

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG99 – Humble By Nature

One of the verses of Scripture that I have used so much, actually over the last two and a half to three years, because of the circumstances that have been going on around us in this world, has been Second Chronicles 7:13-14. In this podcast, I want to focus on these verses again; because I feel like where we are in history and in what God is doing surrounding us, it is very necessary to take the admonition of these verses and put them into practice in our life. I wish that we could see this in the Church. I wish we could see it throughout the whole body of Christ. And in some ways, it is very much of a heartbreak to me that there has not been this groundswell, really, of a reaction to these verses, considering what we see going on around us on a daily basis.

I will read second Chronicles, starting at chapter 7, verse 13: “If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” Now, these verses came from God to Solomon. They came immediately following the dedication of the first Temple, which was an amazing event in itself – God’s Presence came, the Shekinah glory came upon the Temple, to where no one could stand, the priests could not stand to minister. God filled it with His Presence at the outset of the dedication of that Temple. So He was definitely there. Following this event, and the prayer of Solomon to God, then God comes and meets Solomon; and part of what He says to him are these verses. They are to me more than significant; they are instructions from God about what to do as His people when we see certain events transpiring.

He says, again, in verse 13, “If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain.” I know there are many places right now experiencing drought, including where I personally live. He says, “If I command the locust to devour the land”; and we could use not just locusts, but we could talk about the devouring of the environment and the land that we live in. “Or if I send pestilence among My people,” and we have certainly seen pestilence over the last couple of years with COVID-19 – there is a definite reality to the fact that we live in a pestilence, and have been living in a pestilence. So all of these warnings from God, personally, for me, get my attention, because I feel like all of these things are happening right now around us on a daily basis; and I think we are foolish if we do not see that, and God help us if we do not have the perception to recognize it.

But, He is saying, if we understand that these things are taking place, then in verse 14, He gives us the instruction: “And My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” I know for me, personally, as I said, really the impetus of this podcast is just my own time of prayer and intercession and waiting on the Lord before Him on a daily basis. I feel like these four admonitions and the instructions that He gives us – that we are to be humble, that we are to pray, seek His face, and, turn from our wicked ways – these are very definite instructions for us if we are people called by His name. And I think that we, as Christians, believe that we are people called by His name. We understand that the Jewish people are a people called by His name. So all of us who are called by His

name should be heeding the admonition and the instruction of this prayer. To me, it is as significant as Christ teaching the disciples to pray, telling them how to pray. And this is God the Father here, instructing us how to respond, and how to pray.

As I was praying over this, again and again, but just the other day, the first part of this struck me so deeply, that we are to humble ourselves. I just was so struck by the Lord in my heart about this, because I think that the very act of us trying to humble ourself is really not following the instruction here. I feel like, honestly, it is an expression of our arrogance. We in our arrogance declare that we are humbling ourselves, when in fact, dust does not need to declare it is humble – its existence is the definition of humble, and humility. And what I believe it is talking about is not that we come and do some religious act of supposedly humbling ourselves before God. I do not know if it grabs you, but to me, it is the height of arrogance that we would say, as humans who are dust and nothing, “Here we are in Your Presence, Lord, to humble ourselves.” I think what this is saying, I think what God is saying to us in verse 14, is that we need a revelation our existence. We need a revelation that we are dust, that we are nothing, that our very existence on earth is the definition of humility and humble.

If we would look up in the dictionary of the Kingdom the word humble, it would have our picture there, because we are dirt. We are dust before God. We are already nothing. So you see, the idea of coming and trying to declare to Him our humility, or declare we are nothing, means that we have forgotten that we are nothing. And so it is God, in a backhanded way, almost, leading us into a revelation to see really the truth of what our existence is before Him. And I think it is necessary, because this is the first step that He gives in four steps of how we are to respond and to react when we look around us and we see what is transpiring. We see the plagues and the pestilence; we see the earth in its destruction being devoured by the locust of this age; we recognize all of these things are happening. What do we do? The first step is, I believe, we need a revelation of who and what we are before God. I think that there is a way in which, with our free will and the way humanity works, the way our minds work, we exalt ourselves, we exalt our abilities, and we think, in the terms of the apostle Paul, “more highly of ourselves than we ought to think.” And so what I would like to do in this podcast is just go through some of the Scriptures and see if we can bring this into perspective of how it is that we really are, and how we exist.

