

The Blessed of the Lord

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes that true blessings from God are spiritual and found in Christ, and that we must share these blessings to truly experience them.

Duration: 2:00:00

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12, Luke 6:20, Ephesians 1:3

Topics: "Faith Transformation", "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares personal stories of individuals who have experienced a transformation in their lives through their faith in Jesus. One man struggled with his own plans for success until he encountered the love of Christ and surrendered his life to Him. Another man, a tailor, faced a difficult situation where he was not paid for his work, but ultimately found a solution. The speaker also mentions the story of Daniel, a young man who remained faithful to God despite being taken captive in a foreign land. The sermon emphasizes the importance of surrendering our lives to Jesus and following Him as disciples, learning from His character as described in the Sermon on the Mount.

Transcript

Will you please turn to Ephesians chapter 1 verse 3. This is our theme verse. Ephesians chapter 1 verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Psalm 1. The first Psalm. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, and standeth not in the way of sinners, and sitteth not in the seat of scorners.

But his delight is in Jehovah's law, and in his law does he meditate day and night. And he is as a tree planted by brooks of water, which giveth its fruit in its season, and whose leaf fadeth not, and all that he doeth prospereth. The wicked are not so, but as the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish. Matthew chapter 5 verse 1 through verse 12.

Matthew chapter 5 verse 1. But seeing the crowds, he that is our Lord, went up into the mountain, and having sat down, his disciples came to him. And heaven opened his mouth, he taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall find 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 they who are persecuted on account of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens.

Blessed are ye when they may reproach and persecute you, and say every wicked thing against you, lying for my sake. Rejoice and exult, for your reward is great in the heavens. For thus have they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Let's have a word of prayer. Dear Lord, our hearts are full. We are most grateful to Thee, Thou who art the Son of God.

And yet yet, Thou emptied Thyself, and took up the form of a slave, the flesh of a man. And Thou, being man, was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And it is all for our sake.

We thank Thee. Thou now exalted on high, at the right hand of the Father, waiting for all Thy enemies to be by footstool, Thou unworthy. Lord, as we continue in that worshiping spirit, we look to Thee to speak to our hearts.

Bless us that we may bless Thee. We commit this time into Thy hands. Deliver us from self-consciousness.

Lord, that we may be conscious only of Thy presence. Speak, Lord. Thy servant hears it.

In Thy precious name. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies, in Christ Jesus. The Apostle Paul, when he began this letter, his heart was so full that he began with, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We know that our God is the God of blessing. He loves to bless, because He is love. But when we are blessed, do we bless Him? Because of the blessing He has blessed us.

When we are blessed, is it that we just take His blessing as ours, and we enjoy them? No. And if we do, the result is, our hearts will grow fat, and we will soon forget Him, and rebel against Him. And this was proven in the history of the children of Israel.

And we are no different from them. If when we are blessed, and we just take the blessing to ourselves, and let it end with us, dear brothers and sisters, the end result will be curse, and not blessing. When God blesses us, it is that we may bless Him, with the blessing that He has blessed us.

It shouldn't just end in ourselves. If we receive His blessing, and we give the blessing back to Him, and bless Him for His blessing, then brothers and sisters, these blessings will become real blessings in our lives. Everything comes from God, and everything returns.

He is the beginning and He is the end. So when we are blessed, remember, it is for Him. It is that we may have something to bless Him with.

Now blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. When He blesses us, He blesses us as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot imagine how God is the God of our Lord Jesus.

We cannot imagine how the Father is the Father of our Lord Jesus. And yet, thank God, His Father is our Father. And His God is our God.

And today it is in that relationship that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He has blessed us, because He has blessed His Son. He has put every blessing that He can bless with in His Beloved Son.

And through His Beloved Son, He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. We mention again and again that the real blessing, the blessing that will last forever, is not physical, is not material, because physical things are temporal. They soon pass away.

But spiritual blessing is eternal. And God, in Christ Jesus, has blessed us with every spiritual blessing that we can think of. Why? Because all the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Christ bodily.

Outside of Christ, God has no blessing to bless with. Every blessing is in Christ. And in Christ, He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing.

