

with very much wisdom, and there was much of the glory of God sparkling in the very eyes of Jesus Christ. In Rev. i. 14, we find that 'the eyes of Christ were as a flaming fire.' Wisdom makes a man's face to shine. And many times there appears a great majesty in the very countenance of a minister; and a great deal of use is made by the minister's looking upon the people, and the people's looking upon the minister. Therefore because Christ would have his word effect the more, the text saith, he lifted up his eyes upon his disciples, and looked upon them. And it hath a great deal of power in way of reprehension and threatening: and many times a guilty conscience is not able to bear the fastening of the eyes of a minister upon them. Therefore in Acts xiii. 9, we read of Paul, whenas Elymas the sorcerer would have taken off Sergius Paulus, that was the deputy of the place, and would have hindered the work of the ministry upon his heart, Paul was a-preaching, and the deputy began to be stirred up, and to hearken to what Paul should say, and there comes one Elymas and would have taken off the deputy; now when Paul, having hopes to have gained such a man that might be a public instrument in the place where God had set him, the text saith that Paul set his eyes upon Elymas, and spake to him in a terrible manner, as if he should say, O wretch; for so he saith, O child of the devil, and full of all subtlety! What! wilt thou seek to hinder the word upon such an eminent man, O thou child of the devil? There is a great deal of power sometimes in the eyes of a minister of the word. And we find that when Peter had denied Christ, the text saith that Christ looked upon him, and then Peter went forth and wept bitterly. There was much darted through the eyes of Jesus Christ; and there is much many times darted through the eyes of a minister of God.

Now then, my brethren, this is the close of this sermon for the present. I beseech you, while we are preaching over this large sermon of Jesus Christ, do you apprehend that the eyes of Jesus Christ are upon you all. Why should we not apprehend it so now as well as then, when Christ saith, He that heareth you hears me? It is the sermon that Christ preached himself; and as he lift up his eyes upon his auditors at that time, so do you know that Jesus Christ lifts up his eyes upon you all, and his eyes will be upon every heart all the while his sermon shall be preached. Oh, Christ comes into the congregation to look upon this man and the other man, to see how they will entertain his word; and if you will but remember this one note all along as we go, it will be of very great use to you—remember the eyes of Jesus Christ will be upon you, and looks upon your behaviour all the while. And that is the fifth thing by way of preface.

SERMON II. Ver. 2.

VI. The sixth thing is to shew what the scope of this sermon was; and that consists especially in these three things:—

First, To discover wherein true blessedness doth consist; who they are that are truly blessed.

Secondly, To open the spiritualness of the law, or that spiritual light that by the light of the gospel we come to understand. Christ undertakes to shew the duties of the law, how they were by the gospel raised to a higher height. The gospel doth not abolish them, but shews us a more spiritual life to live than those generally under the law did understand. Our Saviour aims at taking of men off from satisfying of themselves in external duties of righteousness, of prayers, or any other way, or keeping from external sins.

And then thirdly, A forewarning of false teachers. These are the three principal heads of the sermon. There are many other things interwoven in. But for the first thing, It is to shew wherein true blessedness consists. He begins with blessedness in his mouth,—Blessed are the poor, Blessed, Blessed, again and again. From this we have these notes briefly—

First, That it is Jesus Christ that teaches wherein true blessedness doth consist. If we would know how to be happy and blessed, it must be by Christ; the natural wisdom of man can never reach it. There were among philosophers a hundred and four-score opinions of man's happiness, and some reckon more. They did but beat the bush; it is the Christian that catches the bird. It is only by Christ that we may know how to be happy; Christ is come from the bosom of the Father to reveal unto mankind those eternal counsels of the Father about man's last end. Man since the fall would never have come to have known wherein his last end consists, and what good it is that he is capable of and God intends towards him, had not Christ come from the bosom of the Father to declare it. Oh the poor and low things wherein the children of men place their happiness in, that know not Jesus Christ, but are strangers to Jesus Christ! When Christ comes to be revealed, the thoughts and hearts of men are raised and enlarged; they look after happiness in another manner than formerly they did. Oh let us bless God for Jesus Christ, by whom we come to know how we may be happy—that is, wherein our last end consists, that high good that man's nature is made capable of by God.

