

Kingdom Culture – Upside Down

Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” -
Matthew 5:3

#Blessed

#Blessed - Dream Job

#Blessed - Wonderful family

#Blessed - Good news.

#Blessed - Dream holiday

#Blessed – New home

#Blessed – New friendship group

Blessed (Greek – Makarios) – It is a word so rich with meaning that it's difficult to capture its fullness with a single word. Wrapped up in this word, all at once, is the idea of happiness, being fortunate, and even flourishing.

What does it mean to be poor in spirit?

Now, the phrase 'poor in spirit' speaks to an even deeper reality beyond physical poverty but to true spiritual poverty. To be poor in spirit means to acknowledge our deepest human need for God and to grow in that longing and that dependence on a daily basis.

1) It is a sense of powerlessness in ourselves

⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. ⁵“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. - *John 15:4-5 (NLT)*

2) It is a sense of spiritual bankruptcy and helplessness before God

⁹ Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: ¹⁰“Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners,

adulterers. I'm certainly not like that tax collector! ¹² I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.'

¹³ "But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, 'O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.' ¹⁴ I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." - *Luke 18:9-14 (NLT)*

3) It is a sense of moral uncleanness before God

All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;
we all shrivel up like a leaf,
and like the wind our sins sweep us away. - Isaiah 64:6

4) It is a sense of personal unworthiness before God

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. ² Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one cried to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;
The whole earth is full of His glory!"

⁴ And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

⁵ So I said:

"Woe is me, for I am undone!
Because I am a man of unclean lips,
And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;
For my eyes have seen the King,
The LORD of hosts." - *Isaiah 6:1-5*

5) It is a sense that if there is to be any life or joy or usefulness, it will have to be all of God and all of Grace

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast - *Ephesians 2:8-9*

Examples from the Scriptures

- 1) **The Centurion** - *Matthew 8:5-13*
- 2) **Samaritan Woman** - *John 4:1-42*
- 3) **Mary, the mother of Jesus** – *Luke 1:46-55*

Where do we start from?

- 1) Understand that we have nothing of worth to offer God
- 2) Admit that because of our sin, we are completely and spiritually destitute and we need God
- 3) Acknowledge that no matter our status in life, we must recognise our spiritual poverty before we can come to God in faith to receive the Salvation He offers
- 4) Realise that Blessed-ness/happiness stem from our complete and utter need for Jesus
- 5) Move from self-sufficiency to a complete surrender, trust in Jesus as all-sufficient saviour

Everybody is powerless, helpless and bankrupt without God – *John Piper*

¹⁰ Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.

¹¹ Cast me not away from your presence,
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation,
and uphold me with a willing spirit. - *Psalms 51:10-12*

Blessed are the poor in spirit

The “poverty” that is key to God’s kingdom is the realisation that although we might possess all things, without God, all our things amount to nothing