THE FIRST BEATITUDE
NO. 3156

A SERMON
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“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
Matthew 5:3.

[In the year 1873, Mr. Spurgeon delivered what he called “a series of sententious homilies” on the Beatitudes. After an introductory discourse upon the Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes as a whole, he intended to preach upon each one separately, but either illness or some other special reason prevented him from fully carrying out this purpose. There are, however, five Sermons upon the Beatitudes, four of which have already been published—See Sermons #422, Volume 7—THE PEACEMAKER; #2103, Volume 35—THE HUNGER AND THIRST WHICH ARE BLESSED; #3155, Volume 55—THE BEATITUDES—#3065, Volume 53—THE THIRD BEATITUDE—and this one—Read/download the entire sermons, free of charge, at http://www.spurgeongems.org.]

BEARING in mind the objective of our Savior’s discourse, which was to describe the saved, and not to declare the plan of salvation, we now come to consider the first of the Beatitudes—

“A Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

It is worthy of grateful note that this gospel blessing reaches down to the exact spot where the law leaves us when it has done for us the very best within its power or design. The utmost the law can accomplish for our fallen humanity is to lay bare our spiritual poverty and convince us of it. It cannot by any possibility enrich a man—its greatest service is to tear him away from his fancied wealth of self-righteousness, show him his overwhelming indebtedness to God and bow him to the earth in self-despair. Like Moses, it leads away from Goshen, conducts into the wilderness and brings to the verge of an impassable stream—but it can do no more! Joshua Jesus is needed to divide the Jordan and conduct into the Promised Land. The law rends the goodly Babylonian garment of our imaginary merits into ten pieces and proves our wedge of gold to be mere dross. And thus it leaves us, “naked, and poor, and miserable.” To this point Jesus descends—His full line of blessing comes up to the verge of destruction, rescues the lost and enriches the poor! The gospel is as full as it is free!

This first Beatitude, though thus placed at a suitably low point where it may be reached by those who are in the earliest stages of grace is, however, none the less rich in blessing. The same word is used in the same sense at the beginning as at the end of the chain of Beatitudes—the poor in spirit are as truly and emphatically blessed as the meek, or the peacemakers. No hint is given as to lower degree, or inferior measure, but on the contrary, the very highest blessing, which is used in the 10th verse as the gathering up of all the seven Beatitudes, is ascribed to the first and lowest order of the blessed—“theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” What more is said even of the co-heirs with prophets and martyrs? What more, in-
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The First Beatitude Sermon

Tell someone today how much you love Jesus Christ.

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all besides left as of comparatively little worth! This teaches us to mind, above all things, those matters which concern our spirits. We must not be satisfied with external religion. If, in any ordinance, our spirit does not come into contact with the great Father of Spirits, we must not rest satisfied. Everything about our religion which is not heart work must be unsatisfactory to us. As men cannot live upon the chaff and the bran, but need the flour of the wheat, so do we need something more than the form of godliness and the letter of truth—we require the secret meaning, the grafting in of the word into our spirit, the bringing of the truth of God into our inmost soul—all short of this is short of the blessing!

The highest grade of outward religiousness is not blessed, but the very lowest form of spiritual grace is endowed with the kingdom of heaven! Better to be spiritual, even though our highest attainment is to be poor in spirit, than to remain carnal, even though in that carnality we should brag of perfection in the flesh. The least in grace is higher than the greatest in nature! Poverty of spirit in the publican was better than fullness of external excellence in the Pharisee. As the weakest and poorest man is nobler than the strongest of all the beasts of the field, so is the meanest spiritual man more precious in the sight of the Lord than the most eminent of the self-sufficient children of men. The smallest diamond is worth more than the largest pebble, the lowest degree of grace excels the loftiest attainment of nature! What do you say to this, beloved friend? Are you spiritual? At least, are you enough so to be poor in spirit? Does there exist for you a spiritual realm, or are you locked up in the narrow region of things seen and heard? If the Holy Spirit has broken a door for you into the spiritual and unseen, then you are blessed even though your only perception as yet is the painful discovery that you are poor in spirit! Jesus on the mountain blesses you, and blessed you are!

