"How Poor Are You?" (Matthew 5:3)

I Introduction: The start of each new year is a good time to set goals, but do you know how God defines success? True success is becoming the person God wants you to be. The Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1-10 describe the ideal character of a kingdom citizen. 'Poor in spirit' is the fundamental characteristic of the Christian, and all the other characteristics are in a sense, the result of this one.

The Beatitudes Collectively: Three Observations

1. **Each of the eight beatitudes opens with the word "blessed."**
2. **Blessing always correlates with a condition.**
3. **The first beatitude (v.3) and the last beatitude (v.10) promise the same reward.**

An Analysis of the First Beatitude

II. The Meaning of Spiritual Poverty

- **A. Poverty of spirit is the personal acknowledgment of spiritual bankruptcy.**
- **B. Poverty of spirit is the opposite of pride and self-sufficiency.**

III. The Importance of Spiritual Poverty

- **A. Spiritual Poverty is essential for knowing God's approval**

  (Luke 4:18; 2:8-12, 25, 37; 23:40-43; Mark 7:27-30; Matt. 8:8).
- **B. Spiritual Poverty is essential for salvation (Luke 18:9-14).**
- **C. Spiritual poverty is essential for effective service**

  (John 15:5; Rev. 3:17-19; Judges 15:16).

IV. The Blessing of Spiritual Poverty

- **A. Spiritual Poverty relieves of the burden of trying to please God in our own strength (Phi. 3:3).**
- **B. Spiritual Poverty drives us to God (Ps. 5:3; Pro. 3:5-6).**
- **C. Spiritual Poverty enables us to walk in contentment and healthy self-esteem (1 Cor. 15:10).**
- **D. Spiritual Poverty inspires gratitude (2 Cor. 5:14-15).**
- **E. Spiritual Poverty allows God to receive glory in all things (1. Cor. 3:5-7).**