

**8 character traits
of the
followers of Christ
(Matthew 5:3-10)**

8 character traits

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

- 5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.**
- 6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.**
- 7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**
- 8. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

Think of it this way...

A line forms of those who hope to follow Jesus.

They have papers in hand, ready to file for spiritual bankruptcy.

Another
initial and *ongoing*
character quality of true
followers of Christ.

**Blessed are those
who hunger and thirst
for righteousness,
for they will be filled.**

A double disadvantage



An unfamiliar experience
(hunger and thirst)

An unfamiliar word
(righteousness)

“I’m starving”

**Their hunger is not for food and water
but for righteousness.**

**They feel a need for righteousness in a way
that the body hungers for food and thirst
for water.**

**This is not a casual interest but a deeply
felt need.**

How should we understand righteousness?

A gift and A requirement

A position before God and a practice



Gift righteousness

(Romans 3:22-23; I Corinthians 1:30;
II Corinthians 5:21; Titus 3:5)

Practical righteousness

(Matthew 5:10-12, 20;6:1; I Peter 2:24;
Romans 6:13; Ephesians 4:24; I John 3:7, 10a, 29)

- **Ready to file for spiritual bankruptcy, they know there's not much to be happy about and good reason for sadness.**
- **They feel hopeless and helpless – ready to cast themselves on the mercy of the Lord.**
- **They don't come to defend themselves because they know that they selfishly wasted their father's inheritance in the far country.**
- **There's not much confidence among them. Their heads are bowed and eyes downcast as they stand at a distance - uncertain of acceptance.**
- **Some of them are even hitting their chests in self-renunciation -- reminding themselves that they are sinners.**

For they stand before the Alpha and the Omega, ... who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.”

They stand in the presence of the First and the Last - the Living One; who holds the keys of death and the grave. (Revelation 1:8,17-18)

“In the beginning, He was with God, and was God and through him all things were made; and without him nothing was made that has been made and in him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind.” (John 1:1-4)

- Before approaching the Lord, they rehearse what they plan to say: “I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.”
- If they’re accepted as servants, they intend to do everything they are commanded, and to say, “we are unworthy servants who have only done what we ought to do.” (Luke 17:10)
- They’re hungry and thirsty, but when offered refreshment, they decline because grief over the mess they’ve made of their lives has caused them to lose their appetites.

These are people who say, “Woe to me! I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips” (Isaiah 6:5).

They feel they should fall to their knees before Jesus, and say, “Go away from me, Lord; I am sinful!” (Luke 5:8)

Then something unexpected happens.

As they mournfully wait to file for spiritual bankruptcy, the Lord speaks and says,

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

“Did He just pronounce blessing on us?” they ask.

How could this be?

They didn't understand that they stood in the presence of a God unlike any ancient deity.

Yes. He is the creator. Yes. He is the Judge. He is all-powerful. Heaven is His throne, and the earth is only a footstool to Him. His hand made everything that has come into being.

Yet He looks with favor on those who are humble and contrite in spirit, who tremble at His word.

Yes. He is the high and lofty one who lives in eternity... the Holy One, who lives in the high and holy place

Yet He is the One who lives with those whose spirits are contrite and humble to restore the crushed spirit of the humble and revive the courage of those with repentant hearts.

They didn't understand that He was anointed to proclaim good news to the poor and was sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners.

They didn't understand that he came to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve.

Although they deserved ashes he came to place on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes and the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. (Isaiah 61:1-2)

These are people who stand in the company of a man after God's heart who says,

“Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. Everything in the heavens and on earth is yours, O Lord, and this is your kingdom.

We adore you as the one who is over all things. Wealth and honor come from you alone, for you rule over everything. Power and might are in your hand, and at your discretion people are made great and given strength.”

“O our God, we thank you and praise your glorious name! But who am I, and who are my people, that we could give anything to you? Everything we have has come from you, and we give you only what you first gave us!

We are here for only a moment, visitors and strangers in the land as our ancestors were before us. Our days on earth are like a passing shadow, gone so soon without a trace.”

(I Chronicles 29:11-15)

This a humble and meek servant of God.

Quote - Lloyd-Jones on meekness