Drawing still nearer to our text, we observe, first, that THE PERSON DESCRIBED HAS DISCOVERED A FACT—he has ascertained his own spiritual poverty. And secondly, BY A FACT HE IS COMFORTED—for he possesses “the kingdom of heaven.”

I. The fact which he has ascertained is an old truth of God, for the man was always spiritually poor. From his birth he was a pauper and at his best estate he is only a beggar. “Naked, and poor, and miserable” is a fair summary of man’s condition by nature. He lies covered with sores at the gates of mercy, having nothing of his own but sin, unable to dig and unwilling to beg—and therefore perishing in a penury of the direst kind.

This truth is also universal, for all men are by nature thus poor. In a clan, or a family, there will usually be at least one person of substance. And in the poorest nation there will be some few possessors of wealth. But alas for our humanity! Its whole store of excellence is spent and its riches are utterly gone. Among us all there remains no remnant of good! The oil is spent from the cruse and the meal is exhausted from the barrel—a famine is upon us, direr than that which desolated Samaria of old! We owe ten thousand talents and have nothing with which to pay—even so much as a single penny of goodness we cannot find in all the treasuries of the nations!

This fact is deeply humiliating. A man may have no money and yet it may involve no fault and, therefore, no shame. But our estate of poverty has this sting in it—it is moral and spiritual—and sinks us in blame and sin. To be poor in holiness, truth, faith and love to God is disgraceful to us. Often does the poor man hide his face as one greatly ashamed, but far more cause have we to do so who have spent our living riotously, wasted our Father’s substance and brought ourselves to want and dishonor. Descriptions of our state which describe us as miserable are not complete unless they also declare us to be guilty! True, we are objects of pity, but much more of censure. A poor man may be none the less worthy of esteem because of the meanness of his apparel and the scantiness of his provision, but spiritual poverty means fault, blameworthiness, shame and sin. He who is poor in spirit is therefore a humbled man and is on the way to be numbered with those that mourn, of whom the second benediction says that, “they shall be comforted.”

The fact discovered by the blessed one in the text is but little known. The mass of mankind are utterly ignorant upon the matter. Though the truth as to man’s lost condition is daily taught in our streets, yet few understand it. They are not anxious to know the meaning of a statement so uncomfortable, so alarming—and the bulk of those who are aware of the doctrine and acknowledge that it is scriptural, yet do not believe it, but put it out of their thoughts and practically ignore it! “We see,” is the universal boast of the world’s blind men! So far from realizing that they are destitute, the sons of men are, in their own es-

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teem, so richly endowed that they thank God that they are not as other men! No slavery is so degrading as that which makes a man content with his servility. The poverty which never aspires, but is content to continue in its rags and filth, is poverty of the deepest dye—and such is the spiritual condition of mankind.

Wherever the truth as to our condition is truly known, it has been spiritually revealed. We may say of everyone who knows his soul poverty, “Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonas, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you.” To be spiritually poor is the condition of all men—to be poor in spirit, or to know our spiritual poverty is an attainment especially granted to the called and chosen! An omnipotent hand created us out of nothing and the same omnipotence is needed to bring us to feel that we are nothing! We can never be saved unless we are made alive by infinite power, nor can we be made alive at all unless that same power shall first slay us. It is amazing how much is needed to strip a man and lay him in his true place! One would think that so penniless a beggar must be aware of his penury, but he is not and never will be unless the eternal God shall convince him of it! Our imaginary goodness is more difficult to conquer than our actual sin. Man can sooner be cured of his sicknesses than be made to forego his bouts of health. Human weakness is a small obstacle to salvation compared with human strength—there lies the work and the difficulty! Hence it is a sign of grace to know one’s need of grace. He has some light of God in his soul who knows and feels that he is in darkness. The Lord Himself has worked a work of grace upon the spirit which is poor and needy, and trembles at His word. And it is such a work that it bears within it the promise, yes, the assurance of salvation—for the poor in spirit already possess the kingdom of heaven—and none have that but those who have eternal life!

