

The Poverty of Christ

March 8, 2015

I. Review:

A. Benefits of Redemption - through the death & resurrection of Christ, we receive 3 benefits.

1. Salvation - He took our sins and we take His righteousness!

1Jn 3:5 You know that He appeared in order to take away sins;

2. Healing - He took our sicknesses and we take His healing!

1Jn 3:8 The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil

3. Prosperity - He took our poverty and we take His riches!

2Cor 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

B. (23) Biblical evidence for prosperity

II. Poverty

There are many political, governmental and religious groups that have it as their goal the eradication of poverty among the poor of the nations. They recognize that poverty is not good, that it is something to be opposed and alleviated. Poverty enslaves and harms countless millions of people every day.

A. Poverty is part of the curse:

1. Poverty is part of the curse.

Deut 28:15-20 "But it shall come about, if you do not obey the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you: "Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country. Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. Cursed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock. Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out. The LORD will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me. (Deut 28:15-68; Lev 26:14-46)

2. Poverty is a result of sin.

Jdg 6:1 Then the sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD gave them into the hands of Midian seven years. (Jdg 3:7; 13:1; 1Sa 15:19; 1Ki 11:6).

3. The Gospel is preached to the poor to bring them out of poverty.

Luke 4:18-19 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR . HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."

(Mt 11:5; Lk 4:18; 7:22)

Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners;

4. Jesus became a curse for us and redeemed us from the curse of the law, so that blessing might come upon us

Gal 3:13-14 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"-- 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

5. Jesus became poor so we could become rich.

2 Cor 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

B. Jesus became poor so that we might be made rich.

2 Cor 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

Questions:

When did Jesus become poor?

Exactly when did that take place?

Did it happen when He came to the planet?

Did He partake of our poverty at that point?

When did He actually give up His riches and His wealth?

In this life Jesus was very well taken care of by His own Father (His heavenly Father).

At His birth, kings from the East came and brought spices and oil and gold in abundance (Mat 1:24) for His sustenance and His provision while His earthly parents fled with Him to Egypt until Herod died.

In the silent years of his childhood and young adulthood, Jesus was provided for by an earthly stepfather who was a successful businessman in the carpentry trade.

In his earthly ministry He was financially supported by some faithful women who followed Him from town to town along with His disciples (Luke 8:3).

There was apparently so much money that **He had** to appoint a **treasurer** with the "bag" (John 12:6). Judas was given this task and of course misused it, but had enough finances that Jesus Himself would give out of their money to the poor (Lk 14:13, 21; Jn 13:29).

Jesus was **dressed in fine clothing**, not in rags. His garments were expensive enough so as to be fought over at the foot of the Cross by the Roman soldiers.

Jesus was **buried among the rich** in his death. Even in His death, He was provided for by a wealthy man for a period of three days. Isaiah prophesied that this would happen (Isaiah 53:8).

So **when** exactly **did He become poor** for us?

Jesus became sin for us on the cross

2Cor 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, ...

Jesus took our sicknesses in His own body on the tree

1Pt 2:24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. (Isa 53:5-6; Mt 8:17)

He became poverty for us also on the cross!

When Jesus came to earth he did not take our sinful nature -

He committed no sin (1Pt 2:22; Heb 4:15; 7:26-27; 1Jn 3:5)

When He first appeared here on the planet, He did not take our sicknesses or become sick.

Neither did He take our poverty or live in poverty when He came to earth.

He actually lived in relative prosperity even while He was here among us.

Jesus on the Cross

So then Jesus became poor on the cross. It is on the cross that He took our poverty, our sickness and our sin. It was on that cruel cross that Jesus bore not only our sins, and carried not only our sicknesses, but also became our poverty-our lack-and our need.

It is only through religious tradition and the concepts of men that we believe otherwise. We have grown up believing that Jesus lived on earth in poverty and lack-that He identified with the poor and ministered to them.

We were taught that Jesus lived a frugal life of just enough and did not have any of this world's goods.

Therefore, we were told, that is how we should live.

But, of course, if Jesus did not live that way, and the disciples and early church apostles did not live that way, then that changes everything. Then neither should we live that way! If Jesus actually took our poverty-then we should not have to live in it any longer. We are set free. We are delivered.

That does not mean that Jesus lived in self-centered luxury, or that the early church apostles collected money from all the churches so they could retire in ease. Of course not. God forbid! Even Jesus Himself was a giver. And the first apostles were givers. The early church followed the example of Jesus and they were givers.

And not only did they give their money, but they gave their very lives for the Gospel (Acts 15:26). Those first followers laid down everything (including their money at the feet of the apostles) in order to gain Christ, and in order to fulfill their commission and see the world reached.

And that is the way we should also live! As we give, we will be blessed. As we are blessed, we bless others and keep giving more. The more we give, the more we are given, and on it goes. And so the wonderful Abrahamic cycle continues and the world is reached with the Gospel through our obedience. That is what Jesus really did. And that is what we should do. Put that on a wrist band!

C. Root of the Word Poverty

Bible words for "poverty"

- 1) Greek word "hustereo" (from which we get the word "hysteria")
and means "lack, or to come behind, or come late, to be left behind in the race, to fail to reach the goal, to fall short." It means "to be inferior in power, influence or rank; to suffer want; to lack excellence or worth."
- 2) Greek word for poor - "ptochos."
It means to be "reduced to beggary or asking of alms; to be destitute of wealth, influence, position or honor; to be lowly, afflicted helpless, powerless and needy." It is to be "lacking in anything."
- 3) Hebrew word for being "poor" (- "roosh")
which means to "be poor, be in want, lack, hinder or one impoverishing himself."

4) Another Hebrew word for poverty is "chacer;"
which means, "to lack, to be without, to decrease or have a need."

Summary:

None of these words sound good.

None of them have any virtue associated with them.

None of these words would be listed as something desirable.

None of these words would be something that God would want any people,
let alone His own people
or His children,
to embrace or receive into their lives.

These words would be things to be avoided and bad fruit to be disdained.

God desires to deliver us from such a station in life.

He wants His children to escape from the ruin of such a condition.

Poverty is no virtue.

Conclusion:

The spirit of religion and the spirit of poverty are twins. - Dr. Phil Pringle