

## The Beatitudes

“Blessed are you who are poor, because the kingdom of God is yours.” Luke chapter 6 verse 20

In 1979, Mother Theresa of Calcutta visited Liverpool said, *“Liverpool is full of those who hunger for love. They may not be poor for the material things of this life, but for love and things of the spirit there is a great hunger.”*

She might well have been speaking about any city in western civilisation. Our whole culture is rooted in the idea that individual and community well being is dependent on a healthy economy, and that one of our primary goals in life is to become well off. If we have no sense of the spiritual life, then all that we have is the pursuit of riches in the material world. That is why Jesus contrasts this saying a little later with, *“But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your comfort.”*

We mustn't run away with the idea that the Bible is against wealth, of course. It does not, contrary to popular belief, say that money is the root of all evil, but that the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. That is why the Psalmist David says *“If wealth increases, don't set your heart on it.”* When we are prosperous, we are in danger of pride and complacency and the illusion that we have all we need and forgetting that, as the Bible reminds us, it is God who gives us the ability to produce wealth.

In terms of eternal things, the poor are in a better position. They have a clearer sense of their need, and are more likely to be able to recognise their spiritual poverty and seek God. Physical wealth and comfort is notorious for obscuring an awareness of spiritual need, which is as great among the rich as it is among the poor.

So Jesus, in this teaching, is commending the humility that is required to realise that, by nature, we are poor towards God. People who recognise that, and seek him as a first priority, will inherit the Kingdom.

Father God, help me to get my priorities in life right. You tell me to “Seek first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness...” Please cause me to make that my first concern. Thank you for all that you give me in this world, and all the blessings I enjoy, but please keep me from pride and complacency, and show me how I am to use my material wealth in your service and for your glory. In Jesus' name, amen.

*All these devotionals can be found on our website [inghamitechurch.org](http://inghamitechurch.org) on the 'Resources' page. Click on the link to go there.*