One thing is certainly true of the man whose spirit knows its own poverty—he is in possession of at least one truth of God, whereas before he breathed the atmosphere of falsehood and knew nothing which he ought to know. However painful the result of poverty of spirit may be, it is the result of the truth of God—and a foundation of truth being laid, other truths will be added and the man will abide in the truth. All that others think they know concerning their own spiritual excellence is but a lie—and to be rich in lies is to be awfully poor. Carnal security, natural merit and self-confidence—however much of false peace they may produce—are only forms of falsehood, deceiving the soul. But when a man finds out that he is by nature and practice, “lost,” he is no longer utterly a pauper as to the truth of God—he possesses one precious thing at any rate—one coin minted by truth is in his hand! For my own part, my constant prayer is that I may know the worst of my case, whatever the knowledge may cost me. I know that an accurate estimate of my own heart can never be otherwise than lowering to my self-esteem, but God forbid that I should be spared the humiliation which springs from His truth! The sweet apples of self-esteem are deadly poison—who would wish to be destroyed by them? The bitter fruits of self-knowledge are always healthful, especially if washed down with the waters of repentance and sweetened with a draught from the wells of salvation! He who loves his own soul will not despise them. Blessed, according to our text, is the poor cast-down one who knows his lost condition and is suitably impressed thereby—he is but a beginner in wisdom’s school, yet he is a disciple and his Master encourages him with a benediction, yes, He pronounces him one of those to whom the kingdom of heaven is given!

The position into which a clear knowledge of this one truth has brought the soul is one peculiarly advantageous for obtaining every gospel blessing. Poverty of spirit empties a man and so makes him ready to be filled! It exposes his wounds to the oil and wine of the good Physician. It lays the guilty sinner at the gate of mercy or among those dying ones around the pool of Bethesda to whom Jesus is known to come. Such a man opens his mouth and the Lord fills it—he hungers and the Lord satisfies him with good things! Above all other evils we have most cause to dread our own fullness! The greatest unfitness for Christ is our own imaginary fitness! When we are utterly undone, we are near to being enriched with the riches of divine grace. Out of ourselves is next door to being in Christ. Where we end, mercy begins, or rather, mercy has begun and mercy has already done much for us when we are at the end of our merit, our power, our wisdom and our hope! The deeper the destitution the better—

“Tis perfect poverty alone
That sets the soul at large—
While we can call one mite our own
We get no full discharge.”
If the heart is distressed because it cannot sufficiently feel its own need, so much the better—the poverty of spirit is just so much the greater and the appeal to free grace all the more powerful! If the need of a broken heart is felt, we may come to Jesus for a broken heart if we cannot come with a broken heart. If no kind or degree of good is perceptible, this also is but a clear proof of utter poverty—and in that condition we may dare to believe in the Lord Jesus! Though we are nothing, Christ is all. All that we need to begin with we must find in Him, just as surely as we must look for our ultimate perfecting to the same source!

A man may be so misled as to make a merit out of his sense of sin and may dream of coming to Jesus clothed in a fitness of despair and unbelief! This is, however, the very reverse of the conduct of one who is poor in spirit, for he is poor in feelings as well as in everything else and dares no more commend himself on account of his humility and despair than on account of his sins. He thinks himself to be a hard-hearted sinner as he acknowledges the deep repentance which his offenses call for. He fears that he is a stranger to that saved quickening which makes the conscience tender and he dreads lest he should, in any measure, be a hypocrite in the desires which he perceives to be in his soul. In fact, he does not dare to think himself to be any other than poor, grievously poor, in whatever light he may be viewed in his relation to God and His righteous law. He hears of the humiliations of true penitents and wishes he had them. He reads the descriptions of repentance given in the Word of God and prays that he may realize them, but he sees nothing in himself upon which he can put his finger and say, “This, at least, is good. In me there dwells at least some one good thing.” He is poor in spirit and from him all boasting is cut off, once and for all. It is better to be in this condition than falsely to account oneself a saint and sit in the chief places of the synagogue. Yes, it is so sweetly safe a position to occupy, that he who is fullest of faith in God and joy in the Holy Spirit finds it adds to his peace to retain a full consciousness of the poverty of his natural state and to let it run parallel with his persuasion of security and blessedness in Christ Jesus! Lord, keep me low! Empty me more and more! Lay me in the dust! Let me be dead and buried as to all that is of self—then shall Jesus live in me, reign in me and be truly my all in all!