We do not need to go outside of Christ. Try to find blessing. Dear brothers and sisters, as a matter of fact, a blessing that is not in Christ, or even to say a blessing that is not Christ Himself, is not blessing at all.

Sometimes we feel that we are blessed. The world will think that. If we have this, if we have that, then we are blessed.

But if this, what we consider as blessing, is not in Christ, is not out of Christ, is not Christ Himself, remember, it is not a blessing, it is a curse. I think experience will tell us that. Anything that is not of Christ, anything that is not Christ Himself, eventually will prove that it is not a blessing.

The real blessing is God blesses us with Christ. When we are blessed with Christ, and when every spiritual blessing is just a face of Christ, an aspect of Christ, then that blessing is everlasting. And it is a real blessing.

So God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies. We mentioned already that there is a heavenly realm, and it is in that heavenly realm that we are blessed with every spiritual blessing. And it is in Christ Jesus.

I do not know how to share my heart. I do not have the word for it. The only word I can say is, what is blessing? Blessing, the blessing that comes from God, is just Christ.

That is it. Now if we can only see this, we will be delivered from all kinds of problems and troubles. We will be delivered from all illusions, misconceptions.

Just remember that the blessing that God has blessed us with, is not only in Christ, but actually it is Christ. When a blessing becomes a person, you receive the right. If a blessing is just a thing, you may lose it, it may change its nature.

But if the blessing is Christ, a person, you come to receive, you come to know, you come to experience, he is living, then that blessing is everlasting. And this is what God wants to bless us. Now this morning, we would like to go a step further.

From blessing to the blessed. From gift to the gifted. In other words, God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing.

And now in turn, we will become the blessed of the Lord. You remember in the Old Testament, when Abraham rescued his nephew Lot, and defeated the four kings. Melchizedek, the high priest of God, met him.

And in Genesis chapter 14 we are told, Blessed be Abraham, of the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth. Abraham is the blessed one. He was blessed by God.

He was blessed, why? Because when the God of glory appeared to him, in the land of Chaldea, and called him to leave his native country, his kindred, his own family, and go to where God is calling him, he obeyed by faith. And because of this he is blessed. Even in the promised land, he lives there as a stranger and a sojourner.

It is this obedience of faith that makes him the blessed one. And when he is blessed by God, with Isaac, he offers Isaac back to God. The sacrifice of faith.

And because of his obedience of faith, and his walk of faith, and his sacrifice of faith, you find Abraham become the blessed one. Not only he is blessed by God, but he becomes a blessing. And in the New Testament, you think of Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus.

Now in Luke chapter 1, when the angel Gabriel appeared to her, he said, Hail, thou favoured one. The Lord is with you, and you are blessed among the women. We call Mary the blessed.

Why? Because when God called her, and wanted to use her, in spite of the fact that she will be misunderstood, she will be rejected, and she will even be stoned to death. Yet she said, Do unto thy handmaid according to what thou hast said. The abandonment of love.

Because of the abandonment of love, she was the blessed one. So dear brothers and sisters, what we want to share this morning is, how can we be the blessed of the Lord? Who are the blessed? In what position will we be the blessed one of the Lord? Now we would like to use two portions of scripture. And one is in the Old Testament.

The other is in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, we would like to use Psalms. Now brothers and sisters, we all know that Psalms is a collection of the experiences of those who knew the Lord.

They passed through all kinds of circumstances. Sometimes prosperity, sometimes adversity, sometimes joy, sometimes sorrow, sometimes life abundant, sometimes the gate of death. The Psalmist, they passed through all kinds of experiences in this world.

The experience that people can experience, every kind of experience that you can think of. And when they go through all these experiences, they discover God Himself. They found that God is their blessing.

And out of their experiences, they wrote these Psalms. So Psalms is a collection. It is not a book of doctrine, but it is a book of experience.

And out of experience, they learn spiritual blessing, the true blessing of the Lord. And of course, the first Psalm is the introduction to the 150 Psalms. It's the preface.

And there you'll find it begin with blessed. Who are the blessed? Whenever I read this Psalm, I remember a story, a true story. In China, we had a fellow worker.

