

THE LAW OF GOD
The First Beatitude

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed – joyful in the highest degree and pleasing to God; poor in spirit – humble, those who are conscious of their imperfections and unworthiness before God, and never think that they are better or more holy than others.

Spiritual lowliness is the conviction that our entire life and all our spiritual and physical blessings, such as life, health, strength, spiritual capability, knowledge, riches, and every good thing of life, all this is the gift of our Creator God. Without help from Heaven, it is impossible to acquire either material well-being or spiritual riches. All this is the gift of God.

Spiritual lowliness is called humility. Humility is the foundation of all Christian virtue, because it is the opposite of pride, and pride introduced all evil into the world. Due to pride the first among the angels became the Devil; the first people sinned, their descendants quarreled and went to war among themselves from pride. *The first sin was pride* (Ecclus. 10:15)

Without humility it is impossible to return to God. Nor are any of the other Christian virtues possible. Humility permits us to know ourselves, to correctly assess our worth and deficiencies. It acts beneficially in the fulfillment of our obligations to our neighbor, arouses and strengthens us in faith in God, hope and love for Him. It attracts the mercy of God to us and also disposes people to us.

The Word of God says, *A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise* (Ps. 50:17) *Surely he scorneth the scornors: but he giveth grace unto the lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls* (Matt. 11:29).

Physical misery or privation can result in the acquisition of much spiritual humility if this privation or need is accepted with good will, without a murmur. But physical privation does not always result in spiritual humility, it can lead to bitterness.

Even the wealthy can be spiritually humble if they understand that visible, material wealth is decadent and transitory, fleeting, and that it is no substitute for spiritual riches. They must understand the word of the Lord, *for what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?* (Matt. 16:26)

But Christian humility must be strictly distinguished from self-seeking self-abasement, such as fawning and flattery, which discredit human dignity.

It is necessary to strictly reject so-called “noble self-love” or “defense against affronts to one’s honor,” which reflects prejudices, pernicious superstitions, which were inherited from Roman paganism hostile to Christianity. The true Christian must decisively renounce these superstitions, which resulted in the anti-Christian and shameful custom of the duel and revenge.

In reward for meekness of spirit, humility, the Lord Jesus Christ promises the Kingdom of Heaven, a life of eternal blessedness. Participation in the Kingdom of God for the humble begins here and now – by means of faith and hope in God; but the ultimate reward in all of its fullness will be seen in the future life.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

TRUE FALSE

Without help from Heaven, it is impossible to acquire either material well-being or spiritual riches. All this is the gift of God.

TRUE FALSE

Humility is the foundation of all Christian virtue, because it is the opposite of pride,

TRUE FALSE

It acts beneficially in the fulfillment of our obligations to our neighbor, arouses and strengthens us in faith in God, hope and love for Him.

TRUE FALSE

It attracts the mercy of God to us and also disposes people to us.

TRUE FALSE

Physical privation always results in spiritual humility.

TRUE FALSE

Wealthy people can be spiritually humble.

TRUE FALSE

Visible, material wealth is decadent and transitory, fleeting, and that it is no substitute for spiritual riches.

TRUE FALSE

Participation in the Kingdom of God for the humble begins here and now.

TRUE FALSE

For the humble, the ultimate reward in all of its fullness will be seen in the future life.

TRUE FALSE