Secondly, It is the end and scope of the ministry to shew to people how they may come to be blessed. For this sermon was preached especially to the apostles when they had their commission, as I opened the

last day. Now in that Christ speaks so much of blessedness to them, it was to prepare them to go and preach it to the world. Oh, it is the ministry of the word that shews to men how they may come to be happy! This is all the hurt it will do you, to shew you how you may be blessed for ever. How poor and miserable are those people that live without the ministry of the word! What poor things do they plant their happiness in! When you come to attend the ministry of the gospel, you must come to attend it as a message from God, to shew you how you may be happy for ever. It is called the gospel that they preach; good tidings. It brings tidings to you from heaven, how those souls and bodies of yours may come to be eternally happy. Come with such a disposition to the ministry of the word. Those, therefore, who forsake the ministry of the word, forsake their own mercy—the way that might shew them to be happy. Oh how vile are men's hearts, to prize it at no higher a rate than most do, so as ye cannot think it worth the enduring a little cold in a morning to come to attend upon the ministry that is appointed by God to shew happiness to those that God intends eternal good to!

Oh, the convictions that many have had in the ministry of the gospel! what a turn sometimes hath the word given to their hearts in one half-quarter of an hour! Their hearts have been seeking after vain and drossy things for their happiness, and would rest in them as the only good that they would think themselves happy in. And the ministry of the gospel hath darted in those truths unto them that have given a turn to their hearts; and they would not have lost what they have found in the ministry of the word, sometimes in one sermon, for ten thousand worlds—that that you prize at so low a rate, they find such good in, as, I say, they would not have lost for ten thousand worlds. They have come sometimes to hear the word with carnal, drossy, vain, sensual hearts, looking only to things that are here, base and vile; but in attending upon the word, there hath been those flashes of light let out unto them that hath made them to see wherein the true good of a rational creature consists—to see what was the end God made man for, and the infinite good that man's soul is capable of; and upon this they have gone away with their hearts scornful and contemning all those sensual delights and vanities that they placed their happiness in before. Therefore, learn to know what the scope of the ministry of the gospel is; that is the second general note.

The third note from the design of Christ in general is this, By what we hear Christ telling us blessedness doth consist in, we may learn that there is a great deal of difference between the thoughts and judgment of God about true happiness, and the thoughts and judgment of the world. For if so be that you look

into all those eight beatitudes that we have here, you will see them in such a quite cross way to the judgment of the world as nothing can be more.

For, in the first place, Suppose the judgment of the world should be asked, who are those that are blessed; certainly they would never have said the poor was blessed. They would think them to be miserable men that are poor. Ay, but Christ is of another judgment, 'Blessed are the poor, poor in spirit, theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' Blessed are the rich, would the world say; they are happy indeed. We call the proud happy in Mal. iii.; but here it is 'Blessed are the poor.'

Then, secondly, Ask the world again, who are blessed men; they would never tell you that those that mourn are blessed. Certainly, if there be any blest in this world, they must be those that live brave, jolly lives; there is a happy man that lives a brave, merry life. No, saith Christ; it is quite contrary. Blessed are they that mourn. Quite cross the judgment of Christ goes to the judgment of the world.

Then, thirdly, If you would ask, who are the happy men; why, those that will take no wrong, and those that are able to right themselves; and if any man wrong them, they shall know it; the world would think them to be happy men. No, saith Christ; 'Blessed are the meek'—those that are willing to put up wrongs, and earry themselves meekly towards those that do abuse them. The world thinks he is a fool that puts up wrongs, but in the judgment of Christ he is a blessed man.

And then, fourthly, If you would ask the world, who are the blessed; surely they would say, Those that are full of all kind of delicacies—that can fill themselves. No, saith Christ; 'Blessed are those that hunger, and those that thirst;' hungry and thirsty souls are the blessed souls.

And then, fifthly, If you would ask the world, who are the blessed men; why, they are those that keep their estates to themselves. They think it is wisdom for a man to keep what he hath, and not let it go. No, saith Christ; 'Blessed are the merciful.' If a man hath an estate and great means, and lets it go for good uses, blessed is he.

