

## RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP (LESSON 36)

SPIRITUAL POVERTY (CONTINUED). Jesus said the “poor in spirit” are happy. There are two Greek words for poor. One means pauper, the other means beggar. The pauper is poor because of his circumstances, and he has to work hard to maintain a bare existence. The beggar is poor because he chooses to be poor. He has nothing and lives on the bounty of others. That is the word Jesus used for “poor in spirit.” In the words of William Hendrickson, “The truly joyous man is one who is destitute, bankrupt on the grace and bounty of God. Conscious of his need, he looks for help outside himself, and gratefully accepts.” Paul described his own spiritual inadequacy in Philippians 3:7-9: “But what things were gain to me, I counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ...” A radical disciple begins with the knowledge that his usefulness to God originates in the purpose of God, and fulfilling that purpose requires God’s supply. As Jesus trusted the Father for everything, Jesus’ disciples trust Him for everything. Jesus found no happiness in His own will. His happiness came from serving His Father in order to make the Kingdom of God available to those who would believe in Him. The attitudes that follow poverty of spirit are a sequence which leads to “being made conformable unto His death.” The blessing that comes to the poor in spirit is: “Theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” In the words of Hendrickson that refers to “the sum total of blessings that result when God is acknowledged over heart and life.”