



THE POOR IN SPIRIT Matthew 5:3

CONNECT

1. Matthew 5:3 finds Jesus saying, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” When you think of the word “poor” what are the ideas that come to your mind? Have you ever experienced a season in which poor is a fitting description? How about a season of blessing—what might it look like to be blessed?

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2. In Luke 2:25–35, a man named Simeon approaches Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus with an important prophecy. Carefully reflect on the prophecy referenced in verses 34–35. What might it mean that Jesus will cause “the fall and rising of many . . . that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed”?
3. Specifically, the word “poor” in Matthew 5:3 speaks to poverty, destitution, affliction and emptiness. Carefully consider Isaiah 61:1. Also read Jesus’ use of this passage in Luke 4:16–30 and Matthew 11:5. What is the correlation between the “good news/gospel” and poverty addressed in these passages?
4. Of course, in Matthew 5:3, Jesus doesn’t just speak of “the poor,” but “the poor in spirit.” The word “spirit” alludes to the rational soul, the mental disposition or the animating principle of one’s humanity. When Jesus talks of one being poor in spirit, what do you think He’s saying?
5. Take time to read the parable told by Jesus in Luke 18:9. What is the posture of the Pharisee? What is the posture of the tax collector? Which one does Jesus commend and why?
6. With that parable in mind, in what way does spiritual poverty or bankruptcy aid us in receiving God’s mercy and grace? Pay special attention to Jesus’ words in Luke 18:14. For further insight, read the Apostle Paul’s words in Ephesians 2:4–7.

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7. In the message series, we’ve defined God’s kingdom as “God’s rule made manifest in the person and work of Jesus Christ, under whom the redeemed of the nations gather, dedicated to and united with Him—partakers of eternal life and ambassadors for His glory.” In what way does being poor in spirit serve as a defining need for entrance into this kingdom?
8. With the last question in mind, to what extent have you presented yourself to God as one who is poor in spirit? Moreover, how do you maintain that posture in the day-to-day? How does Psalm 32:1–2 encourage you in this regard?
9. Being poor in spirit likely doesn’t sell well in our day and age. How could you make the case to others that this is a necessary feature for flourishing within God’s kingdom?