



#Blessed Are The Poor In Spirit

GETTING STARTED

It is widely agreed that the Sermon on the Mount was the greatest sermon ever preached by the greatest person to ever live. The sermon begins with eight *Beatitudes* (Latin: *Beatus*, best translated *Blessed*). These beautiful attitudes frame the characteristics of Kingdom of Heaven life, the good life according to Jesus.

It is often tragic to watch the ways people seek out the good life. If you judge by social media photos with the hashtag #blessed, you will see definitions ranging from fancy new cars, exotic vacations, gym selfies, a fancy walk-in closet, or even a good donut.

There's a lot about Christianity that resonates in broader culture but you don't have to look any further than believing the Sermon on the Mount as truly the Blessed life to find where there's disconnect. When Jesus says it's about self-denial not self-fulfillment that's completely paradoxical in our world today.

The first is about poverty of spirit. Without it, no one enters the Kingdom of Heaven.

READ THE TEXT: Matthew 5:1-3

¹Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

²And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



UNDERSTAND THE TEXT

1. What are the reasons Matthew uses the phrase, *kingdom of heaven* rather than *kingdom of God*? Why does Luke's gospel say, *blessed are the poor* (6:20) and Matthew's say, *the poor in spirit*? Is he speaking of the same or different things?
2. To become truly poor in spirit we have to look at something greater than ourselves. Read Psalm 8 and our Easter passage from last week (Romans 5:6-11) and discuss some great things you see about God. Pause to admire them and to praise God for them.

APPLY THE TEXT

1. As you read through the Beatitudes, do you believe that they are the characteristics of the good life? Why? Why not?
2. What makes it so difficult for people, especially in our society, to admit that there are things we simply can't do without God's help?
3. Do you see why being poor in spirit is so important? Are you poor in spirit?

SHARE & PRAY

1. How can we support each other right now?
2. Who do we know that we can support beyond ourselves? And how?
 - We have some ideas for you at central365.org/help
3. Pray for each other and pray that the Holy Spirit would make you fruitful, effective gospel witnesses.