This brother, his name was Philip Luan. The older ones in our midst may still remember. When he was young, he was sent by his father to Russia to study.

He graduated in Russia. In his youth, he even participated in the Russian Revolution. When he came back to China, he was from Manchuria.

When he arrived in Manchuria, at the railway station, he saw a red cap, that is a coolie, helping people with luggages. And he noticed that that man was a merchant in Russia. He knew that person.

So he asked that person, what happened to you? Well, he said, because in Russia, he began to be an opium smoker. So he lost everything. And this brother, he himself was an opium smoker.

He told us that in Russia, they encouraged the Chinese to smoke opium. So when he saw that, immediately he felt he had to quit smoking opium. So instead of going home, he went to a hotel.

He shut himself in that hotel for three days and three nights. He told us that he was rolling on the floor when that desire for opium came. But he determined he would rather die than smoke opium.

And in three days, he quit. He went home. He had nothing to do.

He came from a very rich family. His brother opened a gold store. And when the Japanese took their land and built an airport, so he was just staying with his brother, having nothing to do.

But he was very anti-Christian. He didn't really know what Christianity was. But he was anti-Christian.

He was just like Saul of Tarsus. In that city, there was only one church. But you know what he did? He employed a group of children to go into that church.

When they stood and singing, threw sands into their mouths. And when they stood and prayed, moved the chairs away. And he did that until that church was closed.

He told us that he went from house to house, preaching against Christianity. He didn't know what Christianity really was. Because of his education in Russia.

And one day, he was in his brother's store. Nothing to do. It was raining.

So he tried to find something to read. And strangely, he found that under the table, he got a book. So he just took that book, opened it and read it.

And he read in that book. It was a hymn book. I don't know how that hymn book came into that house.

He opened it and he read it. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, and standeth not in the way of sinners, and sitteth not in the seat of scorers, and so on so forth. So when he read this, he said that makes sense.

He couldn't sleep that night. The next morning he rose up. He went to that church building.

Now of course it was closed. But he pushed the door and it opened. So he went straight to the pulpit.

He saw a big book on the table. He opened that book. It was Psalm number one.

So he said, well that comes from this book. So he took that book and brought it home. The first time he stole, he stole a bible.

He started to read it. It began to touch his heart. But he became the leader of the second revolution in Manchuria.

And in order to promote revolution, certain things he had to do. He said I need a place where you can propagate, make propaganda. And he said the best place is YMCA.

So he used the YMCA as the outlet for propaganda. But he said in revolution you need money. And how could you get money? Well he said the best way to get money is open a cigarette factory.

So he opened a cigarette factory and began to produce cigarette. But all the foreign cigarette companies, they tried to resist him. And so all the stores that sold cigarettes, all these foreign cigarette companies, of course they gave the cigarettes to them and you don't need to pay beforehand.

You know give you certain days and you can pay later on. And they all resist buying his cigarette. But he was very clever.

He employed a number of people sitting in a rickshaw. You know in the old days you have rickshaw. And they would visit all these stores that sell cigarette.

And when they came down from the rickshaw, they said we want cigarette. And take out the package and said we want this cigarette. That is the best.

And the stores tried to sell them the other one. No, no. All these others are no use.

If you don't have it, we won't have it. And all these things go around the city and go around the city. And all these stores said well this cigarette has lots of demands.

So they began to order. And he said my cigarette is the best. You have to pay cash.

So they all pay cash. And after they pay cash, he disemployed all these people. So all these stores have all these cigarettes and nobody want them.

So they began to push the cigarette for him. You know they advertise it and push it for him. And it became very successful.

And he had all the money for revolution. But of course being the leader of the second revolution, the Japanese want to catch him, arrest him. And the warlords want to arrest him.

So he fled for his life. Oh he told me lots of stories. How he escaped all these arrests.

I give you just one. You know he had the names of all the revolutionists in his home. So he thought well if they got hold of that, then many people will be arrested and killed.

Now what should he do? He couldn't go home. So he disguised himself. And that night he went back to his home.

You know in Manchuria it's very cold. So you cover yourself. You know even only to your two eyes could be seen.

