

#106 “True Humility”

by Brent Barnett

www.relevantbibleteaching.com

Isaiah 66:2 says, "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word." The promise of revival in 2 Chronicles 7:14 is available only to those who are humble, broken of spirit, and who bow their spirits before the authority of the Word of God. It is time to fall on our faces and cry out that Christ is worthy and that we are not, that He is capable and that we are not, and that He is strong and we are weak. Revival is a work of the Spirit in which we surrender to the authority and grace of God to move and operate in our lives. There can only be one captain of our hearts, and it must be King Jesus.

Contrition and trembling before the Word of God are akin to humility. Isaiah 66:2 is not a list of three totally distinct and disconnected spiritual realities; rather, it is three different angles of observing the same reality of the humble heart. In other words, humility involves, by its very definition, both contrition and trembling at the Word of God. The Hebrew word for humility in 2 Chronicles 7:14, is *kana*, meaning "to bend the knee." This means to humiliate, vanquish, bring down low, bring into subjection, put under, or to subdue. It is a relinquishing of authority from self to God. Contrition is to repent or become ashamed of the current state of one's heart, and it is impossible to truly humble oneself without this inner sorrow and change. The humbling process will have begun with a cutting to the heart from God's Word, and it will end in a reverence and fear for the authority and supreme value of God and His Word. When we see God for Who He really is, it is hard not to tremble in our spirits. Contrition, humility, and trembling are the beginning point for revival. All three simultaneously exist in the heart that is to be revived.

For genuine revival to occur, we must become a people of tender hearts. We ought to weep over the state of affairs around us. We cannot pretend that God can send His Spirit to move if we gloss over sin issues. Sin must be identified and crushed. Sin stymies the Spirit, and God requires broken vessels. Some sin is obvious while some is not. Sin relies on self, lifts up self, and operates without God and against God's ways and will. Before we can be shown such errors of spirit, we must humble ourselves to ask God to show us where we might be off course. Humility is the posture of growth because it is where God infuses His grace into a teachable spirit. Humility also has a posture of power because a bowed knee and heart which calls out to God is honored and heard by God. Humility is our starting point.

Philippians 2:3-4 says, "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others." This passage tells us one of the major evidences of a humble heart. If we have the humility of mind characterized by surrender, contrition, and trembling before God, then we will necessarily think of others as more important than ourselves. It doesn't say that others are more valuable than we are, for God values us all equally as His children. It does say that we are to be

cognizant of the needs and welfare of others more than we are to be consumed with ourselves. Humility is not a neglect of self where we act as doormats for others; rather, it is a demeanor and mindset that is far more concerned about how others are than how we ourselves are. Humility is the opposite of self-centeredness because it is driven by service for God and others.

Too often, we try to exalt ourselves by our skills, intellect, and education, among other things. Our Lord says in 1 Peter 5:6, "Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time." True exaltation can only be given by Christ Himself, and it will be given to those who vanquish their own selfish agendas and desires and place themselves in submission to their Master and their Lord, Jesus Christ. Like John the Baptist says in John 3:30, "He must increase, but I must decrease." We decrease not by self-abasement or self-insult but by dying to self and immersing ourselves by faith in Christ's life, purpose, love, and power. *Life is not about discovering our purpose but surrendering to the purposes of God. As we do what He wants, delighting ourselves in Him, we will end up fulfilling our purpose and finding the desires of our hearts (Psalm 37:4).* The child of God who desires to live the Christian life to the fullest must be willing to submit to God's plans and desires, no matter the cost or the particular challenge. True humility bows the knee to the true Lord of the universe and says, "Lord, not my will but Yours be done." And God's way is always the best way, a means for our good, and with honor as its ultimate end. The truly humble will be truly exalted.