Again, sixthly, Ask the world, who are blessed; they would never have pitched upon the pure in heart. Blessed are they that follow their lusts, and satisfy them to the full. No, saith Christ; 'Blessed are the Puritans—those that are pure in heart.'

And then, 'Blessed are the peace-makers.' The men of the world think it a happiness for those that stand out and defend their right. No; 'Blessed are the peace-makers'—that will rather part with that which is their right than that there should not be peace.

But, above all, the world would never have thought that those were blessed that are persecuted. No; saith Christ; now I appeal to your consciences whether ever you would have thought that blessedness had consisted in these things, had not we had it from Christ. Thus have we seen that there is a great deal of difference between the judgment of Christ and the judgment of the world about true happiness.

It is of great concernment for the ministers and the young disciples of Christ to have their hearts taken off from all earthly blessedness, and to consider wherein true heavenly blessedness doth consist; for this is the sermon, as I told you, that Christ preaches to ministers when he sends them to preach to others, and likewise to other disciples that were newly converted, for Christ had been in his public ministry for two years before this sermon, and many were turned to the profession of Christ. But now, though they were turned to be the disciples of Christ, yet nothing but troubles and afflictions did befall them in this world. Upon that, Christ saw that it was like they might be offended through their weakness; therefore Christ takes care fully to inform and instruct them, that, though they did continue in a poor and mean and low condition for the world, and persecuted and reviled, yet there was a blessedness that was beyond all these; yea, in the suffering of all these they might be most happy. Why, this is that that Christ would have ministers and young disciples to know, because that their hearts may be taken off from outward things. They are like to meet with afflictions and troubles, and therefore Christ would have them to be spiritual; and if they be not so, they are not like to do much good to those they preach to. If their hearts be entangled with the world and with sensual things and the pleasures of the flesh, they are never like to do good; but they that see a happiness higher than these things, they are like to do the greatest good in their way. And then for you that are young ones, if you are not fully informed in this when you first give up your names to Christ, that whatsoever afflictions and miseries you endure in the world, yet there is a happiness wherein you may be blessed, you will never hold on in the profession of Christian religion, but you will be offended, and in a small time cast it all off.

Christ doth not say, you ought to be poor in spirit; it is your duty to hunger and thirst, and to be meek. No, he doth not come that way, but 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, and Blessed are they that hunger and thirst;' he goes by way of commendations of what should be in them, rather than by way of exhortation, or threatening the contrary. From whence we may learn this note: that it is a very useful and profitable way for the ministers of the

gospel to seek to gain people to the love of what is their duty, by shewing them what is the excellency and glory of it, and what good and happiness they shall come to enjoy by it; that is the way, not altogether to be merely in laying the burden of a duty, in exhorting or threatening for want of the duty, though these things are reasonable in their times, but a main thing that ministers of the gospel should aim at, should be to convince people that in what is required of them there is a blessedness; for if we should get people to set upon duty merely upon necessity, because they must be done, this would do but little good, and they would be ready to fall off from what they do. But now if we can gain people not only to do what God requires, but to be in love with what God requires, that they may see there is an excellency in it, that they may see they are blessed by it, we then gain their hearts to the duty and to Christ for ever.

And yet there is one note more from this scope of Christ in his blessedness: that Christ doth not here begin his sermon thus, Blessed are those that do believe in me, and that are godly and righteous. Why doth not Christ speak of blessedness that way in general of righteous men, of believers, of saints; but those that are poor, those that hunger and thirst, those that mourn, they are the blessed ones? Why, this is because Christ would suit himself to his present auditory, to those that he was now preaching to; this was a doctrine that was more suitable to his disciples, because they were like to be most offended with poverty and with their afflicted conditions, in which they were like to be put into, and therefore Christ he labours to help them in that thing wherein their chief temptation was like to lie, and pitches rather upon this, 'Blessed are the poor, and those that mourn,' than blessed are those that believe, and that are righteous. It is a great part of the skill of a minister of the gospel not only to preach things that are truths, but to labour to suit himself what possibly he can to those that he speaks unto—that he may speak a word in due season to their hearts, fitted for their condition; and therefore not so much to labour to preach what he might, perhaps, wherein he might shew more depth and excellency of his own parts, but what it is that may be most suitable for the condition of the people that he is speaking to. These are the notes briefly from the general, that Christ begins here with this kind of blessedness, 'Blessed are the poor.' It is good to take Christ's judgment rather than our own about blessedness. Rather follow what the blessed God saith blessedness consists in, than what a wretched, miserable man saith.

