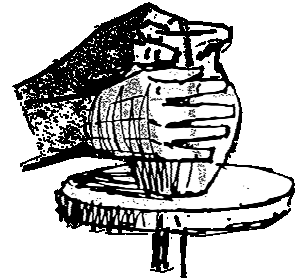


His Workmanship Westside

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."

—Ephesians 2:10



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Isaiah 64:8

Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit Who Mourn, by John Piper

Blessed are those who feel keenly their helplessness and their unworthiness and their emptiness and are driven by them to the grace of God. A student once asked me, "Isn't Christianity [sic] a crutch for people who can't make it on their own?" My answer was very simple. I said, "Yes." Period.

What's So Bad About a Crutch? My return question would be, "Why is the thought that Christ is a crutch considered to be a valid criticism of His Way?" People don't usually look at a crutch and say, "That's bad. It's just a crutch." People don't think that crutches are bad things in the physical world. So why does a crutch become a bad thing when it's spiritual? The answer most critics would give is this: "if religion is a crutch, then it's only good for cripples." And we don't like to see ourselves as cripples. It offends our self-sufficiency need a crutch. But Jesus said, *"Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance,"* Mk 2:17. In other words, the only people who will ever get what Jesus has to give are sick people, people who know that they are spiritually and morally and mentally and very often physically crippled.

Everybody Has a Creed. All people believe in something and shape their lives around it. Even agnostics believe very strongly that you should not believe anything very strongly (which is why it is so hard to be a consistent agnostic). We all have a creed that we live by, whether we can articulate it or not. What is the creed behind the idea that if Christ is a crutch, then He is undesirable and unworthy of acceptance? The creed behind this criticism is the (false) confidence that we are not cripples and that real joy and fulfillment in life are to be found in the pursuit of self-reliance, self-confidence, self-determination, and self-esteem. Any Messiah who comes along and proposes to replace self-reliance with childlike God-reliance, and self-confidence with submissive God-confidence, and self-will and self-determination with sovereign grace, and self-esteem with magnificent mercy for the unworthy—that Messiah is going to be a threat to the religion of self-admiration. The religion of self has dominated the world ever since Adam and Eve fell in love with the image of their own independent potential when they it saw reflected back to them in the eye of the serpent: *"You will not die; you will be like God."*

The Creed of Self-Reliance. Ralph Waldo Emerson, 19th Century American poet and philosopher, wrote the famous essay called "Self-Reliance." It captured the spirit of his age and ours: *"Trust thyself, every heart vibrates to that iron string. Discontent is the want of self-reliance. It is infirmity of will."* Ah-ha! Now we see the creed behind the criticism of religion as a crutch. The real infirmity of the world, according to Emerson, is lack of self-reliance. And so, to his dismay, along comes Christ, not with a cure for the disease, but a crutch! Christ is a stumbling block and an offense to Emerson and to all of our day—yes, and even to us—because it takes the disease that we hate most, namely, helplessness, and instead of curing it, makes it the doorway to heaven: *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,"* Mt 5:3.

Saints in Scripture Who Were Poor in Spirit. What does it mean to be poor in spirit? Look at some great men of God in Scripture.

Abraham. In dealing with the Lord about Sodom and Gomorrah, he said, *"Behold, I have taken upon myself to speak to the Lord, I who am but dust and ashes,"* Gen 18:27.

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**“But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.”
—Isaiah 66:2**

Jacob. When Jacob returned to the promised land after spending 20 years in exile, he wrestled with God in prayer and said, *“I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness which You have shown to Your servant, for with only my staff I crossed this Jordan; and now I have become two companies.”* Gen 32:10.

Moses. When God came to him with a mission to lead his people out of Israel, he said, *“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt? ...Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either before or since You have spoken to Your servant; but I am slow of speech and of tongue.”* Ex 3:11; 4:10.

The reason God got angry at Moses is not because of his humble assessment of his own abilities, but because of his lack of faith in God's ability.

God responded and said to Moses, *“Who made man's mouth? Who makes him dumb, or deaf, or seeing, or blind? Is it not I, the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall speak.”* Ex 4:11-12.

