down.

We all gathered and the organizer of the walk asked if **I would say something to encourage the crowd before we started**, so I stood up on the tailgate of the truck and spoke for a few minutes.

Unbeknownst to me, someone was doing a Facebook live. The next day she showed me her account: it was viewed by nearly 15,000 people. **When I saw that, God spoke to me and said: “prophecy fulfilled.”**

I was stunned. He knocked me down off the high horse I was trying to sit on. I thought I would fill arenas and stadiums and when the unknown prophet at the conference said “thousands.” My PRIDE interpreted the prophecy. God fulfilled the word and instead of being on a stage in the spotlight, I was on Farnham Street in Addison, standing on the tailgate of a pick up truck. The prophecy was fulfilled to a “T” just not the “T” I wanted.

We are to be humble and lowly of heart.

Our exaltation will come when our Lord comes to get His Bride.

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