'The poor, they are the blessed.'

That is, if you would know what is meant by

blessedness here, it is this : they are such as are partakers of the chief good that it was made for, and shall certainly be filled with all good that their natures are capable of, for in this blessedness consists.

Now the poor in spirit, whatever they may want for the present in the creature, yet they are now made partakers of that wherein the highest good of man doth consist, and shall certainly be filled with all good whatsoever, that their souls and bodies are capable of, these are blessed.

The poor; 'Blessed are the poor.' The Greeks had two words to signify a poor man; first, $\piτωχος$, such a poor man as is destitute of necessaries such as he cannot live without; the other $\πεινης$, which signifies a man that indeed hath nothing but bare necessities, that can maintain life and soul, as we say, and keep them together.

The word that we have here in the text, it is not a poor man that hath but just enough to maintain him, but it is the poor that are destitute of that that is necessary. They want that without which they are like to perish, they apprehend such a want to themselves; that is the property of the word, 'Blessed are the poor.'

The poor, but not all poor. 'Blessed are the poor in spirit.' There are some poor that are cursed, that are miserable poor, that are every way poor; that bring poverty upon themselves by their idleness, by their wickedness, by their prodigality, by mispending what they have when they are young and have time to lay up something against charge come upon them, spend it all presently, and so they and their families are like to perish through poverty. Christ doth not pronounce them blessed that bring poverty upon themselves by abuse of the creatures, or by idleness, or by committing such wickedness as they should by the stroke of justice be deprived of the comforts of this world, and so be made poor; nor those that are through bare necessity poor, outwardly poor, or through any secret curse of God upon their estates, as sometimes it is, he doth not pronounce such to be blessed, as these are. Oh no, there are many poor people that are outwardly poor, yet are far enough from being poor in spirit; they are outwardly poor, and yet proud, stubborn, profane, and ungodly, scorning at godliness and religion; certainly these are cursed poor. Therefore in Luke vi., about the 20th verse, saith Christ, 'Blessed are the poor;' when he looked upon his disciples, 'Blessed are the poor.' A man may be poor in this world, and yet be a very cursed man, be miserable in reference to God, as he is in reference to men, yea, more miserable a thousand times in reference to God than he is unto men. Oh what a multitude of the poorest of people do we find living without God in the world—swearing poor, un-

clean poor, most profane and ungodly as any kind of people that lives upon the earth. Oh, these are dreadful objects to look upon, like to be miserable here, and to be miserable to all eternity hereafter; such poor as these, you must not think that because you are miserable here, therefore you have your hell here, and shall not be miserable hereafter; oh no. If you can read, you may read in the Epistle of Jude, where the apostle speaks of some that were consumed with fire from heaven, and yet were sent down to eternal fire afterwards; so there are some that the Lord hath forsaken in this world, and are like to be forsaken to all eternity in the world to come.

But, you will say, this is little comfort to the poor. Little comfort! are there any here that would have comfort? Is it the world that you do expect comfort from? If there be any poor that doth but desire to have comfort from the word, I would be loath to let this pass without adding something; therefore, that you may not be discouraged in your poverty,

You may have this comfort from the word, 'Blessed are the poor;' for, first, You poor ones have as precious souls as the greatest monarchs of the earth. Your souls are as much worth, and capable of as much glory, as the great emperors', kings', and queens' of the world; and that is somewhat.

Secondly, You poor may have as free access to God, and heaven is as open to you as to any of the greatest potentates of the world. There is as great a possibility, if you have hearts to look after it, for you to have a crown of glory in the highest heavens, as for the greatest monarch that lives upon the earth; and that is somewhat to you.