So at night he tried to go back to his home. And he saw the door was closed. It was dark.

He tried to push the door. It opened. And immediately he was caught.

People were waiting there. And when he was caught he said sorry. He said I'm just a tailor.

I'm just a tailor. He said this family they order lots of clothes. I made for them.

They did not give the money. And she showed them all the accounts. You know and while he was showing that he said sorry I have to go to the toilet.

So he so he went to the toilet and all the thing was hidden there. He pushed it and it's all gone flush out. That was this brother.

And when he was fleeing for his life one day when he was in a city. He said one morning the spirit of God convicted him. All his sins came back to him.

And he was in the sitting room kneeling there praying. And his tears wet the carpet. And while he was praying he said the word of God came to him one after another comforting him assuring him.

And he was wonderfully saved. And it all began with someone. Later on he closed his factory.

He went to Shanghai to study Bible. And when he was studying in the Bible Institute he was so anxious to serve the Lord. So he rent a place in Shanghai in in the old Shanghai.

And he employed a preacher to preach for him first. But by weekdays he will come and help. Now that was the brother.

He brought a lot of money to Shanghai put in the bank. But the Lord dealt with him very severely. The bank bankrupt.

He had tuberculosis. But wonderfully the Lord raised him up. And Lord used him mightily in China.

And dear brothers and sisters it all came from this someone. So every time I read someone I just cannot forget that. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked.

And standeth not in the way of sinners. And sitteth not in the seat. Who is the blessed man? According to the Old Testament.

The blessed man is a man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked. Why? Because in the Old Testament time you find the emphasis is more on our outward conduct. Under the law it is the outward behavior.

The outward conduct that matters most. So here you find who is the man that is the blessed of God. He is a man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked.

You know the whole world lies under the wicked one. So far as God is concerned. Everyone in the world is wicked.

Among the wicked there may be some who are less wicked. Some who are more wicked. But all human beings are wicked.

Because we all lie under the wicked one. And the wicked one usually has counsel. They like to have suggestions, plans, projects.

All these are wicked. Because they all lead us away from God. Walk not in the counsel of the wicked.

Stand not in the way of the sinners. Everybody in this world is a sinner. Less sin or more sin for sinners.

And the sinner has a way. It is the way of the sinners. And we are all walking in that way.

If you read Ephesians chapter 2, you will find that we are all dead in sins and transgressions. And we all follow the world and its fashion. Not knowing that actually we are under the evil spirit.

We are the children of wrath. There is a way that we consider as right. But it ends in destruction.

Now the blessed one will not walk in the way of the sinners. And they do not sit in the seat of the scorners. You find there is a progression there.

The wicked, the sinners, the scorners. Not only they rebel against God, they begin to ridicule God. Become scorners.

And they sit down. You walk, you stand, and you sit. Now those who are blessed of the Lord, in their daily life, in their conduct, they do not walk in the counsel, walk in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat of scorners.

It's negative. Negatively, this is what it is. Now in verse 2, you have the positive.

And the positive actually is the reason why they do not walk, they do not walk and stand and sit. But his delight is in Jehovah's law. And in his law does he meditate day and night.

A man that is blessed of the Lord is a person who delights in the law of God, the word, the word of God. And he meditates day and night upon it. Now dear brothers and sisters, the word of God cleanses us.

If we love the word of God, and if we meditate upon it, that will keep us from walking in the counsel of the wicked, from standing in the way of sinners, and from sitting in the seat. I think even today, if we delight in the word of God, and if we meditate it day and night, you know the thing that is very missing today is we do not meditate the word of God. Modern life is rushing, just rush.

We do not have the time to really think, rethink, meditate, consider, and because of this our life is very shallow. We need to meditate on the word of God, in order that our spiritual life may grow deep. And that will keep us from all these wickedness, sins, and scorings.

Now, such man is like a tree, planted by brooks of water. In other words, they are connected with the source of life. And because they are connected with the source of life, therefore you find they will not fail to produce fruit.

And fruit here means something that comes from within. It is the richest of the life within that is expressed in fruit. So you find those who really love the word of God, and meditate on the word of God, they will have fruit, the fruit of the spirit.

