



CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

THE BEATITUDES
PART TWO



THE BEATITUDES

"THE POOR IN SPIRIT"

Citizens of the Kingdom

The Beatitudes

The Poor in Spirit:

Citizens of the Kingdom become like little children who look to and cherish Christ.

The Poor In Spirit are those who become like little children and who look to and cherish Christ

Matthew 5:3

Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3)

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

We need to see that the Poor in Spirit are those who become like little children and who love and look to Christ.

The Porch of the Beatitudes

"poverty of the Spirit is the threshold of kingdom life. No one enters the kingdom except that he enters on his knees." - Paul Carter

To be on your knees is to be helpless and humble before God and dependent upon Him.

1. Helpless

So, then what does *poor in Spirit* mean exactly?

Poor in Spirit means that you are so broken and in need, that you have to beg. You are helpless. You come with Nothing.

"The poor in Spirit are those who know that they have nothing with which to get the kingdom of God. The poor in spirit are those who come totally at the mercy of the kingdom Giver!" - Darrell Johnson

"Poverty of Spirit is the porch of the temple of blessedness...till we are emptied of self we cannot be filled with God. Stripping must be worked upon us before we can be clothed with righteousness which is from Heaven. Christ is never precious till we are poor in spirit- we must see our own needs before we can perceive His wealth. Pride blinds the eyes and sincere humility must open them or the beauties of Jesus will be forever hidden from us."

"No man ever mourns before God until He is poor in Spirit! Neither does he become meek towards others till he has humble views of himself. Hungering and thirsting after righteousness are not possible to those who have high views of their own excellence -

- and mercy to those who offend is...difficult for those who are unconscious of their spiritual need.”
- Charles Spurgeon

Whose Kingdom are you building? Are you seeking great things for yourself, or giving yourself for God? Who is Big in your eyes? Is it You, or Is it God?

2. Humility: Luke 18:9-14

“God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

“Whose performance matters? On whose shoulders does the well-being of your world rest? Who can make it better, make it work, make it safe, make it successful?”

-David Powlison, X-ray Questions

“These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word.” (Is. 66:2)

“For this is what the high and exalted One says – he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with the one who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.” (Is.57:15)

“to be poor in spirit is to be genuinely humble and in touch with those humbled by circumstances.”

- Jonathan Dodson

In God’s Kingdom, it’s humility and poverty of Spirit that leads to Christian maturity.

“Pride based on genuine virtues has the greatest potential for self-deception; but our Lord will allow none of it. Poverty of Spirit he insists on – a full, honest, factual, conscious, and conscientious recognition before God of personal moral unworth.”

- D.A. Carson

You are richest in spirit when you are poor in spirit. Regardless of your “age” or “learnedness.”

We need a childlike posture, not a childish one.





3. Dependent

Like children, we are dependent upon our Heavenly Father, for *everything*.

“17 You say, ‘I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.’ But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.” (Revelation 3:17-18)

To receive the kingdom, you need to acknowledge your spiritual poverty, and your utter dependence on God for even the breath He gives. You and I have little control – really – of our lives.

“Where do you find refuge, safety, comfort, escape, pleasure, security?” (Powlison) On what do you depend?

There is only one on whom we can depend forever. Only one thing that cannot be taken away from us. And Jesus is reminding the Laodiceans and the likes of us that it is Him!

When you depend upon God for your salvation and life, yours is the kingdom of heaven. But we cannot act like we live independently from God and not die independently from Him.

4. Look to their Father, and Cherish Christ

The poor in Spirit Look to their Father and Cherish Christ.

“It has everything to do with where we look. Some of us look inward – in comparison to self. Others of us look outward – in comparison to others. But those who look up- in comparison to God- start to see.” – Jonathan Dodson

“...the result of having been grabbed by the gospel. Jesus did not come into the world looking for Beatitude people He could then call into His kingdom. No, He came into the world and called people to Himself, and then, as a result of the encounter and ongoing relationship with Him, these qualities began to emerge within them.”

– Darrell Johnson

So, have you encountered Jesus? Or are you clinging to something else – do you want to know God and be a citizen of His Kingdom, or are you content to build your own kingdom?

Being grabbed by the gospel is the starting place, and you will not be grabbed by the gospel if you are not poor in Spirit. It will not happen. Your spiritual self-sufficiency, your own kingdom will keep you from becoming a little child before God

So often, we build our kingdom, we trust in what we can do for ourselves, or we seek our own greatness because we don't long for or cherish Christ's presence.

“the minimum bar to be enfolded into the embrace of Jesus is simply: open yourself up to Him...His rest is a gift, not a transaction.”

– Dane Ortlund, Gentle and Lowly

Have you been grabbed by the gospel?

“Not the labour of my hands, can fulfill thy law's demands; could my zeal no respite know, could my tears forever flow, all could never sin erase, thou must save, and save by grace.

Nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling; Naked, come to thee for dress, helpless, look to thee for grace; foul, I to the fountain fly, wash me, Saviour, or Die.”

–Augustus Toplady

Small Group Questions

1. Pastor Colton started his message with Jesus' statement, “Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”
 - a. Sit with that statement. Does it make you uncomfortable? What are some characteristics of a little child that relate to how we are “approved of” by God?
 - b. In what ways does a child's incompetence and helplessness convey our spiritual need?
2. Have you ever had any circumstances or incidents that have helped you realize you were poor in spirit? Share them!
3. John Stott asks, “In what senses do we miss God's kingdom if we do not acknowledge our spiritual poverty?”
4. Read Revelation 3:17-18. What is the answer to the Laodiceans predicament of being poor, pitiful, blind, and naked? What does this mean for us today?
5. Read Isaiah 66:1-4. God delivers a shocking message to those whose outward religiosity doesn't correlate to their inward reality. What does this tell you of being “poor in Spirit”?



Small Group Questions (Continued...)

6. Pastor Colton, quoting Darrell Johnson, said that the essential part of being “poor in Spirit” is to be grabbed by the gospel. Why is “being grabbed by the gospel” so inseparable from being poor in Spirit?
7. Finally, Pastor Colton asked a couple questions, from David Powlison’s X-Ray Questions throughout his sermon. How would you answer these? How should one who is “Poor in Spirit” answer these?
 - a. Where do you find refuge, safety, comfort, escape, pleasure, security? On what do you depend?
 - b. Whose performance matters? On whose shoulders does the well-being of your world rest? Who can make it better, make it work, make it safe, make it successful?

