

I Need Help

By Rick Ezell

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:3 NIV).

In the movie *Apollo 13*, Flight Commander James Lovell radioed back to Earth upon observing smoke and debris emitting from the space craft, “Houston, we have a problem.”

In like manner, we, too have a problem. It is a problem as old as man and as destructive as any we have ever seen. Here’s the problem: There is no greater need than when we think we have no need. We contend with this problem on a daily basis. The Greeks called this arrogance *hubris*; the Bible calls it pride.

C. S. Lewis wrote, “Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind. Pride is spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even common sense.”

Whereas pride says I don’t need help. Jesus said the opposite, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 5:3 NIV). Let me paraphrase this verse: “Happy are those who are bankrupt in their spiritual resources that they realize that they must get help from outside sources.” Poor in spirit is the opposite of being rich in pride. The poor in spirit acknowledge their spiritual bankruptcy, their destitution before God.

The poor in spirit is like Peter who when walking on the water toward Jesus takes his eyes off Jesus and sinks. He cries out desperately, “Lord, save me.” The poor in spirit is the person who is trying to live life on his own without God’s intervention, realizing their plight, now crying out to God, “Lord, help me.”

Can you imagine the number of marriages that would be saved if one or both of the partners would seek help? Many people are stuck in financial, relational, vocational, and spiritual ruts because they are unwilling to cry out for help. What would happen if you went to your boss and said, “I need help. This project is too big for me or beyond my expertise”? What if you asked your teacher, “I need help. I can’t figure this problem out”? What if you asked your spouse, “Honey, I need some help. I am struggling in this area of my life”? What if you said to God, “I’ve made a mess of my life, will you help me”? God is willing and wants to help. And any teacher, spouse, or boss worthy of those titles will want to help, too.

We can’t overcome our spiritual impoverished condition on our own; we need the help of Jesus. When we look to God and see him reflected in the person of Jesus Christ, and then we will learn true humility, a true sense of need. And when we recognize our need and call on Jesus, God meets our poverty with his plenty. God delights to bring us to the end of ourselves, to expose our deficiency, so that his sufficiency might show forth.

Here's the catch: the only acceptable position for coming to God is humility; the only occupation that exists in the kingdom of God is a beggar. We acknowledge our moral destitution, our spiritual paucity. We don't brag; we beg.

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