And they will have leaves, their leaves will not fail, will not fade. And it leaves simply means our outward conduct. There will be outwardly, there will be good behavior that will glorify God.

And their undertakings will be prospered by God. Now in the Old Testament, of course, we know that their blessing is mainly earthly, even though some with faith can go further into spiritual blessing. So here you'll find these are the blessed in the Old Testament.

And on the contrary, you'll find what happened to the wicked. He said the wicked are not so, but are as the chaff which the wind drives away. Chaff, there's no life in it.

It cannot be eaten. And when the wind blows, it blows away, it disappears. That is the life of the wicked.

The life of the blessed is like tree, there's root, but the life of the wicked is like chaff, no root. It's just empty, transient, and it's blown away. And because God is the judge, therefore you'll find eventually the wicked will be judged.

And they will not stand in the assembly of the righteous, because God knows our way. Now this is the Old Testament time. You know, sometimes you'll find in this world, there are the wicked, but they seem to prosper.

And there are the righteous, they seem to suffer. And this is a question that has been asked throughout the centuries. Now if you read Psalm 73, you will find this righteous one, he is asking this question.

Why does the wicked prosper? And the righteous suffer. Sometimes it may appear that way. He said, until I go into the sanctuary, then I know.

God is the judge. And the prosperity of the wicked is just for a time. But the righteous will inherit eternally.

So this is what we find in the Old Testament. The Old Testament time, of course, the blessed is more concerned with our outward behavior. But thank God today, in Christ Jesus, we are redeemed.

We become the heavenly and the spiritual people of God. And who are the blessed in the New Testament time? So let's refer to Matthew chapter 5. Now our brother already mentioned Matthew chapter 5 last night. Here you'll find our Lord Jesus.

He went to the mountain. Great crowds came to Him. So He led the crowd and climbed the mountain.

And His disciples came to Him. So He opened His mouth and He taught His disciples. The Sermon of the Mount began with blessed.

Who are the truly blessed? Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. Now if you turn to Luke chapter 6, and read from verse 20, you'll find there is a little variation there. Luke chapter 6 verse 20.

And He, that is our Lord, lifted up His eyes upon His disciples, said, blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled. Blessed ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh.

Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from them, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as wicked. For the Son of Man's sake, rejoice in that day, and leap for joy.

For behold, your reward is great in the heavens.

For as this manner did their fathers act towards the prophets. Now verse 24. But woe to you rich, for ye have received your consolation.

Woe to you that are filled, for ye shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, for ye shall mourn and weep. Woe, when all men speak well of you, for after this manner did their fathers to the false.

You'll find there is a slight difference between these two passages. In Matthew, our Lord spoke to His disciples, telling them who are the blessed. So it is in structure.

But in Luke, you'll find that our Lord lifted up His eyes and looked at His disciples. In other words, these disciples have been taught. And being taught, the Lord said, blessed ye the poor.

So you'll find that in Luke, it is more simple. It doesn't say blessed are the poor in spirit. Now of course in reality it is.

But He said, blessed ye the poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. Now these disciples, what the Lord means, He does not refer to them as the physically, materially poor. Now even though these disciples, they are not rich in any sense.

John and James of course, even though they are fishermen, and yet you know their father has high hands and boats, so they are not really poor. So when the Lord looked at disciples, the Lord said, blessed ye the poor. So the poor there does not refer to the materially, physically, naturally poor.

The poor there refers to, because they become the disciples of the Lord, therefore they become the poor. You remember, in 2 Corinthians chapter 8, our Lord being rich, yet He becomes poor, for our sake. In Philippians chapter 2, we find that He is equal with God.

And that is not something to be grasped at. Because He is God. He is the Son of God.

The Son and the Father are one. And yet He emptied Himself. You cannot think of anyone richer than our Lord.

Who can be richer than God? The whole world belongs to Him. Everything is His. Our Lord is the richest in the whole universe.

He has the universe. But He emptied Himself. He became poor, for our sake, that we may be enriched in Him.

So brothers and sisters, who are the disciples? Who are the learners, the followers of our Lord Jesus? You remember when our Lord Jesus called His disciples? Come after me. And what they did? They left everything and followed Him. Now, that makes them poor.