Thirdly, Let me say, that not only you are as near, but in some respects nearer, to eternal blessedness—if you be not wicked and ungodly, and have but hearts to look after blessedness, you may more likely attain to blessedness—than the great ones of the world; for your temptations are not so great as theirs. Indeed, the temptations of poverty are great, but the evils that other temptations would draw the heart to, are things more pleasing to nature than the temptations of poverty. Poverty tempts to despair and to shifting courses, but there is a more hardness in these temptations to a man's nature than the sins that riches tempts to, which is to satisfy our lusts, and be proud and haughty and scornful, and there is more danger in that.

Fourthly, You that are poor, you have not so great an account to give as the rich men of the world have.

Fifthly, The Lord hath revealed in the Scriptures that he hath chosen the poor of the world; though he hath chosen some rich, yet of both the Lord hath pitched his thoughts to all eternity upon the poor of

the world to choose them. In James ii. 6, 'Hearken, my brethren,—it is a matter to be hearkened after,—'the Lord hath chosen the poor of the world to be rich in faith.' Oh hearken to this, you poor ones, that you may be encouraged to hearken after true blessedness!

Sixthly, As God hath put his choice upon the poor of the world, so he hath appointed his gospel especially to be preached to them. In Luke xiv. 21, Christ sends forth his servants to call in the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind; Christ invites them: and in Mat. xi. 5, 'To the poor is the gospel preached.' Now if the gospel be appointed to be preached to the poor, then surely it is appointed to be preached to this congregation: and oh that God would but give those that are such miserable poor people in regard of outwards, but hearts to come to hear the preaching of the gospel, and not to make any excuses for want of clothes, or this or the other thing, but to come to hear the preaching of the gospel! For you are invited, you alms-people, and poor people that have not bread to satisfy your hunger withal, you are invited to come to partake of the bread of life: you that are not invited to rich men's tables, yet God hath invited you to his table, to the supper of the Lamb, he hath invited even you poor to come.

Seventhly, We find in Scripture, for an inward call, there are very few but poor people have it, I Cor. i. 26, 'You see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are.' And the poor, they have the gospel preached to them.

Eighthly, If so be that you do come in upon the call of the gospel, the Lord will not disregard you ever a whit the less because you are poor, but the Lord will have as high thoughts of you, and tender you as much as his soul shall cleave to you, and you shall enjoy communion with him, and as much as the greatest emperors shall do, though they be godly. You will say, As much as great emperors and kings that are wicked; that is true: pray, although they be godly? Suppose there be a godly king, and a poor godly alms-body: this poor alms-body may have as much communion with God, and God may accept as much of the services of this poor creature as of a prince, though he be godly; for God doth not so much regard the greatness of the work that is done, as the faithfulness and the uprightness of our hearts in doing of our work. Oh that God now

would sanctify your poverty to you, so as to bethink yourselves after this manner—Why, I am in this world, a poor miserable creature, and there is little hopes that ever I should come to any great matters in this world; oh let me look after spiritual riches then! I am like ever to be miserable here, as to outwards; oh but why may not my soul, yea, and body too, be blessed at the last? why may not I be blessed with God and his Christ for ever? If I could be able to preach to this congregation, and to all the poor in this congregation; if it might be but proclaimed, that such a day there should be a sermon to shew how all the poor in this parish should come to be made rich men and women, and so as to live richly all their days, I make no question there would be an auditory full enough then of poor people. But we can say, as in the name of God, and we can pawn our souls upon it, that if you would come and hear, or get those that you know to come and hear, we can shew you ways how it is possible for you to be blessed to all eternity, for you to have greater riches than if God should make you kings and queens—so that it might be said, not only for the general, 'Blessed are the poor,' but blessed is this poor man that dwells in this street, or in such a poor smoky hole. The very angels of God may look upon you as a blessed creature, if you have but a heart to attend upon the gospel, that reveals the way of blessedness to you. 'Blessed are the poor.'

