

There is No Blessing without Humility – 06 Mar 2005

- Joshua Daniel

Please turn to Luke 18th chapter, 10th verse: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11: The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, god, I thank you, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13: And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14: I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

There is no blessing without humbling. And to humble ourselves is something which is very hard because it means we have to set aside our native pride, our thoughts, our ways. Now here is this man, the Pharisee first, as Jesus told us, his prayer consisted of an enumeration of his virtues or his donor like activity. I give! You know some times people have that attitude as though they are the donors. They forget that everything that they are and have, they have received it from the good lord. Forget it. You know this donor attitude begets a lot of trouble. You know in some families, oh if I did not marry you, you would be still sitting on that shelf. Masculine pride! Chauvinism. And on and on and on it goes. Why is that that we obey so little and so tardily the word of god? Pride. Now even in the place of prayer this man must enumerate all his virtuous acts and what he considered to be things which he had not done which give him a very special place before god. A kind of negative righteousness. How many extortioners did he transform? Did he transform any one? You know there were some young fellows whom I had apparently never sat down with or given even a few minutes to them and this was brought to me, someone said they miss that little time that they crave. So I called up these five boys and one of them had been a terrorist. He told me how he was converted and now with the bible college in the bible school he was being trained, he had hardly any education. I was sad about this. A family of many children but you know he had gotten into that culture of being the underground, fighting the army, fighting the other tribe. I didn't go into all the atrocities which he committed but however I saw the tremendous potential in just those five young people; coming out of those tribal areas. Now my dear friends, we should ask ourselves and say how many criminals have been touched by my life. It is not a question of saying I didn't do this, I didn't do this, I didn't do this. That's a very negative way of evaluating yourself. The Christian life makes you to win others. You know, to win others you have got to be winsome. I told a young fellow who had been a regional sales manager, I said to him, if you keep such a grim face, who would want to come anywhere near you? Some people don't know that you can be very open who is threatening you? Why do you behave as though you should

be on your defense the whole time? No, I don't feel I have to take a defensive posture at all. You can have such a beautiful demeanor as the lord gives you his beauty. But today, I don't know your beauty sleep, I have none of that! But all the beauty sleep and cosmetics in the world cannot make some people's countenance open or inviting. Simply because there is an inner tension. Why? Why should we have inner tension? We must learn how to cast our cares upon the lord. That is faith that is prayer. In any case, you can't bare all that load, can you? You can't make any difference in some of those things that are worrying you. No. why don't you leave it at the foot of the throne and say Lord, I can't handle this? It's for you to handle this. We don't do so. Here is the other man, the publican, he is very direct. You know in certain prayer meetings, I had to tell the people when they were praying general prayers, I said, Listen, we do not want any of those usual prayers. You know there is a lingual, people learn the phrases, they go on and on and on. You see with those old hack-need phrases which are meant to nothing! But I had to tell the people, now listen, I do not want the plural used at all. First person, singular. That's what I see in the bible. God be merciful to me, a sinner. First person singular. I want to tell you that the congregation used to take that up. I remember a meeting where a young man who later became a minister in the Presbyterian Church stood up. A well-known young man in community and said Lord, I am a hypocrite have mercy on me. I said I don't want flowery prayers, the usual prayers, No. come get to the point and people would do so. And the pastor of the church said to me next evening when I was preaching, Brother, I went in and I prayed a kind of nice polite general prayer and the lord rebuked me. So in the morning service I made a confession of my sins. That's it. That's praying. So when we say Lord we are all robbing you, that's wrong. If you are robbing god of tithes and offerings, well, it's for you to say lord I am a robber. Don't seek company you know, that's being very dishonest. That's not being fair. How do you assume that all the others are doing the same thing? No, that's not right. You are praying to the lord. So the first person singular. Dear friends that's where prayer begins. The broken spirit says Lord here I am, I need you, I humble myself. This man went home justified. Cleansed. Clear in the sight of god. Isn't that wonderful? Just imagine it's such a short prayer, right from the depths of this heart and it was answered right away. That's praying. And today in most of our congregations we will not see such praying. It is a general mish mash of all sorts of pious phraseology which gets nobody anywhere. So that's where prayer begins my dear people. And now let me take you to the Lord 's Prayer. After this manner therefore pray you, our father which art in heaven, hallowed be your name. Our father which art in heaven. A heavenly father and there is an open free unbroken relationship. Our father. Friends, when we call the lord our father, is it just an empty word? Or do you pray with the consciousness when you call the lord our father? Do you pray with the consciousness that you are an heir to the throne, a join heir with Jesus Christ. For every one that exalteth himself shall be abased and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. There is no blessing without humbling.