



The King's Highway

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A SERIES ON THE BEATITUDES OF
JESUS

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Introduction

THE BEATITUDES of Jesus Christ present a great gospel for humanity, for every human need. There are eight beatitudes. It was on the eighth day that our Lord arose from the dead; it marked the victory of the resurrection, the complete victory of redemption. In like manner, the victory of the resurrection life is marked by its blessedness; for to be raised with Him is to seek the things that are above (Col. 3:1). It is to enter the hidden life "hid with Christ in God," "the faith life." Paul, in his letter to the churches of Galatia, put it in these words: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

The first beatitude and the eighth promise the same reward, "the kingdom of heaven." To such is the promise of protection and provision, for every need. This must be true, especially of the Kingdom of Heaven; supreme victory and gladness would of necessity be included in the Kingdom's provision. They that mourn have the promise of comfort; the meek, the promise of inheritance; those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the promise of being filled, satisfied; the merciful, the promise of mercy; the pure in heart, the promise of the beatific vision of God, "see God"; the peacemakers, the promise of a place in the family of God.

Happiness means more than pleasure, and the word "blessed" in the Beatitudes signifies more than being happy. Indeed, it indicates an impartation of immortality, a deliverance from fate. In other words, it includes the work of God in the human soul, and the providence of God over human life. God is the Blessor, and the people of certain disposition or spirit are blessed by Him. "Blessed is the man" (Psalm 1:1) reveals the use of the Hebrew word *ashroy*, which is really plural in form and expresses an exclamation, "Oh, the blessedness of the man!"

I.—The Poor in Spirit

Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Our Lord begins His message with blessings. He came into the world to bless the human family. In Him, all the families of the earth are to be blessed. The Old Testament ends with a curse; the New Testament, beginning with our Lord's ministry, the blessing of His gospel.

In these Beatitudes there are two outstand-

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO OUR READERS

We are very grateful to our readers who have responded to our appeals for renewals and have sent in the money. But there are many still, who are in arrears, and where as June 15 is the end of our denominational year when our reports must be sent in, we want to hear from all of our subscribers who are not paid up to date. Please look at the label on your Highway, the figures will tell you when your subscription expires, which should read '51 or '52. We will continue to send the Highway to all who want it even if you feel you are not able to pay for it, if you will write and tell us. But considering the high cost of publishing papers now, we cannot continue to send the King's Highway to so many people without receiving pay. So please let us hear from you before June 15. If you want a little more time to pay up your arrears, we will continue to send your paper until you can do so, but we will feel we must cancel unpaid subscriptions on June 15, 1951.

ing aspects, namely, the people who are truly happy or blessed, and the promise given to such. We begin then, first, by

The Persons Described

Blessed are the poor in spirit. It is scarcely necessary to say that our Lord did not say here, "Blessed are the poor." While Luke makes the statement, "Blessed be ye poor," the context makes clear the kind of poor. No; there are many poor folks who are not blessed; many of them are very wicked. Lazarus did not get to Abraham's bosom because he was poor; he reached that glorious place because he was godly. While poverty is no friend to grace, yet the poor are more receptive to the gospel message than the rich. "The poor," said the Lord Jesus, "have the gospel preached to them." Such a statement by our Lord should be a great encouragement to the poor people.

Our Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit:" the people with a certain disposition of spirit or soul; a disposition by which they realize their own unworthiness, their own

helplessness, their need of the favor and help of God. Yes, to be "poor in spirit" is to realize this, to look with contempt on ourselves, to realize what Christ has done for us in the light of our unworthiness, to realize His mercy and kindness to us.

The "poor in spirit" will realize that salvation is of grace, not works; realize their need of saving grace, sanctifying grace, overcoming grace, and then more grace to seek more grace.

"This poverty of spirit," says Matthew Henry, "is put first among the Christian graces. The philosophers did not reckon humility among their moral virtues, but Christ put it first. Self-denial is the first lesson to be learned in His school, and poverty of spirit entitled to the first beatitude. The foundation of all other graces is to be laid in humility. Those who would build high must begin low; and it is an excellent preparative for the entrance of gospel grace into the soul; it fits the soul to receive the need."

The "poor in spirit," then, are those who have a proper estimate of themselves; not an overestimation, nor an underestimation; a proper conception of their own capacity and ability, of their true need of God. This is necessary in order to be or do anything worth while.

The "poor in spirit" are consecrated souls. They are willing to have or go without, willing to be or not to be, willing for God's plan without any pride or pretense. They are humble in their own eyes; "Poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

Second:

The Promise Designated

For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The "poor in spirit" are blessed: (1) because they receive riches to meet their poverty; a kingdom within, which is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost (Rom. 14:17). In response to dissatisfaction, the answer is a Kingdom of satisfaction; in response to the state of poverty, with regard to the need of grace, the answer is a Kingdom of grace; grace on the throne, "grace reigning through Christ."

(2) The "poor in spirit" are blessed because they are humble; not necessarily because of circumstances, for Christians are sometimes creators of circumstances, but rather because of the realization of their poverty of spirit. Spiritual poverty reveals the spirit of true humility. If we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God, He will lift us up (James 4:10). Humility is a tender plant in the household of God—so tender that, if one should realize that he has it, the plant will immediately fade and die.

(Continued on Page 5)