Jeremiah. Jeremiah said he was only a youth, but God told him that He had put His word into his mouth, Jer 1:6-10. *“Do not be afraid of their faces, for I AM with you to deliver you,”* the Lord said, Jer 1:8, 19.

The Answer to the Paralysis of Low Self-Esteem. What is the Biblical solution when a person is paralyzed by a sense of guilt or unworthiness or uselessness? The solution is not self-esteem. God did not say to Moses, “Stop putting yourself down. You are somebody. You are eloquent.” That is not the Biblical way. What God said was, “Stop looking at your own unworthiness and uselessness and look to Me. I made the mouth. I will be with you. I will help you. I will teach you what to say. Look to Me and live!”

The Biblical answer to the paralysis of

low self-esteem is not high self-esteem—it is sovereign grace. You can test whether you agree with this by whether you can gladly repeat these words: *“Fear not, you worm Jacob...I will help you,” says the Lord; ‘your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel,’*” Is 41:13. In other words, God's way of freeing and mobilizing people who see themselves as worms is not to tell them that they are beautiful butterflies, but rather to say, *“I will help you. I am your redeemer...Go now, and I will be with you.”*

William Carey's Secret. William Carey did not have high self esteem. He castigated himself again and again for his sins. When a fire in 1812 destroyed dozens of his precious manuscripts, he didn't blame the devil. He said, “How unsearchable are the ways of God!” He accused himself of too much self-congratulation in his labors, and said, “The Lord has smitten us. He had a right to do so, and we deserve his corrections.” When he had outlived four of his comrades, he wrote, “I know not why so fruitless a tree is preserved; but the Lord is too wise to err.” When he died in 1834, a simple tablet was put on his grave with the words he requested.

“WILLIAM CAREY b. 8/17/1761 d. 6/9/1834—A wretched, poor, and helpless worm, On Thy kind arms I fall.”

What was William Carey's secret? How could he persevere for 40 years over all obstacles—as a homely man, suffering from recurrent fever, limping for years from an injury in 1817, and yet putting the entire Bible into six languages and parts of it into 29 other languages? What was the secret of this man's usefulness and productivity for the kingdom? The secret for William Carey was not self esteem. He was poor in spirit to the very end. “A

wretched, poor, and helpless worm,” he called himself, knowing very well his sin and failures. His secret was in the last line of his epitaph: “On Thy kind arms I fall.” This was his secret in dying and this was his secret in living. He cast himself—poor, helpless, despicable—on the kind arms of God. For he knew the promise of Jesus: Blessed are the poor in spirit, for to them belong the merciful and mighty arms of the King of kings.

My prayer is that all of us at Westside will find the secret of productivity and usefulness and happiness NOT in the pleasures of self esteem, but in the power of sovereign grace. “Fear not you worm Jacob... I will help you, says the Lord.”



Other People Who Knew This Secret. David. Everyone agrees that the spirit that pleases God after you are taken in adultery and murder is contrition: *“The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise,”* Ps 51:17. But what about the times when you are doing good? When the collection for the temple was being taken, David prayed, *“Who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from You, and of Your own have we given You,”* 1 Chr 29:14. In other words, even when David and his people were performing an act of virtue, David did not yield to the impulses of self-esteem. Instead he was carried away by the impulses of sovereign grace: “Who are we that we should be able thus to offer willingly! To God be the esteem, to God! and not to us, even in our virtue.”

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Let your faith be seen in 2014
 "I rejoice to see your good order
 and the steadfastness of your faith
 in Christ."
 —Colossians 2:5

Poor in Spirit who Mourn, from p. 2
Solomon. He recognized God's mercy:
 "Now, O LORD my God, You have made
 Your servant king instead of my father Da-
 vid, but I am a little child; I do not know how
 to go out or come in," 1 Kg 3:7.

Job. He saw God's greatness: "I have
 heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but
 now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor
 myself, and repent in dust and ashes," Job
 42:5-6.

Isaiah. He needed cleansing: "Woe is
 me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean
 lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of
 unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the
 King, the Lord of hosts!" Is 6:5. We learn
 from Job and Isaiah that one source of
 lowliness is to see God in His power
 and holiness.

