

Do You Struggle With a Poverty Mentality?

Paupers have a poverty mentality. They always feel like their resources are limited.

They believe that when someone else receives something, it takes away some of the provision that could be theirs. They surmise that someone else's blessing costs them.

The story of the prodigal son from Luke 15 illustrates this point clearly. Having squandered his inheritance, the youngest son came home seeking refuge. His father was so excited to see him that he threw him a party. He had been saving the fattened calf for such an occasion, and finally it was time to celebrate. Everyone came to the festivity except for the elder brother; he stayed out in the field. When his father didn't see the older brother at the party, he went looking for him. He found him outside alone.

"Why aren't you coming to celebrate?" the father asked.

The older brother yelled, "You gave him the fattened calf, but you haven't even given me a goat!"

His father was stunned. He looked at his son, staring into his soul with the eyes of a loving father and said, "I gave him the fattened calf, but you own the farm" (summarized from Luke 15:11-31).

Why in the world did the older brother hang out waiting for his father to give him a goat when he owned the whole farm? He failed to recognize that he was a son and not a servant.

The revelation of our true identity will destroy the spirit of poverty in our lives. Until that happens we will keep thinking there are limits on what we get to have. As a result, we are

jealous of anyone who receives something that we don't have. This leaks into all aspects of our lives including work, friends, and positions within the church.

A Kingdom of Finances

Unfortunately, most of us in the church are still thinking like the older brother. We have lost sight of the fact that we don't just work on the farm—we are sons and daughters of the Owner, and our Dad has plenty! I believe this revelation will totally change the way we think and plan for our futures. Most of us are still looking at our provision (what our bank statement says) to help us determine our vision, and therefore are living within our means instead of His blessings.

For example, if we are constructing a new building, we argue that we must give up some other project to cover the cost. Yet we have been called to live beyond reason and far beyond the borders of our own abilities. If we can't do any more than mere men, then let us not tell others we are a part of the church of a living God. We have to accomplish more than the Elk's Club if we are going to call God our Dad. This requires us to live by faith in God's provision.

When we daily trust God for our substance then we will tap into heaven's resources. (I know that there is a real need for true stewardship in the body of Christ but much of what is called stewardship in the Church is simply fear that has disguised itself as wisdom.)

Paul said it best, "My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). Did you get that? He said, "God will supply all of our needs according to His riches in glory!" He is not supplying according to my need but according to His riches.

Living By Faith

Many times I have asked people what they do for a living. Some

of them say, "I live by faith." I have learned over the years that this statement usually means, "I don't have a job. I depend on people to donate to my ministry." The unspoken belief is that people who receive a paycheck don't need to believe God for their income. This ideology is problematic. If we stop living by faith when we start receiving a regular income, then we reduce our provision down to our ability to perform instead of the Lord's ability to provide.

The pauper mentality can be found in every level of society and in all walks of life. A person's bank account is no indication whether they are experiencing the provision of God or not. People can have a lot of things but still feel insecure fearing something could happen to them and they'd lose it all. When paupers acquire money or things they tend to get their identity from them. The truth is that a man is not measured by what he has but by what has him. Some people own houses, but sometimes it seems that houses own people.

When we live just to get things or work so much that we don't have time for the important relationships that we have in our lives, I wonder if we own things or if they own us. The way I see it is that there is a difference between being rich and being wealthy. Wealthy people refuse to be reduced to their balance sheet and their wealth never has them. They don't worry about the money because they know there will always be enough.

Rich people's self-esteem is attached directly to their "Profit and Loss Statement." They exert a lot of energy either chasing money or trying to keep it. I don't mean that we shouldn't have great work habits. I just mean that princes don't work for money, but rather, they work for God.

When a pauper gets a lot of money, the question that needs to be answered is, "Did God gain a fortune or lose a man?" Paupers often lose sight of their priorities when they get money, but princes don't get their identity from what they

have because they know their identity is not dependent on their performance or their possessions. Princes own things, but they never let things own them. The result is that they are able to experience the worry-free life Jesus promised and are free to seek first the kingdom, knowing that all they need will be added to them.

The Promised Land

The promised land of princehood is filled with the Father's blessings. He wants to lavish His love on us, pour out His blessings in us, and give more than we can contain. The Psalms put it best, "How blessed is the man who fears the Lord, who greatly delights in His commandments. His descendants will be mighty on earth; the generation of the upright will be blessed. Wealth and riches are in his house, and his righteousness endures forever" (Ps. 112:1-3).

For more on this subject, check out my book *Supernatural Ways of Royalty*.

Do you struggle with a poverty mentality? Tell me about it in the comments below. {eoa}

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