

Blessed are the Poor in Spirit

Study of Matthew, Part 13

Matthew 5:3

Sermon Outline

I. What “Poor in Spirit” isn’t

- A. Not “blessed are the poor.”
- B. Not “blessed are the poor spirited.”
- C. Not “blessed are the passive.”
- D. Not “blessed are the spiritually dull.”

II. What “Poor in Spirit” is

- A. A continual spiritual condition of the heart before God.
- B. Spiritual unworthiness or bankruptcy before God.
- C. Spiritual neediness before God.
- D. Spiritual desire directed toward God.

III. Why be “Poor in Spirit”

- A. A condition that God approves.
“blessed are the poor in spirit”
- B. A condition that God rewards.
“for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”

IV. How to become “Poor in Spirit”

- A. Ask for a Biblical vision of God.
- B. Pursue a Biblical vision of God.
 - Study God’s beauty and character.
 - Study the life and death of Jesus.
 - Study the Sermon on the Mount.
- C. Get brutally honest with your secret inner self.
 - What do you value more than God?
 - What do you trust more than God?

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Questions for Contemplation & Discussion

1. Read Matthew 5:1-12. Who is Jesus talking to? Just his committed disciples? The crowds? Both?
2. How does Jesus teach us to “value and prize what the world despises” in the beatitudes? What’s counter-cultural about each of these things? What do we learn about the kingdom of heaven based on these beatitudes?
3. Do you notice any progression in the beatitudes? Are these talking about 8 different people or the same person? In other words, are we supposed to be all these or just one or two of these?
4. Before the sermon, what did you think it meant to be “poor in spirit?” What doesn’t it mean?
5. Why is “blessed are the poor in spirit” so shocking in today’s world? What does the world value, approve and reward? What have we been taught all our lives about how to get ahead in the world? What is the opposite of being “poor in spirit?”
6. What does it mean to be “poor in spirit?” Is it enough to feel unworthy or bankrupt before God? What else must be present in us? Can you think of some biblical examples of those who were “poor in spirit” before God?
7. What does it mean to be “blessed” in a biblical sense?
8. Why be “poor in spirit?” Is there any other way to obtain the “kingdom of heaven?” What other ways do we try to obtain it? Why do we think it is obtained these other ways?
9. How do we become “poor in spirit?” Who do you know that is “poor in spirit?” Why is it so hard for us to be brutally honest with our secret inner selves? Why is it absolutely necessary to become “poor in spirit?” Who do we tend to compare ourselves with? Who must we compare ourselves with?
10. What do you value more than God? What do you trust more than God?
11. How is Jesus “poor in spirit?”