Ay, but blessed are the poor in spirit. What! every poor; no, nor every poverty of spirit is not blessed neither. There is a poverty of spirit that is an evil, and an accursed poverty of spirit. A man may be a man of a poor spirit, and of a cursed spirit, because, indeed, he is a poor spirit. By that, therefore, I mean this, such a man as is of a low, base, sordid spirit, that hath his spirit sunk down to low, earthly, sensual things as his highest and chiefest good; he minds no higher good than to eat and drink, and satisfy his flesh. Here is a man of a poor spirit; he is of a low spirit indeed. But this poor, low spirit is sordid, is base and accursed. You see many times poor people; they mind those mean things that they are exercised in, as their adequate object. You shall see sometimes a poor woman be scraping in a dust-heap or dunghill for an hour together. Now she is not miserable because of that; but when that is her adequate object, that if she can but get sixpence or a shilling a day she thinks herself blessed, and minds no higher things than this, you will say, this is a poor spirit indeed. Why, truly, such kind of poor spirits have the men of this world, yea, the princes and great ones of the world. For many of them they mind only the satisfying of their flesh, to eat and drink and be unclean, as that that is the most

suitable thing to their spirits. Why, these are men of poor, low, base spirits. The Lord would have his saints to be of low spirits in a godly sense—that is, to be humble. But the Lord would have his servants again, in another sense, to be of high and lofty spirits—that is, that nothing in the world should satisfy their spirits for their portion but God himself. Here is a man of a high spirit indeed, that though indeed he knows he is unworthy of the least crumb of bread, yet, saith such an one, though I be unworthy, yet if God should give me all the world, it would not satisfy me for my portion. I must have himself; I must have heaven, and eternity, and glory. This is a man of a true raised spirit; and all men in the world are of poor, base, low spirits in comparison of this man, whose spirit godliness hath thus elevated in this gracious way. Therefore it is not every one that is poor in spirit which is thus blessed.

Well, but who then? what poverty of spirit is that that makes a man blessed?

For that you must know, first, thus, Blessed are those that are poor in spirit notes thus much, when a man or woman—so I find some carry it—is willing in their spirits to be in a low and poor condition, if God shall so please; so as to be willing, though he hath never so much of the world, yet if God shall please to call for all his estate, he is willing in his spirit to give it up to God and to live poorly. Now God doth give a man a comfortable estate: he hath comings in, he hath all things well about him in his family. Ay, but now saith this soul, It is true, I have received these good mercies from God; but yet God knows this is in my spirit, that God that searches the hearts of all, and converses with men's spirits, knows that this is in my spirit, that if the Lord will call for all these to give witness to his truth, I am here ready to part with all these outward accommodations, and to live upon bread and water all my days; to live in as poor a condition as ever poor creature lived in in this world; to lay aside all my pomp and riches and glory that I have in this world, and willing to be in the lowest condition that any poor alms-body is, so be it that the Lord may have any glory by me, and I may further witness to himself. Here is one that is truly poor in spirit; it may be he is not poor in his estate. I confess the papists make a great deal of do about this poor in spirit—that is, say they, one that is willing to vow poverty; but God doth not call for this, but whenever he calls for your estates, or any comforts you have, that you should be willing to lay them down at his feet. So much God requires of every man. And now examine as I go along, you that have estates, and do enjoy them, do you find such a disposition in your hearts—indeed if it were put to it,

that rather than you would deny the least truth of God, all your estate should go? Rather than you would commit the least sin any way against your consciences, your estates should all go; and you will prize rather the witnessing to any truth, than to live in all the jollity in this world? Could you bring your hearts to this? Why, this is to be poor in spirit, in the midst of all your abundance. It is not grace to cast away our estates and riches willingly; but grace consists in the well-managing of our estates while we have them, and in the willingness to part with them when God calls for them.

But secondly, Blessed are the poor in spirit—that is, a spirit willing to lie down under God in a low condition, when I am put into such a one. First, Such as are willing to be poor if God will; and secondly, Such as are already poor for their outward estate: and suitable to that poverty of their outward estate, they find a poverty in spirit—that is, their spirits do lie down under God's hand, and are willing to glorify God in this way that God hath set them. They do not envy at others that are in a higher condition, they do not murmur and repine against God. Why doth God dispense his gifts so diversely, that such and such men shall have so much, and other men shall have so little? No, God hath by his providence brought me to this condition; and, Lord, here I am, and submit to thy hand. I am content to glorify thee in this mean condition that thou hast set me; I am content to apply myself to those duties that thou requirest of me in such a poor and low estate. Many poor people think, Oh if I were rich as others are, then indeed I could glorify God; but in the way that they are in, they vex and fret, and seek after shifting ways to provide for themselves, and cannot bring their souls to glorify God in such a low way wherein they are. But now if you can find your hearts submissive to God in that low way wherein you are, blessed are the poor in spirit. And this disposition of your spirits to be willing thus to glorify God, it is a greater excellency than if God made you the chief of a parish or the chief of a kingdom.