John the Baptist. Not self-esteem but
 unworthiness. "I baptize with water; but
 among you stands one whom you do not
 know, even he who comes after me, the
 thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to
 untie... He must increase, I must de-
 crease," Jn 1:27; 3:30. Could this be why
 Jesus said, "Among those born of women,
 none is greater than John," Lk 7:28? "If
 anyone would be first he must be last of all
 and servant of all," Mk 9:35.

The Tax Collector. Jesus told a parable
 of a Pharisee and a tax collector who
 went up the temple to pray. "But the tax
 collector, standing far off, he would not even
 lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his
 breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a
 sinner!' I tell you this man went down to his
 house justified," Lk 18:13-14. Jesus was
 illustrating poor in spirit.

The Centurion. He said he was not
 worthy to have Jesus under his roof.
 "When [Jesus] was not far off from the
 house, the Centurion sent friends to Him,

saying to Him, 'Lord do not trouble Yourself,
 for I am not worthy to have You come under
 my roof; therefore I did not presume to come
 to You. But say the word, and let my servant
 be healed.' ...When Jesus heard this, He
 marveled at him, and turned and said to the
 multitude, 'I tell you, not ever in Israel have I
 found such faith,' " Lk 7:6-9.

The Canaanite Woman. When Jesus at
 first refused her request for help, since
 she was not a Jew, she said, "Yes, Lord,
 yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall
 from their master's table." Jesus respond-
 ed, "O woman, great is your faith!" Mt 15:27-
 28. So we learn from the centurion and
 the Canaanite woman that poverty of
 spirit is at the very heart of true faith.

Peter. When he saw the power of Jesus
 on the Lake of Gennesaret, "Peter fell
 down at Jesus' knees, saying, 'Depart from
 me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord,' " Lk 5:8.

Paul. He knew himself: "I know that
 nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my
 flesh," Rm 7:18; "I am the foremost of
 sinners; but I received mercy for this reason,
 that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ
 might display his perfect patience for an
 example to those who were to believe in Him
 for eternal life," 1 Tim 1:15-16. His only
 power came from God, "We have this
 treasure in earthen vessels to show that the
 transcendent power belongs to God and not
 to us," 2 Cor 4:7; "I planted, Apollos watered,
 but God gave the growth. So neither he who
 plants nor he who waters is anything, but
 only God Who gives the growth," 1 Cor 3:6-7.

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Travel The **Huelsmans** are in the
 Springs this am. The **Campbells** are in AR
 visiting Pat's father, will return Tues. The
Gintchins are in Bulgaria. The **Maillouxes**
 are out of town through 7/14. **Christina
 Adams** is out of town.

CONVINCE, COMMIT, CONNECT
2014 Goals—midway checkpoint:
 1. Attend every service
 2. Attend and prepare diligently for
 every Bible class
 3. Participate in neighborhood
 evangelism
 4. Convert/baptize souls (10)
 5. Present the gospel in studies
 6. Invite people to hear the gospel
How are you doing so far?

Discipleship Here At Home

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Judy Strand—bruising and soreness after fall
Kirk Johnson—fire in apartment directly above
 his last week; needs help this pm to move furni-
 ture for professional wall cleaning—see Jeff W.

Corray girls—pink eye

Brandon Thompson—ill

Sarah Hadders—broken foot

Ed Fink—prostate cancer; current treatment for
 brain tumors

Giles Free—seizure last month; confined at home

Mina Gonzalez's granddaughter, **Juliet**—
 broken collarbone

Sue Witherington, Brett's grandmother—
 breast cancer has returned

Shirley Barrett, Rod Green's mother—home
 from hospital for respiratory ailments

Rhonda Love, friend of Judy Strand—terminal
 cancer; young mother studying with Jim & Vicki

Gregg Geis's friend **Becky** in CA—terminal
 cancer; searching for the truth

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

**Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian
 Harrod; Rocco Jr; Pat Wilkes**—asthma

Bill Dennis—heart issues

Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease

Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome

Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs
 quick meals to heat up, like soup

Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;