It is voluntary poverty. For the sake of the Lord, they leave everything behind and follow the Lord. And the Lord said, Blessed ye the poor, for yours is the kingdom.

Dear brothers and sisters, when we become the disciples of our Lord Jesus. Now, what do you mean by disciples? Disciples simply means learners. You learn from your Master.

Now, who is the Master? Our brother mentioned last night. When you look at the Sermon on the Mount, at the Beatitude, it is actually a description of the character of our Lord Jesus. That is what He is.

He is the most blessed one. Why? Because He is the poor in spirit. He is the one who mourns.

He is the meek. He is the one who thirsts and hungers for righteousness. He is the merciful.

He is the pure in heart. He is the peacemaker. He is persecuted for righteousness sake.

So, in other words, you find it is a description of the character of our Lord Jesus, when He was. He is the Master, the Teacher. And He is calling us to be His disciples.

Dear brothers and sisters, today, we tend to divide believers and disciples. We think that we can be believers and not be disciples. But you know, in the early days, there is no separation.

If you believe in Him, then you follow Him. If you receive Him as your Savior, then you surrender to Him as your Master, as your Lord. I think probably many brothers and sisters know the story of Watchman Lee, when he was saved.

He knew the doctrines, the gospel. And when he went to hear Miss Daughter Yu, he said on the first night when he listened, he knew it is all true. The gospel is true.

Jesus Christ is true. His salvation is real. And he knew that he should believe.

But he didn't that night. After a number of nights, he struggled. And the problem with him was, he knew if he received Jesus as his Savior, then he must surrender to Jesus as his Lord.

He couldn't do that. As a young man, he had his own plan. And he would be successful from the human standpoint.

It was hard for him to give up. And he struggled and struggled, until one day, he said, when he was praying, he saw the blackness of his sins, and the redness of the blood. He was moved by the love of Christ, and he capitulated.

He believed in Jesus as his Savior, and at the same time, he accepted Jesus as his Lord and Master. Dear brothers and sisters, when we receive Jesus as our Savior, do we surrender our life to him as our Lord and Master? This is discipleship. Do we give ourselves away, leave everything, and follow him? In other words, we become poor voluntarily.

Everything, leave behind. Just follow him. He is our riches, our wealth, our all.

Brothers and sisters, blessed ye. So, when you come to Matthew, you'll find it explains, what does that poor mean? He said, blessed the poor in spirit. You know, before we believe in the Lord Jesus, we are very rich in ourselves.

We think highly of ourselves. We are capable. We have lots of abilities, talents.

We can do this, we can do that. We can even save ourselves, and we try. But thank God, he bankrupts us.

We come to a point, where we find that we can do nothing. We cannot save ourselves. Our righteousness is all as filthy rags.

They will not meet the demand of the righteous God. We are reduced to poverty, spiritual poverty, and it is then we receive the Lord as our Savior. Blessed the poor in spirit.

It doesn't mean that we are, we have a poor spirit. You know, some people have a poor spirit. That is different from poor in spirit.

If you are poor, if you are a poor spirit person, there's no blessing there. But if you're poor in spirit, you are reduced to poverty, reduced to nothing. You begin to have that humility, spirit of humility, self-effacement.

When you are reduced to that, now how can you be reduced to that, to nothing? Naturally, we all think highly of ourselves. We think that we are somebody, we are something, we have something. But brothers and sisters, when we see the glory of God, when we see the face of the Lord Jesus, when we see his riches, when we see his beauty, that turn our beauty into corruption.

You remember the story of Daniel. Daniel was such a young man. When he was just in his teens, he was taken as a hostage to a foreign country, and he was given the best opportunity.

And yet, how he kept himself pure. He will not defile himself with the king's food and wine. Such a young man.

And God bless him with wisdom, with understanding, discernment. And yet, in his old age, when he saw the beauty of the Lord, the glory of the Lord, he said, my beauty turned into corruption. Dear brothers and sisters, if we see the Lord, if we follow him, now you cannot see him if you do not follow him.