Thirdly, 'Blessed are they that are poor in spirit'—not those that seem to be poor in their words, in their expressions, in their carriages. You shall have many that will be complaining of themselves, and say that they are thus weak, and poor, and vile, and have nothing in them; and yet God knows their hearts are haughty enough, and proud enough, that if other men should but think of them, and say of them as they speak of themselves, they would not bear it. Therefore though they be poor in words, yet not in spirit. There be some that will carry themselves in a very poor way, and live very meanly in the world. Ay, but in spirit they are not so; they go

very poorly, and seem to be very humble, as if there were no other pride but in clothes and gay things. But the main pride is the pride of men's spirits. Therefore blessed are those that are poor in spirit—that is, those that have their wills and affections and understandings bowed down to God; blessed are those that are so sincerely poor.

In the fourth place, and more especially and principally, 'Blessed are those that are poor in spirit'—that is, such as are truly apprehensive and sensible of their spiritual poverty. Now this is a great point, I am now indeed come unto the point itself, that Christ promises blessedness too.

Now for this, there are these three things that I shall do about it:—

First, To shew you what is that spiritual poverty, that these that are poor in spirit do see and are sensible of.

Secondly, What the behaviour of the heart is that is thus poor in spirit; how it doth behave itself, or what are the several workings of such a heart that is thus poor in spirit.

Thirdly, Why it is that such a heart is so blessed in the esteem of Jesus Christ.

But now wherein the blessedness consists, that especially will appear in the promise, 'For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

I will but briefly open a little the first unto you, What the spiritual poverty is that such a soul doth see and is sensible of.

In respect of its spiritual estate, such a soul apprehends itself as a very poor creature.

First, It sees that it is deprived, as it is in itself, of all true spiritual good that should do it good in reference to God, and in reference to its own happiness; this it is that it sees clearly. As a poor man sees himself poor; what is that?—that is, I want all those outward comforts that others have, I am destitute of such and such comfortable things, the necessary things that others have; so one that is poor in spirit sees his condition to be thus, O Lord, though indeed at first when thou didst make man, thou didst make him rich, thou puttest him into paradise, and madest him according to thine own image, by which he was the king and the great heir of all the world; but, Lord, now I am deprived of all good whatsoever, of all spiritual good, deprived of thine image—I have nothing of thine image now in me that is spiritual, not any part of spiritual life whereby I should come to have union with thee, or communion with thee, that in any way may work in order to eternal life—I am wholly destitute of every good thing that may make me any way acceptable to God. Now here is a poor man: when I can see it, and be convinced of this, that whatever good thing that should make me acceptable to God, that am I wholly deprived of, I

have not one whit of it. I have, it may be, an estate in the world, and outward comforts in my family; ay, but what have I in reference to God? How are things with me in reference to the infinite glorious first being of all things? Why, as I am in myself naturally, I am deprived of all; never was there a man so poor, that had not a rag to cover him, as I am poor in regard of my spiritual condition. Oh, for a man that hath the riches of the world, yet to see himself a miserable, poor, undone man! This is not ordinary, and therefore, indeed, you shall find that Christ in Luke vi. doth oppose that poor here to the rich of the world; that is, because there are so few of the rich of the world that can be brought to be convinced of this, their spiritual poverty.

A poor man, you know, is put upon many straits that others are not put upon, and many miseries a poor man doth endure that others do not; and so a second thing in this spiritual poverty is, for the soul to apprehend and be sensible of those spiritual evils that are upon it. As I do not only want the image of God and spiritual life, but I have that that is contrary, oh the misery that is upon me in my mind, the darkness of that! the crossness of my will and heart to God, those many corruptions that are in my soul! Oh the vermin that creeps about me continually! There is no misery that poor people do endure, but those that are spiritually poor do see that misery upon themselves, as they are in themselves.