Virginia, macular degeneration; high BP

Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes

Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia

Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain

Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; arthritis

Judy and Mike Strand—both beginning
 treatment for hepatitis

Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness

Job concerns Linda Szymanski

Directory Updates

Terry and Tianna Smith have chosen to
 work and worship with us—please add:

18 S. Zinnia Way, Lakewood 80228

Terry 303-718-0198 awalkin@aol.com

Tianna 303-718-3514

tianna.m.smith@gmail.com

Tianna school: Student Box #51305

403 S. Adair St, Clinton, SC 29325

Strand change: Mike and Judy

240 B Street, Golden 80401

720-775-2797

Poor in Spirit who Mourn, from p. 3

What Then Is Poverty of Spirit?

- It is a sense of powerlessness in ourselves.
- It is a sense of spiritual bankruptcy and helplessness before God.
- It is a sense of moral uncleanness before God.
- It is a sense of personal unworthiness before God.
- It is a sense that if there is to be any life or joy or usefulness, it will have to be all of God and all of grace.

The reason it is a sense of powerlessness and a sense of bankruptcy and a sense of uncleanness and a sense of unworthiness, is that, in truth, everybody is poor in spirit. The reality (objective truth) is that we are all unworthy. Everybody, whether we sense it or not, is powerless without God and bankrupt and helpless and unclean and unworthy before God. But not everyone knows it. And thus, not everyone is blessed.

Who Is Blessed? When Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," he did not mean everybody. He meant those who feel it, those who know their own unworthiness. That is why it is so appropriate to take the first and second beatitudes together. "Blessed are those who mourn," clarifies the subjective (feeling) side of being poor in spirit. Once we see our spiritual poverty, we then feel deep sorrow—we feel crushed, broken, bereft. Sorrow is described by nine different words in the New Testament, but the strongest, *pantheo*, is used here, Mt 5:4. It is a grief so consuming that it cannot be hidden. It seems strange to speak of the blessedness of a broken heart, the gladness of grief, the treasure of tears, the joy of sorrow. If you mourn, how can you be blessed? But this is God's plan, and from it we learn not only how to deal maturely with life's sorrows, but also how to deal with our sins and how to know and understand God better. We see our sins; we grieve because we have sinned and caused God sorrow. But God will comfort our sorrow: "*Happy are those who know what sorrow means, for they will be given courage and comfort*" (Phillips). Why should people who are caught up in the throes of distressing, sorrowful, and even sinful experiences be congratulated? *Because when they grieve over their sins, they will be comforted.* And what then? Out of the comfort they receive, they can give comfort to others. Examine 2 Cor 1:3-4: "...the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...who so wonderfully comforts and strengthens us..." or as J.B. Phillips paraphrases it: "*For we may be able to give the same strong sympathy (strength, comfort, help) to others in their troubles.*" The best comforters are those who have known the deepest hurts. You may receive divine comfort which, in turn, will deepen your sensitivity to others and enrich your service in the body of Christ. When we are willing to experience sorrow and grief, then God is able to use these losses to make our service to others more effective, sensitive, and fruitful.

Blessed are the poor in spirit who mourn. Blessed are the people who feel keenly their inadequacies and their guilt and their failures and their helplessness and their unworthiness and their emptiness and their sins—who don't try to hide these things under a cloak of self-sufficiency, but who are honest and grieved about them and are driven to the grace of God.

Blessed are you! because you are going to be comforted. "*Fear not, you worm, Jacob!*" Fear not, Moses, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Peter! "For I will be with you, I will help you, I will strengthen you, I will uphold you with My victorious right hand..." Yours is the very kingdom of God. ©2014 Desiring God Foundation.



meets at
13789 W. 8th Avenue
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720-295-4530

Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

info@thechurchingolden.com

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

• **adult Bible class, *Inside Out, Growing a Spirit of Service***, Lesson 12, "A Unified Spirit," DeWayne Howell
Deuteronomy study begins next Sunday

• **Sermon**, "Beware of the Little Foxes," Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon

• **Sermon**, "Church History: A Different Perspective," Jim Reingrover

Wednesday night adult Bible class, July, Proverbs, Jim Reingrover