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| **SERIES** | The Pursuit of Happiness |
| **BIBLE** | Matthew 5:13 – Matthew 15:21-28 |
| **TITLE** | #1 – Blessed are the Poor in Spirit |
| **OVERVIEW** | As a citizen of the Kingdom of God you are to find yourself being blessed not for your own spirituality but in finding the richness of God’s Kingdom bringing you alive! |
| **SCRIPTURE BREAKDOWN** | **Cry Out to the King** – Matthew 15:21-22  The Woman cried out!  -The Gospel is all about transfer. It’s good news to those who have lived with bad news. This list is the ethics of the Kingdom of God. It’s a list of those who belong, those who are valued, and those who are blessed!  -We do disservice to this list if we see it as a list of rules.  ILL- Kuma’s Corner Rules  -There is a famous burger place just down Belmont and I remember the first time I went there discovering their ‘rules’. Which is just a list of things that annoy them that customers do or ask. Some including, no we don’t have ranch, but most humorous of all, “no we can’t put the game on.”  -I think if we view the Beatitudes as a list of rules we are making it to be bad news. You have to be poor in spirit, you have to be mourning, you have to fit one of these sub-categories to fit in…No! These aren’t rules these are ethics about what God’s Kingdom is all about. The Kingdom of God isn’t about empowering those in the seats of power, the Kingdom of God is founded on taking those who are cast aside and passed over, those who are viewed as weak and blessing them into strength!  -Timothy Keller calls this the introduction into “The Upside Down Kingdom”. That the Kingdom of God is established not on what we think works and succeeds in our ‘right side up kingdom’ but God’s Kingdom values things the other way. Those who are poor, mourning, meek, and persecuted.  -Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who are poor at being spiritual! Dallas Willard writes it this way, “Blessed are the spiritual zeros-the spiritually bankrupt, deprived, and deficient, the spiritual beggars, those without a wisp of ‘religion’ – when the Kingdom comes upon them.”  -We need to sit in and understand the ethics of the Kingdom of God because not only do they help us see what the values of the Kingdom are but the help remind us the driving force of the Kingdom is this Good News!  This understanding helps us approach God to cry out for help!  **Do not Relent in Approaching!** Matthew 15:23-25  The woman doesn’t give up she keeps approaching.  We can be persuaded to stop moving toward God when we don’t get a response but we are to keep pressing in.  **Receive from the King** Matthew 15:26-27  Her relentless pursuit leads to Jesus response.  His response is one that interrupts our thinking, why is he comparing her to a ‘dog’.  He was using a phrase that was common in how Israelites talked about Canaanites.  His response though causes her to respond again – ready to receive from Him.  Her posture as the ‘poor in spirit’ equips her more than others to come in faith and receive from the King!  You don’t have to have a certain status nor a high position to approach and receive from God – you are to come as you are. Come and receive! |
| **GOSPEL** |  |
| **NEXT**STEPS |  |