

擁抱貧窮是神所祝福的 “Embracing Poverty as Blessed by God”

「心靈貧窮的人有福了！因為天國是他們的。」太五 3

在「心靈黑夜」一書中，作者約翰十架鼓勵我們要完善心靈的貧窮。他說：「在我們進深神的路程中，我們在所難免會進入一道奧秘裡，我們發現在這關係中，我們是無法去講條件或要求。在繼續進深的靈程上，我們必須放棄操控和作主，（就是自以為能用自己的方法處理與神交往）。這樣放棄的話，我們會進到超越了自我所理解的真相（就是自己建設出來的），從而走向神所定義的真相，是神啟示出來的。」

當我們走在不再自主的路上，我們會除去所有根自自我而來的保障，真正開始過著信心，愛神，倚靠神的生活，神才是唯一我們信仰的主和完成者。這樣的捨棄自然是有困難。約翰十架教導說這樣的成長會帶著一種失落感，然而，這種感受會引導我們經歷真實的、耶穌所說的心靈貧窮。

當你感到你的靈命好像失去能力，其實是信仰上一種吊軌（似非而是），因為這是靈命更進深倚靠神的一個象徵。覺醒內裡的貧乏或意識到什麼都沒有可獻給神，應該是導致平靜而不是困擾，這正是耶穌在他的教導中說的得祝福的地方。

反省問題：

1. 以自己的方法處理與神交往的途徑會是怎樣的呢？我們是怎樣放下「講條件或要求」？
2. 我們可能是怕向神求祂啟示祂是誰？到底我們是怕什麼？又怕失去什麼？
3. 如果「靈裡的貧窮」是指承認我們受造的本相（或需依靠神的本相），這是否容易接受？這怎樣引申到我們形容自己與神的關係是像一個小孩或是一個成人來到神面前？

禱告：

求耶穌幫助你接納你靈裡的貧窮，就是祂所指的福氣。想想在你屬靈生命中你要放棄的所謂「能幹、成就」是什麼意思？

“Embracing Poverty as Blessed by God”

In the Dark Night of the Soul, St. John of the Cross encourages us to “make perfect the inner poverty of spirit.” St. John teaches that, as we approach God in our journey, we inevitably enter a realm of mystery where we recognize that we are no longer in a position to lay down the terms and conditions of the relationship. In order to progress in the spiritual life we must lose our sense of mastery and control over it, our sense of being able to deal with God on our own terms. In so doing, we move beyond our own version of reality—one that is largely self-constructed—and more towards truth as God defines and reveals it to us.

As we walk along a path that is no longer self-determined we are stripped of all guarantees which are rooted in our selves. We begin to truly live a life of faith, love, and trust in God as the sole Author and Finisher of our faith. It’s no wonder that this undoing presents us with such difficulties. St. John of the Cross teaches that such growth will naturally be accompanied by a sense of loss which will lead us to experience the true poverty of spirit that Jesus is referring to here.

In the paradox of faith, when you feel that you’ve lost your sense of competence in your spiritual life it could well be a sign of real spiritual progress in the direction of a deeper dependence on God. An awareness of inner poverty, of having nothing of your own to offer God, should be cause for peace rather than disturbance since it is, in Jesus’ teaching, the very condition that ushers in blessing.

- What are some of the ways that we try to manage our relationship with God on our own terms? In what ways do we “lay down terms and conditions?”
- What might we be afraid of in asking God to reveal who God is to us? What might we fear losing?
- If “poverty of spirit” means to recognize our “creaturehood” (or dependence) before God how easy is this for us to accept? How might the idea of being a child, versus being more adult-like in our relationship with God, apply to this?

Prayer: Ask Jesus to help you accept the poverty of spirit in your life that He calls blessed. Consider what it means to let go of whatever “competence” you think you have in the spiritual life.