



# *The Christian Life Institute*

## Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit

There are two sides to the Gospel: the pulling down and the pulling up. We must be emptied before we can be filled with Christ; therefore, we have the first Beatitude. D. M. Lloyd Jones, in his commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, points out the Divine sequence of the Beatitudes without adherence to the first one, blessed are the poor in spirit, it is hard for the others to unfold in our life in Christ. Conviction must precede conversion; the Gospel of Christ convicts before it releases us into His freedom. Amen. Whenever we are convicted of a sin in our lives and confess it before Him (1 John 1:9), there is always a freedom that follows from our authentic confession. Confession does not mean that we are free of sin – it means we are forgiven - and as sin continues to tempt us and creep back into our lives we look up, align ourselves to Christ and recognize the victory which assures us we are overcomers through Christ Jesus.

Lloyd-Jones stresses the danger of thinking that the Beatitudes are something, we as Christ-followers 'must do.'

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.
- Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
- Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

The Beatitudes are not action items – rules, we must follow - generated by our human striving. The Beatitudes are attitudes of the heart. We cannot do the Beatitudes in our own power we can achieve an attitude of the heart y surrendering into the power of Christ in us!

The scripture, "Blessed are the poor in Spirit," is not about material possessions, wealth - the resources of this world. Poverty of spirit is an attitude toward one's self. An attitude in Christ that reminds us of our wretchedness before God and our complete need for Him. This attitude of desperate dependence is contrary to the self-reliance taught and worshipped by the world. Self-reliance, self-confidence, self-assuredness, etc. are all worshiped at the altar of the world. Christ's message is countercultural. We are nothing without Him. Education, knowledge, intellect, accomplishments (as Paul reminds us in Philippians 3:8) are but dung in light of the glory we have in Christ Jesus. Blessed are the poor in Spirit prompts a humbling and sober thought of our need for our Savior every moment of every day.

We must come to embrace our wretchedness so that we can truly embrace that it is solely through the love of Christ that we have value, significance – we matter – because we matter to Christ. Our complete worth comes from Him and Him alone. The world loves out-going, self-assured individuals but the Bible states the greatest personality trait is humility. To empty oneself completely, is to be reliant only on Jesus Christ, to give Him all the glory for all that we have, all that we do, is to be "poor in the spirit." To be poor in the spirit is to have abundant life in Christ. Christ's death on the cross allowed us to be filled with His spirit and provided a new beginning in Him. A complete absence of self-pride, self-reliance, or self-anything is necessary for a spirit filled Life. Let us cry out - Lord Jesus, let there be less of me and more of You.

As we absorb these truths, we are reminded that it is a process in our own personal relationship with the Lord, Jesus. Our lanes or paths in Christ are unique to each one of us. We are to be encouraged to continue forward – to press on – in the path of Christ no matter the speed of our progress. It is about forward progress, steps in the direction of our Lord and Savior; not the speed of our steps that matter. We are to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord – obedient to Him - our eyes focused upward and on Him alone. "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might" (Ephesians 6:10).

How can you surrender action and cultivate an attitude of the heart? Please be specific with actions.

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How can you appreciate your wretchedness from a healthy spiritual perspective?

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