If you follow him and you see him, what will happen? It will bring you into spiritual poorness. He will reduce you to being poor in spirit. The spirit of Christ is the spirit of the Lamb.

It is a spirit of humility. And that spirit will characterize your spirit. And that is the way to blessing.

You know why we are not blessed as we should? So far as God is concerned, he has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies, in Christ. But why is it we do not receive the blessing as we should? It is because we are too full. We are too rich in ourselves.

We are just like the little Laodicean church. I am rich. I do not lack anything.

I have everything. I have knowledge, I have understanding, I have everything. That kind of spirit blocks the way to blessing.

So, dear brothers and sisters, to begin with, if we want to be the blessed of the Lord, where should we be? We have to be in a low place. Not physically, but spiritually. Poor in spirit.

We acknowledge, we confess, we are nothing. There is nothing. But as a matter of fact, the more you know that you are nothing, actually, the more you have something.

It is the poor in spirit that are rich spiritually. Because they will be filled. If we empty ourselves, then he will fill us.

Theirs is the kingdom of the heavens. We do not need to wait until the future to get into the kingdom of the heavens. You know today, among God's people, many do not even know there is the kingdom.

They think that today and eternity. This age and eternity. They do not even know there is the age to come, the kingdom.

But brothers and sisters, those who are poor in spirit, they are the blessed. Why? Because even today they are already in the kingdom. Because that is the very atmosphere of the kingdom of the heavens.

In the kingdom of heavens there is no quarrelling who is the greatest. In the kingdom of heavens, he who is the smallest is the greatest. You live even today in the kingdom of the heavens.

And only those who today live in the kingdom of heavens will be qualified to reign with Christ in the kingdom to come. So the blessing of the Lord in the New Testament time begins with the spirit of humility. So may the Lord keep us in that spirit.

You know as we look into church history, whether it refers to a group or whether it refers to individuals, you will find that the reason why those who are blessed of the Lord began to fall, it is because they left the spirit of humility. You look at church history, you will think that every twenty, thirty years, it is as if the blessing of the Lord cannot maintain more than thirty years. After thirty years, a declension.

And it repeats again and again. But dear brothers and sisters, is it the will of God? Certainly not. The reason why you find after twenty, thirty years of being blessed and there is the declension, is always because you become full in yourself.

You are proud of the blessing of God. You have the blessing, but you lose the blessing. You lose sight of Christ.

You only see the blessing He has blessed you with. You separate blessings from the blessing. And that is the declension.

But it should not be. If only by the grace of God we are kept in a humble spirit, then you will find you are the blessed. The blessing will continue.

And you are, even today, living in the kingdom of the heavens. Now the second one of course, blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Our brother Mike Woods has already given us very exhaustive explanation of this verse.

I will only mention this. Why is it that the mourn today are blessed? Because they grieve according to God. If you grieve according to the world, there is no blessing there.

But if you grieve according to God, then it will lead to repentance and to salvation. So blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. And the third one, blessed the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Now who are the meek? You remember our Lord Jesus? In Matthew chapter 11 verse 29 said, Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest in your soul. So our Lord Jesus is the meek one. And if we take his yoke upon us, you know we have to be yoked with Christ.

We cannot learn meekness if we are not yoked with him. He is on the one side of the yoke. He is the meek one.

And we are the naughty, the haughty one. And we are on the other side of the yoke. And when we are pulling the plow, we find that he, the meek, is stronger than the haughty one.

And he will pull us in his direction. And by that we begin to learn meekness. If you are yoked with Christ, you will never learn meekness.

Because naturally we are haughty. We have to be yoked with Christ. Now that's discipleship.

And we learn. Then there will be meekness in us. You know Moses, the Bible said he is the meekest of all men.

Now certainly that is not our impression. You know the artists when they draw Moses, what kind of face, what kind of feature. It's so masculine.

But in Numbers 12, the Bible said Moses is the meekest of all people. Now certainly he is not weak. But where is meekness? What is meekness? Meekness is that he is soft, tender to the will of God.

Whatever it is the will of God, he will do it. When he was commanded to build the tabernacle and was given the pattern on the mount, even to the minutest details, he being trained in Egypt, a great architect, yet he does not deviate. He follows the direction.

