

THE MESSAGE OF THE YOKE

Matthew 11:29-30

29) Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30) For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

One notices that the Greek words for “humble” and “lowly” are completely different altogether. While there is a built-in sense of similarities between the terms, there is also a distinct contrast between the two. Especially when employed in the context of verb and adverb usage.

Humble:

First of all, the scripture teaches us to humble ourselves. God’s design and order are for Him never to have to humble a man. Again, we must ideally humble ourselves according to scripture. To humble ourselves is a voluntary act of human choice. We choose to abase ourselves. We choose to lower our status. We choose to prefer another above or perhaps before ourselves. To humble ourselves is a conscientious sovereign act of our own will. However, to act in a humble fashion is no true measurement in and of itself that equates to lowliness of spirit. Lowliness is an issue of the heart.

Lowly:

Jesus taught us to take His yoke upon ourselves and learn of Him — “For I am meek and lowly.” Lowly, or lowliness, is not merely a mindset decided by our own volition as the state of humility is, but rather it transcends humility and becomes an actual lifestyle of low status. Verse 29 speaks plainly — for I am meek and lowly “IN HEART.” Jesus said that those who are “poor in spirit” would have the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3). Being poor in spirit means that only those who admit to an absolute bankruptcy of spiritual worth will inherit eternal life. Therefore, humility is a prerequisite for the Christian that translates into a spirit of lowliness within.

For redundancy's sake, allow me to emphasize that lowliness becomes a heart issue, not merely a voluntary act of the will. The residual acts of humility are designed to bring us into a state of lowliness or to create a spirit of lowliness within our heart. It consumes the entire inner-man. It becomes who we are in every facet of the spirit man. Christ did not say: I am acting lowly, but rather, “I am lowly.” The proof can be found in who I am and how I live.

Humbling ourselves is, once again, a “man-ward” action. Authentic lowliness is a spiritually generated process that begins with humility and can only truly

be discovered in the unity of His yoke. To humble oneself is an act. To be lowly is a lifestyle. The word means to “become depressed as in heavily pressed down. “To become.” A lifestyle and not an attitude. Not depressed in some dark, sinister, or demonic way, but to allow God to design our lifestyles to allow His burden, vision, mission, or cause, to become weighty. To live with a high level of spiritual gravity and weight regarding His purpose wherein we are submitted unto the kingdom work in such a fashion as to not live or reflect a lightweight or glamorous lifestyle. Lowliness, indeed, is a spirit. The message of the yoke is: “Be ye lowly, for I am lowly.”

Humbling ourselves is designed pristinely to be a “man-thing.” Lowly is truly a “God-thing.” Lowliness is the deepest dimension of humility. A proud man can humble himself for a certain cause, but can he truly change and become lowly? Outside of the yoke of Christ, genuine lowliness becomes a vanishing virtue among men.

When humility graduates, it becomes lowliness or the second dimension of humility. One may act in a humble fashion, but he can never truly act lowly. He must become lowly. Lowliness in mind and spirit cultivates and reflects lowliness in lifestyle. The DNA of a child of God is meekness and lowliness of spirit and is impossible to conceal. We witness humility or lowliness in the deepest fashion in the life of Christ. We can only learn this lifestyle with Christ in the bonds of His yoke.

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