First of all, I would go back to Genesis the third chapter, in verse 19, after Adam and Eve fell and sinned. God was bringing the curse, and He was speaking to Adam, and He said, “By the sweat of your face you will eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Let that impact you: you are dust. I know we dress ourselves up; I know we seem as humans to have accomplished many mighty things; but not in God's eyes. In God's eyes, we are dust; and in truth, we are but dust. And when Adam and Eve fell, they lost the standing that they had of moving through God into becoming His sons, and sort of growing out of this state – because at some point, they were to be everlasting. Dust is not everlasting.

Job 42 at verses 1-4 says, “Then Job answered the Lord and said” – and remember, in this story, this is at the end of the book of Job. I encourage you to go read it, because all through the book of Job, he has kind of argued with God and he has kind of been obnoxious and honest, in his mind, to plead his case about who and what he is, about his own righteousness, and how he has lived, and all of these things. But then, all of a sudden, he meets God, and God appears to him, and God speaks to him. And these verses come following that event: “Then Job answered the Lord and said, ‘I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. “Who is this that hides counsel without

knowledge?” Therefore I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.” And I think this applies to us in humanity. I think that we have come to assume things or declare things about our life, and about humanity, and about society, and about government, and about our world, and about our knowledge and our brain and how intelligent we are, and how many books we have written, and all of these things – when we really do not know what we are talking about. He said, “‘I have declared that which I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.’ “Hear, now, and I will speak; I will ask You, and You instruct me.”” See, all along, he has been instructing God; and I think this is something we need to recognize.

I think the church has come to a place where I do not know that we are listening to Him, or instructing Him in our minds. I do not know that our doctrines are telling Him who He is and what He is and how He acts and how He thinks and what He should do, or if we are listening and waiting upon Him for Him to tell us how to think, and what to do, and who we are, and who He is. I think that we have turned this thing upside down, and God is looking for us to correct ourselves. When He appeared to Job, Job was able to correct himself. He goes on in verses 5-6 and says, “‘I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear; but now my eye sees You; therefore I retract, and I repent in dust and ashes.’”

Before this time, Job had only heard about Him – “I have heard about You” – and he was speaking out of what he had heard. I think one of the things that comes along with this recognition of being dust of the earth is to recognize also, we have not yet seen Him face to face. We do not know Him; and yet we act like we do. We need to be seeking to know Him, not proclaiming, or pretending, that we know Him. This is what Job recognized: “I have heard of You with the hearing of my ear, but now I see You with my eyes.” And there will come this for us, and we should contend for it. We are waiting for Him to appear to us, for us to see Him even as He is. And as the Scripture says, when we see Him as He is, we shall be changed, from glory to glory, into His image. We cannot try to become like He is without seeing Him, or else we are like Job, talking about what we do not really understand. And so Job said, “I retract, I take back everything I say.” I wonder how much we will take back when we see Him? I wonder how many statements we will retract? I wonder how many doctrines we will retract? I wonder how much of our church function, in the way that we worship and do many things in presenting ourselves before God, we will retract? and we will find ourself repenting in ashes, repenting as dust and ashes. Good lesson that we learn from Job.