He was meek towards the will of God. That's meekness. So brothers and sisters, are we meek? It doesn't mean you are weak.

Now we think of meek as you are like a jelly. No backbone. No principle.

No. Meek is not weak. Meek simply means before God.

Before his will. You are so meek. He will do everything that he orders you.

That's meekness. And if you are meek, the world will say you will get nothing. But God will give you the land.

And here you'll find the fourth one. Blessed they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be healed. Are we hungry and thirsty after righteousness? Now of course the righteousness here is not Christ our righteousness.

Period. You know we have no righteousness of our own. We are like the prodigal son.

When we came back, we are in rags. Dirty rags. But when the Father met us, he took off our dirty rags.

He put upon us the best robe. And the best robe is Christ. Christ our righteousness.

God made Christ our righteousness. We are all close with Christ. And because we are close with Christ, we can stand before God without shame.

Accepted in the beloved. But brothers and sisters, the righteousness here is different. It is the righteousness that exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees.

You know the scribes and the Pharisees, they have a kind of righteousness. It is just an outward appearance. A good appearance.

Outwardly they appear to be very pious. That they keep the letter of the Lord. Even to the minute nudist degree.

But inside is like a tomb with all these dead bones. Our righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and the Pharisees. Unless we exceed their righteousness, we cannot enter into the kingdom of the heavens.

So what is that righteousness? Seek ye first the righteousness of God, the kingdom of God and his righteousness. And all these things shall be added unto you. So the righteousness there is the righteousness of the saints.

You find in Revelation chapter 19, the wife of the Lamb, she was given a white shiny living cloth, which is the righteousness of the saints. That is the wedding gown. You know, in Psalm 45 we are told, the queen, inside she has a garment of wrought gold.

That speaks of Christ our righteousness. And over this golden garment there is a raiment of embroidery. And that is the wedding gown.

The raiment of embroidery, it means that the Holy Spirit weaves the character of Christ stitch by stitch into our very being. So Christ began to appear in our life. His character began to become our character.

It is the righteousness of the saints, but it is Christ. It is Christ. Brothers and sisters, we need to hunger and thirst after this righteousness.

And if we do, we will be filled. Thank God for that. I have to hurry on.

And then of course, blessed are the merciful, they shall receive mercy. God does not want sacrifice. He wants mercy.

He knows our heart. Man judges by appearance, but God judges. And He wants us to be merciful.

Our Lord is the merciful one. And He wants to be merciful. We who have received mercy, we should show mercy.

You remember that parable, the servant that owned his master so much and forgiven, but he will not forgive his fellow companion that owned him a little bit. And the Lord said, because you are not merciful, you will not receive mercy. So may the Lord help us.

And blessed are the pure in heart. The pure in heart. Not only a clean heart, but a pure heart.

Not a double heart, heart and heart, but an undivided heart towards the Lord. Now, if our heart is undivided towards the Lord, you see God. The reason why we do not see God in our daily life is because our heart is divided.

If it is united, one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, then we will see God in our daily life. And also, blessed are the peacemaker.

Our brother already mentioned this morning. Our Lord is the peacemaker. And because He is, so when we take up His character, we also become peacemaker.

God has given us the ministry of reconciliation, begging the world to be reconciled to God. In Christ Jesus. And blessed are those who are persecuted for my name's sake.

Dear brothers and sisters, we do not belong to this world. And because we do not belong, we are not of this world, as Christ is not of this world. Therefore, the world will not understand us.

They will not only misunderstand us, they will even persecute us. But if we are namesake, rejoice. For great is your reward in the kingdom of heaven.

So dear brothers and sisters, who are the blessed? How can we be in a position of being blessed? Remember, the beatitude. If we really learn of Him and take up His character in us, then brothers and sisters, there is no limit to the blessing of God. May the Lord help us.

Shall we pray? Dear Lord, You are the blessed one. And You want us to be joined to You, that we may be blessed. And Lord, we do pray that we may learn of You.

Thy character becomes our character. And Lord, all this is for You. We want to bless You with what You have blessed us.

In the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

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