

What's Your Net Worth?

Roxborough Bible Chapel

November 17, 2013

Matthew 5:3

- What's the connection between possessing nothing and being poor in spirit?
- How can you be blessed and own nothing?
 - Not what we would expect since we tend to correlate possessions with blessings
- Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven
 - What does it mean to be poor in spirit?

What's the connection between possessing nothing and being poor in spirit?

“There is within the human heart a tough fibrous root of fallen life whose nature is to possess, always to possess. It covets ‘things’ with a deep and fierce passion. The pronouns ‘my’ and ‘mine’ look innocent enough in print, but their constant universal use is significant. They express the real nature of the old Adamic man better than a thousand volumes of theology could do. They are verbal symptoms of our deep disease. The roots of our hearts have grown down into *things*, and we dare not pull up one rootlet lest we die.

Things have become necessary to us, a development never originally intended. God’s gifts now take the place of God, and the whole course of nature is upset by the monstrous substitution.”

- A.W. Tozer

What's the connection between possessing nothing and being poor in spirit?

- Force of pride/self-love roots our hearts into possessions
- It can't tolerate anything that doesn't promote it
- A brief digression...

“The Good Samaritan” Social Experiment

- A group of seminary students at Princeton University were asked to prepare a short talk on a biblical theme and then walk over to another building on campus to present it to a group of undergrads.
- In between the two buildings the researchers placed an actor dressed as a derelict, slumped down in an alley, coughing and groaning.
- Then they watched to see if the seminary students would stop and help the man or not on the way to giving their theological presentations.

“The Good Samaritan” Social Experiment

- Who would stop and help?
- Before the experiment a questionnaire was given to the seminarians as to why they were studying theology.
 - Researchers assumed that if their motivation to enter ministry was to help others they would more likely to stop and help the man.
- One group of seminarians was given the parable of the Good Samaritan to present during their theological talk.
 - Surely that group would stop and help the groaning man.

What's the connection between possessing nothing and being poor in spirit?

- Force of pride/self-love roots our hearts into possessions
- It can't tolerate anything that doesn't promote it
- Harsh reality of sin is the first line of attack against this force of self-love
 - However self-love won't go down without a strong fight
- Even then this view persists that we own certain possessions in the truest sense
- Only when we've "repudiated every external thing and have rooted from [our] hearts all sense of possessing" is when we have become *poor in spirit*

So...

“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it”

- Matthew 16:24-25

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