

Poor in Spirit, Pure in Heart

Ezek. 36:26-27; Matt. 5:3, 8; Heb. 4:12; Rom. 1:9; 7:6; 1 Pet. 3:4; Mark 12:30; 4:14-20; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Jer. 31:33; Heb. 8:10; Psalms 51:6; Heb. 10:22

I. The heart and the spirit

Ezek. 36:26-27 I will also give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and My ordinances you shall keep and do.

II. Dealing with the heart so Christ can grow in us

Matt. 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. - Matt 5:8

Mark 4:14 The sower sows the word

Mark 4:20 And these are the ones sown on the good earth: [those] who hear the word and receive [it] and bear fruit, one thirtyfold, and one sixtyfold, and one a hundredfold.

III. Dealing with the Lord to be poor in spirit

Matt. 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.

IV. A proper heart and a proper spirit to experience and enjoy Christ as the tree of life

2 Cor. 3:16-18 But whenever [their][heart] turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Prov. 4:23 Keep your heart with all vigilance, / For from it are the issues of life.

Today's Reading

The Triune God, who is the tree of life, has imparted Himself into us to be our enjoyment. He is the seed of life sown into our heart. Our heart is like the soil, the earth. If the soil of our heart is the wayside, trodden by the world and preoccupied by many things, it becomes hardened. Our heart must be released from any preoccupation for the seed of life to be sown in it. Our heart may not be preoccupied, but there may be hidden rocks in our heart. The rocks are hidden sins, personal desires, self-seeking, and self-pity, which frustrate the seed from gaining root in the depth of the earth. We may seemingly be a good brother or a good sister, and yet we are superficial with the Lord because of the rocks in our heart. Thus, it is impossible for the Lord as the seed of life to grow within us deeply. It is also possible for our heart to be full of thorns, which are the anxieties of the age, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts for other things. Some people have their heart set on a better car. Even this desire can hinder and choke the word from becoming fruitful. The thorns frustrate and choke the growth of the seed.

If we are going to have the Lord as the seed of life grow within us to be our full enjoyment, we have to deal with our heart. We have to ask the Lord to be merciful to us. By His mercy we have to deal with all these negative things in our heart. We have to deal with the things preoccupying us, with the hidden rocks, with the anxieties of the age, the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts for other things. Then our heart will be good, right, proper, released, and prepared for Christ as the seed of life to grow within us.

TURNING OUR HEART TO THE LORD

Second Corinthians 3:16-18 says, "Whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. But we all with unveiled

face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.” We may talk about the Lord as the life-giving Spirit, but our enjoying and experiencing the Lord as such a living Spirit depends upon our heart being turned to Him. When our heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Actually, our turned-away heart is the veil. To turn our heart to the Lord is to take away the veil. Our heart is the crucial factor in our enjoyment of the Lord as the life-giving Spirit and in our being transformed into the Lord’s image. If we are going to enjoy the Lord as the living Spirit and be transformed by Him, we have to deal with our heart. Our heart has to be turned to the Lord.

OPENING OUR HEART TO THE LORD BY REPENTING AND CONFESSING

We have seen that the Lord’s intention is to sow Himself as the seed of life into us. We are the living earth, the living soil, the living ground. The spirit is enclosed by the heart, so if the Lord is going to come into us, our heart has to be opened. We can open our heart to the Lord by repenting and confessing. The word repent in the Greek language means to have a change of mind or a turn of mind. Our mind was originally not toward the Lord but toward something else, and our mind was fixed. Now we have to repent, which means that we have to have a change of mind, and we have to turn our mind. This means that the mind is open to the Lord. Following our repentance, we will always confess. We need to confess all our failures, sins, and shortcomings to the Lord. Confession is the exercise of the conscience. When we repent by turning our mind, we will immediately confess by exercising our conscience. Then there is an opening of the heart. When we mean business to repent to the Lord and confess all our failures before God, our emotion will immediately be moved and touched. We will tell the Lord, “Lord Jesus, I love You.” When our emotion is moved, our will makes a decision for the Lord. We will say, “Lord, from today I want nothing besides You. I want You to be my aim, my goal, and my one desire. I only want to seek after You.” The mind of the heart turns, the conscience of the heart is opened, and the emotion and will of the heart follow. Thus, the whole heart is open to the Lord, and the Lord has a way to come into our heart. It is by repenting and confessing that we open our heart to the Lord. This is revealed in the Scriptures and proven by our experience.

... Day by day we have to learn the lesson to deal with the Lord to be poor in spirit by emptying our spirit of many old things such as old knowledge and old experience. If our heart is not open, the Lord has no possibility to dispense Himself into us. If our spirit is full, the Lord also has no way to impart something fresh of Himself into our being. We have to be poor in spirit and pure in heart. We need to ask the Lord to empty our spirit and clear up our heart. Then the Lord will have the free way in us and the adequate room in our being to fill us.

The heart acts in cooperation with the spirit, but the spirit is the organ for us to directly receive and contact the Lord. If we are going to contact the Lord, we must exercise our spirit. If we are going to serve the Lord, we must exercise our spirit. If we are going to receive the Lord, to take the Lord in, we must exercise our spirit. But the exercise of our spirit depends on the condition of the heart. If the condition of our heart is wrong, it is hard for us to exercise our spirit. One thing we should never do with the saints in the church is to play politics. We should not have two faces, pretending to be one way to a brother’s face but undermining him behind his back. Our heart must be honest and sincere for us to experience the Lord. We have to be faithful, honest, and frank. If we feel that something needs to be said, we should say it faithfully, honestly, and properly. We are the children of God, the children in light. Our heart must be honest and pure. Our conscience must be purged. If our heart is condemning us, how can we pray in a proper way?