It may seem to some to be a small matter to be poor in spirit. Let such persons remember that our Lord so places this gracious condition of heart that it is the foundation stone of the celestial ascent of the Beatitudes—and who can deny that the steps which rise from it are sublime beyond measure? It is something inexpressibly desirable to be poor in spirit if this is the road to purity of heart and to the godlike character of the peacemaker! Who would not lay his head on Jacob’s stone to enjoy Jacob’s dream? Who would scorn the staff with which in poverty he crossed the Jordan if he might but see the kingdom of heaven opened as the Patriarch did? Welcome the poverty of Israel if it is a part of the conditions upon which we shall receive the blessing of Israel’s God! Instead of despising the poor in spirit, we shall do well to regard them as possessing the dawn of spiritual life, the germ of all the graces, the initiative of perfection, the evidence of blessedness!

II. Having spoken thus much upon the character of those who are poor in spirit as being formed by the knowledge of a fact, we have now to note that IT IS BY A FACT THAT THEY ARE CHEERED AND RENDERED BLESSED—“For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

It is not a promise as to the future, but a declaration as to the present—not theirs shall be, but “theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” This truth is clearly revealed in many Scriptures by necessary inference, for first, the King of the heavenly kingdom is constantly represented as reigning over the poor. David says in the 72nd psalm, “He shall judge the poor of the people, He shall save the children of the needy...He shall spare the poor and needy and shall save the souls of the needy.” As His virgin mother sang, “He has put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.” Those who enlist beneath the banner of the Son of David are like those who of old came to the son of Jesse in the cave of Adullam—“Everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them.” “This man receives sinners and eats with them.” His title was “A friend of publicans and sinners.” “Though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor,” and it is therefore right that the poor should be gathered unto Him. Since Jesus has chosen the poor in spirit to be His subjects and said, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom,” we see how true it is that they are blessed.
The rule of the kingdom is such as only the poor in spirit will endure. To them it is an easy yoke from which they have no wish to be released. To give God all the glory is no burden to them. To cease from self is no hard command. The place of lowliness suits them, the service of humiliation they count an honor! They can say with the psalmist (Psa 131:2), “Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.” Self-denial and humility, which are main duties of Christ’s kingdom, are easy only to those who are poor in spirit. A humble mind loves humble duties and is willing to kiss the least flower which grows in the Valley of Humiliation. But to others, a fair show in the flesh is a great attraction and self-exaltation the main object of life. Our Savior’s declaration, “Except you are converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,” is an iron rule which shuts out all but the poor in spirit! But, at the same time it is a gate of pearl which admits all who are of that character.

The privileges of the kingdom are such as only the spiritually poor will value. To others, they are as pearls cast before swine. The self-righteous care nothing for pardon, though it cost the Redeemer His life’s blood. They have no care for regeneration, though it is the greatest work of the Holy Spirit. And they set no store by sanctification, though it is the Father, Himself, who has made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light! Evidently the blessings of the covenant were meant for the poor in spirit—there is not one of them which would be valued by the Pharisee. A robe of righteousness implies our nakedness. Manna from heaven implies the lack of earthly bread. Salvation is vanity if men are in no danger. Mercy is a mockery if they are not sinful. The charter of the church is written upon the supposition that it is formed of the poor and needy and is without meaning if it is not so. Poverty of spirit opens the eyes to see the preciousness of covenant blessings. As an old Puritan said, “He that is poor in spirit is an admirer of Christ. He has high thoughts of Christ, he sets a high value and appreciation upon Christ, he hides himself in Christ’s wounds, he bathes himself in His blood, he wraps himself in His robe. He sees a spiritual dearth and famine at home, but he looks out to Christ and cries, ‘Lord, show me Yourself, and it suffices.’” Now, inasmuch as the Lord has made nothing in vain and since we find that the privileges of the gospel kingdom are only suitable to the poor in spirit, we may rest assured that for such they were prepared and to such they belong!