We see then in Leviticus 16:29 – and this would be good to go and read and rehearse – the whole idea behind the Day of Atonement is a day of recognizing; it is to humble your soul; it is for us to come to the revelation. And I think this is important, because you see, the Day of Atonement is the day of forgiveness. It is the day when sin is removed. It is the day when sin is cleansed from us, from the camp, from the Tabernacle, from everything surrounding us, because we in our humanity have spoiled it. We have imparted to it our very adamic nature of sin. And so we come to this Day of Atonement, and we realize that He is looking for something to happen. As we enter into the Day of Atonement, it says, “You shall humble your souls.” This is out of Leviticus 16, verses 29 and 30: “‘You shall humble your souls and not do any work, whether the native, or the alien who sojourns among you; for it is on this day that atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you; you will be clean from all of your sins before the Lord.’” This is to be a permanent statute for Israel. It is a day in which you shall humble your souls. We are to humble ourselves. And yet, again, when we read this terminology, we have got to understand, God is not saying you humble yourself; recognize what you are, recognize your humility by virtue of your form. “As I said to Adam, I am saying to you: you are dust, and you shall return to dust.” We could see ourselves now as an animated dust cloud, which will return to dust of the ground with no longer the

animation of the Spirit of God within us. And so He has given us this Day of Atonement, and we should relate to the Day of Atonement with this thinking.

One thing that really struck me, as the Lord was moving upon me in this message, is the fact that the men and women throughout the Scriptures that God really used in a great way all had this revelation of being dust. I will go through and give you some examples. These are certainly not all of them, but they are representative of the true men and women of God who He used and was able to use. And I think it is this idea that God is able to use dust. That is why He formed us from dust in the beginning; what He forms from the dust He is able to use. But when we lose the perspective that we are dust, and we lose the perspective that He has formed us, we lose the ability for Him to use us any longer. So when we look at some of these amazing men and women of God, we see that they had this common revelation of who they were and what they were in the earth. One of the first, of course, is Moses; and I will give you some verses as we go along that you can read, because I am going to jump through these verses. I am not going to read them all, this will be too long already.

Numbers 12:1-13 are great verses to read. In verse 3, he says, "Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth." Why did God use Moses? Moses had a revelation of what he was not. He knew that he was dust; he felt that from the very beginning. He stood there and told God, "You can't use me because of my form, and what I am unable to do in myself." But see, that is what God turns and uses. I will give you another illustration – Mary, the mother of the Lord. We see in Luke 1:46-55 some great verses. Again, please read through these verses, they are really tremendous. Starting at verses 46-48, this is when Mary comes and meets with Elizabeth: "And Mary said, 'My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant.'" What was the quality that allowed God to use Mary? She knew she was dust. Jumping down to verses 51-52, "He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. He has brought down rulers from their thrones, and has exalted those who were humble.'" Very true. Those who know that they are dust, and have been brought to a place where they will never forget that.

Remember, one of the admonitions of the Scriptures is, "Do not forget the pit from which you were dugged." Do not forget the fact that you were dug from the ground. When God finished forming you, He had dirt under His fingernails, because He brought you forth as dust, and formed you into something. These people, as Mary, recognize that He takes of the dust and creates something out of it that He is able to use. While on the other hand, He brings down the rulers from their thrones, because they have exalted themselves, instead of exalting God.

Paul was another one who had this revelation. We see it in Romans 12, verses 2-3, and I will read verse 3: "For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgement, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith." Sound judgment. Paul said, don't think more highly of yourself. No matter what God does to use some of these people like Moses, Mary, Paul, different ones as we go along, you can never think more highly of yourself; because whatever God does, whatever He makes you, whatever He uses you to do, you remain dust. Everything that happens is by virtue of Him, as the Lord, the Creator, and the Father. And so Paul says that we should not think more highly of ourselves than we ought, but we should have sound judgment. Do you know how simple sound judgment is? I will tell you – sound judgment is me looking at myself and saying, "Gary, you are but dust," and holding on to that revelation as the central core truth of my life, that I am dust and He is my Creator and my Father.

