

Series: Isaiah

Title: What Kind of Man God Regards

Text: Isaiah 66: 1-5

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**Isaiah 66: 1: Thus saith the LORD, The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest? 2: For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD: but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.***

This is the word of God—Thus saith the LORD. That ought to command our attention. This is God speaking. If we would know the truth then we must hear the word of God.

Have you ever wondered what kind of man does God regard? Our subject is “What Kind of Man God Regards.” God declares that man—you and I—cannot build the place where God dwells. God says, “The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest?” God dwells not in temples that our hands make, a temple we build cannot contain God, God is everywhere—“the heaven *is* my throne and the earth *is* my footstool.”

2 Chronicles 2: 5:[Solomon said] And the house which I build *is* great: for great *is* our God above all gods. 6: But who is able to build him an house, seeing the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? who *am* I then, that I should build him an house, save only to burn sacrifice before him?

Right now, our congregation is looking at a church building. It is honoring to Christ that we purchase a nice building in which to worship God—for “great is our God above all!” The place we worship ought to be a reflection of what we think of our God.

Let me say another thing. Some will say, “If God is everywhere then I don’t have to go to a church building, I can worship God in nature.” But it pleased God to save through the foolishness of preaching. And God will have his people assemble together under the sound of the gospel wherever God has established his name by sending a faithful preacher of the gospel.

But here is the point of our text. No building can contain God.

Acts 17: 24: God that made the world and all things therein seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;

Beside that, God is the creator of all things. You and I can make nothing that has not already been made by God--“where *is* the house that ye build unto me? and where *is* the place of my rest? For all those *things* hath mine hand made, and all those *things* have been, saith the LORD.”

God builds his house through the blood and righteousness of Christ. God our Savior is the creator of the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Hebrews 8: 1:...We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; 2: A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.

Be sure to hear God’s word. The house God dwells in—the house we are about to see where God dwells—is not a house that can be built by my hand or your hand—no sinner can build this house. This house is built by God the Father who chose the materials, God the Son who dug them out of the earth and polished these stones in his blood and God the Holy Spirit who made these stones living stones. So where does God dwell? God says “but to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.*”

God says that he looks to—regards, dwells in, rests in—the man who is poor in spirit, contrite in spirit and trembles at God’s word. Now, let’s see what scripture says it means to be poor and contrite in spirit and to tremble at God’s word.

## **POOR IN SPIRIT**

First, God says, “to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is poor...in spirit.*”

It is not merely those poor financially. God looks to those “poor in spirit.” To be “poor in spirit” is the opposite of being: rich in spirit, full in spirit. The rich in spirit think self to be worth something before God. They think their works to be worth something to God. They think their will is worth something to God. This is all men by nature. All men by nature are religious by nature. Yet, in their rich spirit they choose their own way rather than God’s way. So God has word for such rich spirited men in verse 3. He says “He that killeth an ox *is as if* he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, *as if* he cut off a dog’s neck; he that offereth an

oblation, *as if he offered* swine's blood; he that burneth incense, *as if he blessed* an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations."

To be poor in spirit is to be afflicted, humble, wretched, needy, weak, and lowly because of our sin. Those who are poor in spirit know that sin has left them without one thing to offer to God. We are nothing but sin. We have no righteousness or holiness, no willingness of ourselves, no faith, no repentance, no good thought, no sinless deed. In short, we have nothing of ourselves to commend us to God. We are poor in spirit. "In spirit" means it is real. It is created by God's grace and given in the inner man. The "poor in spirit" bow before the Lord in humility from a sense of their own insignificance, worthlessness, and sin.

God says, to this man will I look, even to him that is poor in spirit. Christ said, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." (Mr 2: 17) Christ said, "The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." (Lu 4: 18) Christ has glad tidings for the true depraved sinner. He has Life if you are lifeless; forgiveness if all you do is transgress; grace if all you are is guilty, mercy if you deserve nothing but God's wrath, salvation if you nothing but a sinner.

Has God's grace made you poor in spirit? Christ said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." (Mt 5: 3)

## CONTRITE IN SPIRIT

Secondly, God says he looks to the man "of a contrite spirit."

To be of a "contrite spirit" is the opposite of being "proud, arrogant, thinking in your heart that you can do anything needed to be saved."

Proverbs 6: 16: These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: 17: A proud look,...

God has nothing for the proud hearted sinner except just condemnation. He says in verse 4, "I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose *that* in which I delighted not."