Moreover, it is clear that only those who are poor in spirit do actually reign as kings unto God. The crown of this kingdom will not fit every head. In fact, it fits the brow of none but the poor in spirit! No proud man reigns—he is the slave of his boasting, the serf of his own loftiness. The ambitious worldling grasps after a kingdom, but he does not possess one. The humble in heart are content and in that contentment they are made to reign! High spirits have no rest—only the lowly heart has peace. To know one’s self is the way to self-conquest—and self-conquest is the grandest of all victories! The world looks out for a lofty, ambitious, stern, self-sufficient man and says he bears himself like a king and yet, in very truth, the real kings among their fellows are meek and lowly like the Lord of all—and in their unconsciousness of self lies the secret of their power! The kings among mankind, the happiest, the most powerful, the most honorable, will one day be seen to be not the Alexanders, Caesars and Napoleons, but the men akin to Him who washed the disciples’ feet—those who in quietness lived for God and their fellow men, unpretentious because conscious of their failures, unselfish because self was held in low esteem, humble and devout because their own spiritual poverty drove them out of themselves and led them to rest alone upon the Lord! The time shall come when glitter and novelty will go for what they are worth and then shall the poor in spirit be seen to have had the kingdom!

The dominion awarded by this Beatitude to the poor in spirit is no common one. It is the kingdom of heaven, a heavenly dominion far excelling anything which can be obtained this side of the stars. An ungodly world may reckon the poor in spirit to be contemptible, but God writes them down among His peers and princes. And His judgment is true and far more to be esteemed than the opinions of men or even of angels! Only as we are poor in spirit have we any evidence that heaven is ours. But having that mark of blessedness, all things are ours, whether things present or things to come. To the poor in spirit belong all the security, honor and happiness which the gospel kingdom is calculated to give upon earth! Even here below they may eat of its dainties without question and revel in its delights without fear. Theirs are also the things not seen as yet, reserved for future revelation. Theirs the second advent, theirs the glory, theirs the fifth great monarchy, theirs the resurrection, theirs the beatific vision, theirs the eternal ecstasy!
“Poor in spirit.” The words sound as if they described the owners of nothing, and yet they describe the inheritors of all things! Happy poverty! Millionaires sink into insignificance! The treasures of the Indies evaporate in smoke while to the poor in spirit remains a boundless, endless, faultless kingdom which renders them blessed in the esteem of Him who is God over all, blessed forever! And all this is for the present life in which they mourn and need to be comforted, hunger and thirst and need to be filled. All this is for them while yet they are persecuted for righteousness’ sake. What, then, must be their blessedness when they shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father and in them shall be fulfilled the promise of their Master and Lord, “to him that overcomes will I grant to sit with Me on My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father on His throne”?

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:
MATTHEW 5:31-42.
[Continued from Sermon #3155, Volume 55.]

31, 32. It has been said, Whoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, That whoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causes her to commit adultery: and whoever shall marry her that is divorced commits adultery. This time our King quotes and condemns a permissive enactment of the Jewish State. Men were known to bid their wives, “Begone,” and a hasty word was thought sufficient as an act of divorce. Moses insisted upon “a writing of divorcement,” that angry passions might have time to cool and that the separation, if it must come, might be performed with deliberation and legal formality. The requirement of a writing was to a certain degree a check upon an evil habit which was so ingrained in the people that to refuse it altogether would have been useless—and would only have created another crime. The law of Moses went as far as it could practically be enforced. It was because of the hardness of their hearts that divorce was tolerated—it was never approved.

But our Lord is more heroic in his legislation. He forbids divorce except for the one crime of infidelity to the marriage vow. She who commits adultery does, by that act and deed, in effect break the marriage bond—and it ought then to be formally recognized by the State as being broken. But for nothing else should a man be divorced from his wife. Marriage is for life and cannot be loosed except by the one great crime which severs its bond, whichever of the two is guilty of it. Our Lord would never have tolerated the wicked laws of certain of the American States which allow married men and women to separate on the merest pretext. A woman divorced for any cause but adultery, and marrying again, is committing adultery before God, whatever the laws of man may call it! This is very plain and positive—and thus a sanctity is given to marriage which human legislation ought not to violate. Let us not be among those who take up novel ideas of wedlock and seek to deform the marriage laws under the pretense of reforming them. Our Lord knows better than our modern social reformers. We had better let the laws of God alone, for we shall never discover any better.