Solomon was another one. We always talk about Ecclesiastes and how negative it seems, but I really find that he is using certain terminologies because he is emphasizing really the revelation that he has. One of the things that you find repeating itself throughout Ecclesiastes is this idea of vanity, or futility; because, what is dust? Dust is futile. What can it do? It can do nothing. Ecclesiastes 3:18-20: "I said to myself concerning the sons of men, 'God has surely tested them in order for them to see that they are but beasts.' For the fate of the sons of men and the fate of beasts is the same. As one dies so dies the other; indeed, they all have the same breath and there is no advantage for man over beast, for all is vanity. All go to the same place. All came from the dust and all return to the dust." These are sentences and statements from the wisest man that has lived. He understood that he was dust, and without God, all is futility.

Isaiah had an experience with God that showed him who he was. In Isaiah 6:5, it says, "Then I said, 'Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.'" Isaiah saw himself in reference to seeing God, and he knew he was but dust.

John on the Isle of Patmos had tremendous visions, and when he did, it showed him who he was. Revelation 1:10-18 – these are great verses for you to read. In verse 17 he says, "When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, 'Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last.'" John fell as a dead man; and we have seen that experience. When people see the Lord, they know who they are, and what they are. Daniel had a very similar experience. Read Daniel 10:4-10. In verses 7-8 he says, "Now I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, while the men who were with me did not see the vision; nevertheless, a great dread fell on them, and they ran away to hide themselves. So I was left alone and saw the great vision; yet no strength was left in me, for my natural color turned to a deathly pallor, and I retained no strength." He, as John, became like a dead man. These verses are just to help us understand that the men and women of God throughout the Scriptures had this experience, and I think this is what God is looking for us to have. As He talks about these verses in Chronicles, we are to have a revelation of our humility. We don't humble ourselves, we recognize we exist in a humility that is beyond words. We are truly the dust of the ground.

Other examples of this through the Scriptures relate to the potter and the clay. There are several references to this throughout the Word; I will, again, try to go quickly and give you several of them, because I would love for you to be able to go back and study these things yourself. My purpose here is not to cover everything in detail; it is to give you what you need to go before the Lord and seek Him for this revelation in your own life.

In Isaiah 64:8-9, it says, "But now, O Lord, You are our Father, we are the clay, and You our potter; and all of us are the work of Your hand." In Isaiah 29:16, it says, "You turn things around! Shall the potter be considered as equal with the clay, that what is made would it say to its maker, 'He did not make me'; or what is formed say to him who formed it, 'He has no understanding'?" And when we look at this and study this and pray over these verses, we will see how much we do this in our humanity. We really hold ourselves up as something; and many times in our thinking and in our prayers, in what we voice, in what comes out of our mouth, we literally challenge God, and what He has done and what He is doing.

In Isaiah 45:9-12, we find awesome verses again. Verse 9: "Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker—an earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth! Will the clay say to the potter, 'What are you doing?' Or the thing you are making say, 'He has no hands.'" See, these are pointing to tendencies and really truths about how we as humans and the Church relate back to God, because our arrogance

has become so ingrained into our thinking and our being that we feel like we are something when we in fact are nothing.

More verses to read are Jeremiah 18:1-10. I will give you verse 6: “‘Can I not, O house of Israel, deal with you as this potter does?’ declares the Lord. ‘Behold, like the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel.’” When we see this, we don’t try to humble ourselves. We don’t humble ourselves, we recognize the truth of what we are. Paul brought this very theme back up in Romans 9:18-24. I will read verses 20 and 21: “On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, ‘Why did you make me like this,’ will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?”

Not only does the Scripture give us the example of the potter and the clay, we see several times another illustration of what we are through the example of the grass of the field, or the flower that blooms in the field – how it dies and withers and goes back to dust. We will start in Isaiah 40:5-8: “‘Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.’ A voice says, ‘Call out.’ Then he answered, ‘What shall I call out?’ All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.”

