

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

RICHARD BROWN

SOME OBSERVATIONS

- The first and last beatitudes – theirs *IS* the kingdom of heaven. The other six beatitudes – they *WILL* be... Six promises sandwiched between two assurances.
- The six promises are blessings for those who have the kingdom of heaven – comfort, overcoming life, satisfaction in living righteously, mercy, vision of God, son of God.
- The beatitudes are not a set of rules to obey, they are a portrait of what it looks like to belong to the kingdom of heaven.

BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

- Who are the poor in spirit?
- What does it mean to be blessed?



WHO ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT?

- NOT financial destitution or material poverty.
- NOT a lack of vitality or courage.
- NOT a lack of the presence of the Holy Spirit
- NOT a lack of spiritual awareness.

WHO ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT?

- It is a sense of powerlessness in ourselves as we stand *before God*.
- It is a sense of spiritual bankruptcy and helplessness *before God*.
- It is a sense of moral uncleanness *before God*.
- It is a sense of personal unworthiness *before God*.
- It is a sense that if there is to be any life or joy or usefulness, it will have to be *all found in God and all because of his grace*.

WHO ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT?

- The Bible teaches us that you cannot stand tall in your own strength and self-worth and enter the kingdom of heaven,
- Camel and the eye of a needle



WHO ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT?

EXAMPLES: OLD TESTAMENT

- **Abraham** – *“I have been so bold as to speak to the Lord, though I am nothing but dust and ashes” (Genesis 18:27).*
- **Jacob** – *“I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps.” (Genesis 32:10).*
- **Moses** – *“Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt? ... I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue.” (Exodus 3:11; 4:10).*

EXAMPLES: NEW TESTAMENT

- **John the Baptist** – *“I baptize with water; but among you stands one whom you do not know, even he who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie ... He must increase, I must decrease” (John 1:27; 3:30)*
- **The Tax Collector** – *“But the tax collector, standing far off, he would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you this man went down to his house justified” (Luke 18:13–14).*
- **The Centurion** – *“When [Jesus] was not far off from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying to him, ‘Lord do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore, I did not presume to come to you...’ (Luke 7:6–9).*
- ...

WHO ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT?

- Am I (are we) anything like these great people of God?
- Am I like the portrait Jesus is painting in the Beatitudes?



WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BLESSED?

- The basic meaning of "blessed" is *happy* or *fortunate*
 - When things are good, I'm happy!
 - But is that always true?
 - Ephemeral, it comes and goes
- When the Bible talks about blessed...
 - Spiritual joy and satisfaction regardless of circumstances
 - It's from within, not without
 - Fortunate because we don't actually deserve it; it's by God's grace we are blessed

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BLESSED?

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for *theirs is the kingdom of heaven*.
 - This means we are accepted. “*Although you were once distant and far away from God, now you have been brought delightfully close to him through the sacred blood of Jesus—you have actually been united to Christ!*” (Eph 2:13 TPT).
 - God calls us his sons and daughters.
 - It’s not about works, it’s about coming humbly before God and receiving his gift of forgiveness for our sins.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE BLESSED?

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for *theirs is the kingdom of heaven*.
 - The kingdom of heaven is not just up there and in the future.
 - In Jesus heaven has come down into the here and now and we can taste of the kingdom of heaven.
 - We start to bear the fruit of the Spirit.

CLOSING

WILLIAM CAREY

Born August 17th, 1761

Died June 9th, 1834

A wretched, poor, and helpless worm

On Thy kind arms I fall.