33-37. Again, you have heard that it has been said by them of old time, You shall not forswear yourself; but shall perform unto the Lord your oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither of heaven, for it is God’s throne: nor by the earth, for it is His footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yes, yes; No, no: for whatever is more than these comes of evil. False swearing was forbidden of old, but every kind of swearing is forbidden now by the word of our Lord Jesus. He mentions several forms of oath and forbids them all—and then prescribes simple forms of affirmation or denial as all that His followers should employ. Notwithstanding much that may be advanced to the contrary, there is no evading the plain sense of this passage—that every sort of oath, however solemn or true, is forbidden to a follower of Jesus! Whether in court of law, or out of it, the rule is, “Swear not at all.” Yet, in this Christian country we have swearing everywhere—and especially among lawmakers! Our legislators begin their official existence by swearing. By those who obey the law of the Savior’s kingdom, all swearing is set aside so that the simple word of affirmation or denial, calmly repeated, may remain as a sufficient bond of truth. A bad man cannot be believed on his oath and a good man speaks the truth without an oath—to what purpose is the superfluous custom of legal swearing pre-
served? Christians should not yield to an evil custom, however great the pressure put upon them! They should abide by the plain and unmistakable command of their Lord and King.

38. You have heard that it has been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. The law of an eye for an eye, as administered in the proper courts of law was founded in justice and worked far more equitably than the more modern system of fines, for that method allows rich men to offend with comparative impunity. But when the lex talionis (an eye for an eye) came to be the rule of daily life, it fostered revenge—and our Savior would not tolerate it as a principle carried out by individuals. Good law in court may be very bad custom in common society. He spoke against what had become a proverb and was heard and said among the people, “You have heard that it has been said.” Our loving King would have private dealings ruled by the spirit of love and not by the rule of law.

39. But I say unto you, That you resist not evil: but whoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also. Non-resistance and forbearance are to be the rule among Christians. They are to endure personal ill-usage without coming to blows. They are to be as the anvil when bad men are the hammers, and thus they are to overcome by patient forgiveness. The rule of the judgment seat is not for common life, but the rule of the cross and the all enduring sufferer is for us all. Yet how many regard all this as fanatical, Utopian and even cowardly? The Lord, our King, would have us bear and forbear, and conquer by mighty patience. Can we do it? How are we the servants of Christ if we have not His spirit?

40. And if any man will sue you at the law, and take away your coat, let him have your cloak, also. Let him have all he asks and more. Better lose a suit of clothes than be drawn into a suit in law. The courts of our Lord’s Day were vicious and His disciples were advised to suffer wrong sooner than appeal to them. Our own courts often furnish the surest method of solving a difficulty by authority, and we have known them resorted to with the view of preventing strife. Yet even in a country where justice can be had, we are not to resort to law for every personal wrong. We should rather endure to be put upon than be forever crying out, “I’ll bring an action.” At times this very rule of self-sacrifice may require us to take steps in the way of legal appeal, to stop injuries which would fall heavily upon others. But we ought often to forego our own advantage, yes, always when the main motive would be a proud desire for self-vindication. Lord, give me a patient spirit, so that I may not seek to avenge myself, even when I might righteously do so!

41. And whoever shall compel you to go a mile, go with him two. Governments in those days demanded forced service through their petty officers. Christians were to be of a yielding temper and bear a double exaction rather than provoke ill words and anger. We ought not to evade taxation, but stand ready to render to Caesar his due. “Yield” is our watchword! To stand up against force is not exactly our part—we may leave that to others. How few believe the long-suffering, non-resistant doctrines of our King!

42. Give to him that asks you, and from him that would borrow of you turn not you away. Be generous. A miser is no follower of Jesus. Discretion is to be used in our giving, lest we encourage idleness and beggary. But the general rule is, “Give to him that asks you.” Sometimes a loan may be more useful than a gift, do not refuse it to those who will make right use of it. These precepts are not meant for fools—they are set before us as our general rule—but each rule is balanced by other Scriptural commands and there is the teaching of a philanthropic commonsense to guide us. Our spirit is to be one of readiness to help the needy by gift or loan—and we are not exceedingly likely to err by excess in this direction—hence the boldness of the command.

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