In First Peter 1:23-25, we see these same words repeated. These are examples of both the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. In verse 24, Peter says, “For, ‘All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off.’” Psalm 103, David. David had such a revelation of this, repeats it so, so many times throughout the Psalms and the writings. Psalm 103:13-17 is a great example. I will read verse 14: “For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust.” God knows we are dust – the issue of this podcast is, do we? Verses 15-16: “As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. When the wind has passed over it, it is no more.” We go to James the first chapter, 9 through 11, and he talks again about us being like the flower of grass. We are this; what God is looking for is for us to get a revelation of it. He is not saying, “Humble yourself”; He is saying, “Get the revelation of your true existent state, and know how humble you are.”

One of the great examples is God leading the children of Israel through the wilderness. This was the purpose, for them to recognize and be able to confess, admit, and realize their humility. Deuteronomy 8:2-17 – again, please read all of these verses. Why were they in the wilderness? Verse 3 says, “‘He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord.’” The Lord is not trying to ask you to humble yourself, He is trying to make you understand the state of man. That is what He is doing through our circumstances, and that is what the wilderness wanderings were, the circumstances by which they would get their relationship with God right. Why did they end up in the wilderness for forty years? Because they grumbled against the Lord and against Moses. They complained against Him. They did not have faith. They were mad at what He was doing and the way He was doing it. That is the arrogance of our human flesh. And more times than we want to admit, we stand up and tell God how wrong He is, or think it in our heart of how differently He should be treating us, or treating others, what should be happening in the world. It is arrogance – and we need to recognize it. He was trying to get them in the wilderness to recognize their arrogance and to see the truth of their existence.

Verses 12-14: ““Otherwise, when you have eaten” – He is talking now about bringing them into the land – ““Otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived in them, and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt.”” He was trying to make this revelation of what they were stuck in their minds, so that He could bring them into an exalted place and bless them, without them losing that concept and having their arrogance arise once again, until He had to bring them into humility. We do not humble ourselves; God will bring us into circumstances that will humble us, because it is a revelation of what we are.

In verse 16, he goes on to say, ““In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end.”” God is not trying to just make you come to a place of depression because you are but dust; He is looking to have you have the revelation of the truth of your state in order that He can bless you, and do something good for you in the end. Verse 17: ““Otherwise, you may say in your heart, ‘My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.’” And I believe we exist in a day and age when humanity has come back to this place. We believe it is by the power and strength of our hand, and our ability, that we have become what we have become. It scares me that this process has so ingrained itself into America, in the thinking of the generations that have arisen over the last fifty years. The arrogance that we have, believing that it is through our ability that we have brought forth everything that has come into being. That is a scary place to be in, because God, again, is going to be the One that humbles us.

When we truly get this revelation of our humility, then God is able to exalt us and use us. He is able to bless us and give us many things. But don't ever lose the revelation of being dust, and know that it is the Lord that is exalted and glorified. When it talks about us being exalted, it is not us that is exalted – He is exalted because of what He is capable of doing with dust, what He is capable of accomplishing through dust. He is glorified, He is exalted, and we remain but dust.

James 4, verses 9 and 10, says, ““Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.”” In First Peter 5, read verses 5 and 6. In verse 6 it says, ““Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.”” What is the proper time? The proper time is when this revelation is so ingrained into our heart that we are never in threat of losing it and starting to attribute to ourselves what is being done and what is being accomplished. It is not that way. And in fact, I believe that in the days ahead, as we go into the end time, our very survival is based upon this revelation being our truth.

Zephaniah 2:3 says, ““Seek the Lord, all you humble of the earth who have carried out His ordinances; seek righteousness, seek humility.”” In other words, don't try to humble yourself. Seek the revelation of humility. ““Perhaps you will be hidden in the day of the Lord's anger.”” I think as we approach these days that we are in, we are going to need a special covering from the Lord; and it is the humble that will receive it.

If we look at a few points and take aways, I have four. The first is, to try to humble ourselves is proof of our arrogance. Secondly, the truth is that we are but dust. We exist in humility. Number three, we must cry out to God for a revelation of what we are. And lastly, God can use us when we know and acknowledge this truth.

I bless us to seek the Lord about our humility, and the revelation of it. Let us walk before Him in these ways, because the days require it. Amen.