

## Mid-Week Devotion



### When Bankruptcy Leads to Blessing

Read Matthew 5:1-3     *“Blessed are the poor in spirit...”*

The term bankruptcy typically congers up images of being monetarily destitute, suffering great loss and of course much embarrassment. As anyone who has suffered bankruptcy will tell you, it is not a pleasant experience; it summons with it a wide range of emotions, from embarrassment to humility; from anger to forgiveness; from loss of possessions all the way to the loss of self. In the world’s economy, being bankrupt will never elevate your status in society; in fact, it has just the opposite effect, just as it does on your credit rating. However, in the Savior’s economy, being bankrupt is not only a good thing, it is necessary!

Jesus had a busy few days healing the sick, preaching, and battling Satan, so it comes as no surprise that when He saw the crowds, He retreated up the mountain where His disciples soon joined him. Jesus then began to teach them saying, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”* Now for you and me, using the terms blessed and poor in the same sentence might be considered an oxymoron, however, for Jesus it was simply business as usual.

To be poor usually means to be in need, or not to have something in sufficient measure. This can be applied to almost anything one might require; however, in the broader sense, it denotes a certain life condition. When we speak of the poor in the community, we think of those less fortunate than ourselves, those whom without the community’s charity would otherwise not survive. Clearly however, Jesus is not speaking about the lack of wealth, unfulfilled needs, or physical poverty, but rather He uses the term here to speak about one’s spiritual well being, in other words spiritual poverty. Moreover, He equates this spiritual poverty with blessing! Why? Remember Jesus is always about the heart, and so what He is saying is that our hearts must be emptied of anything that would have us believe that we don’t need a savior. If you are, or have ever been poor, then you know that being poor makes you dependent as opposed to independent. Being poor can be a great teacher – it teaches you about grace; the receiving of what you don’t deserve.

In this our season of Lent, we examine our spirituality through confession and repentance. But what does Lent have to do with bankruptcy and Jesus’ words you ask, everything! You see the beginning of repentance is the recognition of one’s spiritual bankruptcy—one’s inability to become righteous on one’s own. The blessing or happiness that belongs to the poor in spirit is because such a person is, by his own admission, already moving toward participating in God’s kingdom plan, acknowledging his need for a source of salvation outside himself. This source is none other than the Savior, Jesus.

So are you poor in spirit? Good. Are you spiritually bankrupt? Good. Have you emptied your heart through confession of anything that might have you believe you can make it on your own? **GREAT!** says Jesus...then you are finally ready for Me and My kingdom.

Blessings, Pastor Ed