And then a third thing that makes one poor is this: suppose I have many miseries upon me, yet if I am able to work for myself, I cannot be extremely poor; but when the man hath many miseries upon him, and is not able to work for his livelihood, then is he poor indeed. So it is, though we have lost the image of God, yet if we were able to do anything to help ourselves we were not so poor; but now, when a man sees himself thus miserable, and can do nothing for himself to get any good for the enriching of his soul, he is poor. A man or woman that hath lost all, and then falls lame, so that they cannot work nor do anything for their maintenance, this now is a poor man or woman, when their labour is lost as well as their estate; so now when we have lost all and are lame, and can do nothing that may help us in any spiritual good, then must we needs be poor indeed.

Fourthly, But if I be not able to labour, yet if I have friends that may help me, I am not miserably poor; thus it is in regard of our spiritual estate. What friend hast thou to relieve or help thee? is it God or Christ that should help thee? Why, God he is a stranger, Christ thou hast no interest in; as thou art in thyself, thou must not look upon God as he is in himself—thou art an enemy to God; for so the Scripture saith, 'We are enemies to God, and strangers to the covenant of grace;' and thou art a poor crea-

ture indeed that hast no whither to go for thy help. All the angels in heaven cannot help thee, all the men in the world cannot help thee in this thy poor condition in which thou art.

Fifthly, But suppose a man hath no friend to help him, and he is not able to work, yet if he hath any excellency at all in him, there is some hope that some will regard him for the worth that is in him; perhaps he is a man of excellent parts, though through weakness he is able to do little now. This is our spiritual poverty; we are thus miserable, we have no friends, we can do nothing, and then we have no worth at all in us whereby God should have any respect to us—whereby his angels should have respect to us, if they could do us good; we are naturally worthless creatures, we still aggravate our poverty.

Sixthly, If a man were so poor as that he should not be able to do something now, yet if it can be conceived that hereafter he might do something, there were hope; but I am so in debt, that as soon as I can get anything my creditors may come upon me and take away all. This is our spiritual poverty; suppose God should put abilities in us to enable us to do something that is good, why, all that we are able to do cannot satisfy for what is past. If we were able to obey now the law of God perfectly, what becomes of all the old arrears? The justice of God will have satisfaction; God is resolved that no soul shall ever be accepted but his infinite justice shall be satisfied. Now the soul sees itself poor indeed, as it is in itself, when it sees that the debt must be paid to every farthing. If a man now hath broke, and lost his estate, yet he thinks he may agree with his creditors and get up again, and so is not so miserably poor;

but if he knows this, that certainly the debt must be paid now, and there will be no compounding with his creditors, he will conclude his life is like to be poor indeed. This doth those that are spiritually poor see in themselves; they are in debt, and all that they can do can never be able to satisfy for what is past.

Seventhly, Suppose a man or woman should receive something to help them for the present, yet they must live upon continual alms; this is poverty. So a soul that is spiritually poor, it sees it must live in a continual dependence—that though God doth give me some power to act, yet there must be a new influence of his grace to help me to make use of what I have. That is a poor creature indeed that hath nothing of itself, and if anything be given him, knows not how to make use of it without help of another; so doth the soul see itself in such a condition, that whatsoever God should bestow upon me, I know not how to make use of it, without new supply of grace, and that continued to me every moment. Now if we put these seven particulars together, we shall see that here is a poor man indeed: first, I am destitute of all spiritual good; I have woeful spiritual miseries upon me, and I am not able to work at all; I have no friend, and I have no worth to commend me to another; and I am in debt, and if anything be given me, I must have new supplies for using it and for continuing of it. Oh, what a poor creature am I then! Now for a man to see this, and to be made sensible of it, here is a man or woman that is poor in spirit; but now this is not all.

But in the next place, there must be that behaviour in a man that is suitable to this to make him poor in spirit; but of that we shall speak further afterwards.