



WHAT **JESUS** SAID ABOUT...

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



WHAT **JESUS** SAID  
ABOUT...

# POVERTY OF SPIRIT(MT. 5:3)

A.To be poor in spirit is to be aware that we are in great need of experiencing spiritual growth in our heart, ministry,church,and society.

This truth is one of the most misunderstood and misapplied truths in the grace of God.

To be “happy” means to have a vibrant spirit.

B. To be poor in spirit is to see ourselves as spiritually poor instead of spiritually rich, in terms of our ability to experience and impart spiritual life without the Spirit. It means seeing our deep need to be helped by God in light of how much God wants to give us; seeing our poverty-stricken state in spiritual things; and, thus, being aware of our spiritual deficiency and neediness.

C. This virtue starts with the awareness of our need to receive salvation and then continues through our spiritual life. It is a deep awareness of our spiritual needs and deficiencies, especially in light of the call to be perfect (Mt.5:48). To be poor in spirit means that we are aware of our spiritual deficiency in our obedience and love. We are aware of the need for our love to be developed. “Poverty of spirit” is how we see ourselves; “mourning” is how we feel about what we see.

D. Poverty of spirit and meekness are closely related, but are not exactly the same virtue. Poverty of spirit acknowledges our lack before God and our inability to produce spiritual life on our own. Meekness is awareness of our lack before people; it includes using our resources to serve them.

E. The way that we become poor in spirit is by gaining understanding of God's highest purpose for His people. We see how much God desires to do in us and through us. We are called to walk in love for Jesus and people and then to inspire others to this lifestyle as defined in the Sermon on the Mount.

It includes having a vibrant spirit and being hungry for the Word, for a spirit of prayer, and for the release of the Holy Spirit's power through our words, hands (praying for the sick), and deeds. In other words, God wants to manifest his Presence in our lives and anoint us to inspire other people to walk out the Sermon on the Mount lifestyle as well (Mt. 5:19).



## Matthew 5:19

19 Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

F. As our understanding increases, we discern the gap between what God wants to do through and in us and what we experience. We see that we cannot close the gap without the Spirit helping us in response to our seeking Him; we cannot experience more of His fullness without His help, so we set our heart to live in a way that positions us to receive all He has for us (Mt. 6:1-18).

G. This can be an offensive message because it makes people feel uncomfortable when they realize that they have a great spiritual lack and need to respond in specific ways. Many agree with the message in principle but are troubled by it when it touches them specifically and personally.

H. Jesus addressed this as the root problem in the church of Laodicea (Rev. 3:14-21). When a ministry (individual or corporate) becomes rich in finances, popularity, and influence they are tempted with spiritual passivity (acceptance of what happens, without active response or resistance:).

**Theirs is the kingdom:** Theirs “is” the kingdom, not “shall be.” Jesus promised that any who live poor in spirit would experience the kingdom realities. This includes having a vibrant spirit, feeling God’s presence, and being a vehicle of His presence to others. Many feel a lack in these realities without ever connecting it to being poor in spirit. The kingdom belongs to us now. This speaks of experiencing more of the kingdom in a personal way.