To be of a "contrite spirit" is to be smitten in heart, broken hearted, totally lame in spirit. Remember Mephibosheth? "And the king said, Is there not yet any of the house of Saul, that I may shew the kindness of God unto him? And Ziba said unto the king, Jonathan hath yet a son, which is lame on his feet." (1 Sa 9: 3) The word "lame" is the same word from which "contrite spirit" is translated in our text. To be of a "contrite spirit" is to be "lame in spirit", "broken in spirit" because of your sin against God. We see it in the publican,

Luke 18:13: 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.

God says "to this man will I look, him that is of a contrite spirit." The first thing God does when he saves a sinner is break our hard-stony-hearts of flesh and gives us a broken heart to mourn over our sin. God had given David a contrite spirit but again God broke David's heart after he murdered Uriah. David's heart was broken because he sinned against God and brought reproach upon his Lord. A broken heart knows God is not pleased with our sacrifices. These are the words of a contrite heart,

Ps 51: 16: [O Lord]...thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give *it*: thou delightest not in burnt offering. 17: The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Has God broke your heart? Has God made you contrite? Are you fully persuaded that there is nothing you can do to save yourself? Do you need Christ to do it all? The only way I rest in Christ for all my righteousness is if I have absolutely none! The only way I can trust Christ to be my Sanctifier and my Sanctification is if I have absolutely no holiness apart from him! I cannot have free redemption by Christ if I have anyway of redeeming myself from sin and freeing myself from the bondage of my sin nature! But if you are totally helpless—broken and contrite in spirit—God has good news for you!

Psalm 34:18: The LORD *is* nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

Luke 4:18: [Christ said] The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because...he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, [the contrite]

## TREMBLETH AT MY WORD

Lastly, God says he looks to the man who "trembleth at my word."

To “tremble at God’s word” is not to take it lightly, not to make jokes about it, not to have a take it or leave it attitude toward the word of God. To “tremble at God’s word” is to be full of the fear of God, to hear and believe that every word God speaks in his word is true. Be sure to understand this: the spirit with which we regard God’s word is how we really regard God.

Here is an illustration of a man who, by God’s grace, trembled at his word. This is an example of God looking to the man who trembled at his word. It is King Josiah, king of Judah:

2 Kings 22: 11: And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law, that he rent his clothes...[he said] 13: Go ye, enquire of the LORD for me, and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great *is* the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written concerning us. [so they got a word from the Lord]...16: Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, *even* all the words of the book which the king of Judah hath read: 17: Because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the works of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and shall not be quenched. 18: But to the king of Judah which sent you to enquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, *As touching* the words which thou hast heard; 19: Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have heard *thee*, saith the LORD. 20: Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace; and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place.

It is only when God has given us a true fear so that we tremble in respect, in reverence, and in awe of the word of God that we will hear and repent and believe the good news of Christ’s gospel!

Luke 4:18: [Christ said] The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19: To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

The healing, recovering of sight, and setting at liberty by Christ comes to those that tremble at his word because they hear and believe God’s word. They tremble and reverence and are in awe of every word God speaks because that is their heart toward God by his grace!

The riches of God in Christ is freely given to the poor in spirit through the word of the gospel because he fears and believes God’s word. Christ heals the broken-hearted through the word of the gospel because the sinner reverences God’s word and believes God. Those whom God irresistibly makes to tremble at God’s word hear and are set free because Christ is our Redeemer who redeemed us from the curse of the law, from the dominion of our flesh, and shall at last redeem us into the glorious liberty of the sons of God in heaven. When we trembling at the word we hear and believe Christ is our Light who gives us sight and in him we shall never walk in blindness and darkness again. Christ has set us at liberty so that we are free from the law, free from the curse and condemnation, free from death and the grave, yes, free indeed! God makes us tremble so that we really believe God, fear God, reverence God. We tremble at his word. We believe the acceptable year of the Lord has come—the jubilee trumpet has blown and now all our debts are totally blotted out of the books by Christ’s blood!

But those who do not tremble at God’s word receive nothing from Christ because they believe not the word of his gospel!

Do you have a fear put in your heart by God? Has God made you tremble at his word by his grace? Has the power of God made you to be in awe at the great things spoken in God’s word? Felix trembled but it was a natural fear—he sent the preacher away. The Pharisee’s and scribes and Sadducees trembled—but theirs was a hatred for his word—so they cast out Christ and his people in God’s name! Some of us have experienced it! But King Josiah trembled at God’s word by God’s grace and he is yet alive in the joy of Christ’s presence forevermore!

If God’s grace has made you tremble at God’s word then God has a word for you in verse 5, “Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name’s sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.”

May God in grace make us poor in spirit, make us contrite in spirit and make us tremble at his word that we might believe Christ is All our salvation! The man who gives Christ all the glory as every aspect of our salvation is the kind of man—the only kind—God regards!

**Amen!**