**When Bankruptcy Leads to Blessing**

Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (ESV)

With this verse Jesus begins His Sermon on the Mount, but more specifically the first section of His Sermon: The Beatitudes. Beatitudes means blessings. Jesus is about to list eight blessings over those who follow Him. This tiny verse is just the first of the Beatitudes. Remember we have said the Sermon on the Mount is simply a description of what the Christian ought to be, so in this verse Christ lays down the first characteristic of the Christian. And these characteristics come with beatitudes—or blessings.

The first blessing is upon those who are poor in spirit. Make no mistake, this is not referring to poor, as in lacking wealth, but spiritually bankruptcy.

**So first we must ask what does it mean to be poor in spirit?** To come to a true understanding of what the Bible means we must look to the rest of the Bible for answers.

Isaiah 66:2 For My hand made all those things, thus all those things have come to be, says the Lord. But to this man I will look, even to him who is **poor** and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word. (MEV)

Isaiah 66:2 All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is **humble** and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word. (ESV)

God is not impressed by the man or woman that has many accomplishments! God is not concerned with how many degrees you have, how much education, how many followers, how strong you are, how powerful. God loves when a person is humble, contrite and has reverence for His Word.

Ultimately, “poor in spirit” refers to a person’s attitude towards themself. To be poor in spirit is to be humble. Isaiah tells us that God’s attention is directed at those who are poor in spirit. This is further confirmed by James in his epistle:

James 4:6 God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble

The trouble we fall into with being poor in spirit is that this is not the way of the world. The world does not prefer the person that is poor in spirit. The world prefers self-confidence and self-reliance. The world looks for someone with personality and charisma. They are looking for the person with “rizz” and “style”. The world encourages people to make a show of themselves. The world wants people to “strut their stuff”. The world wants us to believe in ourselves. Did you know that the Satanic Bible is not a book about following Satan, but rather it is a book about how to do your own thing, how to live for yourself, how to have faith in oneself.

But the true believer understands that they are nothing without God.

Moses is a prime example of being “poor in spirit” in the Old Testament. When God calls him to speak to Pharaoh, Moses recognizes his own helplessness to do what he is called to do. But God reminds Him that He will help Moses. Gideon is yet another example of a person that is poor of spirit. When God comes to Gideon asking him to lead an army, Gideon falls back on the fact that he comes from the weakest tribe of people, weakest clan of his family. He recognizes he cannot accomplish this task without God’s help. The Bible tells us that the people of Corinth saw Paul as a weak and fearful man. A mark of Paul’s life was true humility.

While the world is looking for people who will believe in themselves, God is looking for those who believe in Him.

Those who are poor in Spirit find their wealth in the Cross of Jesus Christ

The next question to ask is: **What is the blessing for those who are poor in spirit?**

Christ says, “theirs is the kingdom of heaven”. The kingdom of heaven is filled with those who are poor in spirit. Heaven belongs not to those who think they can make it there on their own, but to those who know they cannot. The kingdom of God belongs to those who recognize their desperate need for God. The people we find in heaven are people that did not put faith in themselves and their abilities or strengths, but those who put their faith in God.