

## A DIFFERENT KIND OF LIFE

# What Happens to the Poor?

TEXT: Mt. 5:3

INTRODUCTION: We began last week to see God's roadmap to the land of abundant life. In Jesus' first recorded sermon, He said that real abiding happiness begins by being poor in spirit.

Recall that those who are poor in spirit are those who are beggars on the inside. They are those who realize that in the deepest part of themselves, in their spirit, they

- are totally destitute,
- have nothing worthwhile in themselves to offer,
- so that they are totally dependent upon the Lord.

The poor in spirit have no self-sufficiency, but a deep God-dependency.

Isaiah describes it this way:

Is. 66:2 For all those *things* My hand has made,  
And all those *things* exist,"

Says the LORD.

"But on this *one* will I look:

On *him who is* poor and of a contrite spirit,  
And who trembles at My word.

The Psalmist says:

Ps. 34:18 The LORD *is* near to those who have a broken heart,  
And saves such as have a contrite spirit.

Ps. 51:17 The sacrifices of God *are* a broken spirit,  
A broken and a contrite heart—  
These, O God, You will not despise.

Jesus gives us a perfect example contrasting the outwardly religious with the truly poor in spirit in Luke 18.

Lk. 18:10-14 <sup>10</sup>"Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup>The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank You that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. <sup>12</sup>I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' <sup>13</sup>And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise *his* eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!' <sup>14</sup>I tell you, this man went down to his house

justified *rather* than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Being humbled before the Lord, being impoverished in spirit is a necessary condition for entering the Kingdom of God. But **the plan is not to enter as a humble tax collector and develop into a pride-filled Pharisee.**

What a tragedy that many

- who once came to God’s throne with a broken heart and tear-stained cheek,
- with poverty of spirit,  
now sit in the pew
- with a sense of self-satisfaction
- and self-sufficiency
- with heart seldom stirred
- and never broken
- to lead them to once again to bow their spirit timidly before the Lord Jesus, our All in All.

Dear friend, what Jesus here describes is not a one-time attitude to fade away with spiritual age, but a life-long characteristic of a true disciple.

The happy, blameless follower of the Lord Jesus lives a life in poverty, not necessarily in material things though that is often helpful, but in poverty of spirit.

Now I raise a single question to you today, a question with several answers. What happens to the poor in spirit?

What is their life like?

## I. THE POOR IN SPIRIT ARE WEANED FROM SELF.

Ps. 131:1-2 <sup>1</sup> LORD, my heart is not haughty,  
Nor my eyes lofty.  
Neither do I concern myself with great matters,  
Nor with things too profound for me.

<sup>2</sup> Surely I have calmed and quieted my soul,  
Like a weaned child with his mother;  
Like a weaned child *is* my soul within me.

With self gone two things become the object of their attention.

1. God and His glory
2. Others and their need

## II. THE POOR IN SPIRIT GAIN AN AWE FOR THE WORK OF CHRIST.

- A. **For their salvation** – that Christ would love one so unworthy that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.
- B. **For His care** – that though undeserving, the Lord would watch over them and provide for their specific needs.
- C. **For His guidance** – that He would take the time and give attention to the details of your life. You'll sing "Great is Thy Faithfulness" with new meaning from your spirit.

## III. FOR THE POOR IN SPIRIT, COMPLAINING CHANGES TO GRATITUDE.

When you are poor in spirit, you realize you don't deserve anything.

So if that's what you get you have no complaint.

If something good happens, you are immediately and overwhelmingly grateful because you know you did not deserve it.

You realize the literal truth,

**James 1:17** Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

## IV. THE POOR IN SPIRIT BECOME SUBMISSIVE TO AUTHORITY.

- A. **The lack of this characteristic reveals the absence of poverty of spirit in our lives.**
- B. God has put four basic kinds of authority in each of our lives:  
Family, Government, Church, Business

### 1. Family

Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church.

Wives, submit to your husband as to the Lord to show him respect.

Children obey your parents.

### 2. Business

**Col. 3:22-24** <sup>22</sup> Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. <sup>23</sup> And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.

### 3. Government

1 Pet. 2:13-14 <sup>13</sup> Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, <sup>14</sup> or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and *for the praise of those who do good.*

#### 4. Church

First and foremost to the Lord Jesus Christ Who is the Head of the Church. But also to those whom God puts in leadership in the local church.

Heb. 13:17 *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

God tells us

Rom. 13:2 *Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.*

#### C. God gives us these authorities in order to

1. Grow us in wisdom and character – Jesus was obedient to parents above His spiritual calling. (Luke 2:52)
2. Protect us from destructive temptations (1 Sam 15:23)
3. Give clear direction for life's decisions

Prov. 6:20-21 <sup>20</sup> My son, keep your father's command,  
And do not forsake the law of your mother.

<sup>21</sup> Bind them continually upon your heart;  
Tie them around your neck.

Jesus commended the faith of the centurion because he perceived that God works thru the structure of authority. (Mt. 8:10)

#### D. Failure to obey or submit to God's authorities for our life is

- an elevation of self,
- an attitude of self-sufficiency,
- an embodiment of pride,
- the complete opposite of poverty in spirit.

#### The poor in spirit are

- emptied of self
- awed with Christ
- through with complaining
- grateful in spirit
- obedient to parents
- submissive to spouses
- loyal citizens of their country

- **faithful members of their church**
- **dependable employees**

That's what being poor in spirit will do to your life.

And when you're like that,

- a deeper,
  - more abiding happiness,
  - like the happiness of those already with the Lord
- will come to you.

Conclusion: **How do I become poor in spirit?**

1. **Want it.**
2. **Ask for it.** The beggar knocks often and stays until blessed. The poor in spirit pray much. The Publican says, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."
3. **Read the Word.** Read about Jesus, meditate on Him, lose yourself.
4. **Humble yourself.** (2 Chr. 7:14... humble themselves.)  
Bow before the Lord  
Humbly acknowledge

The invitation time is perfect for this.  
Reason most rarely come to the altar is

- not lack of need,
- not lack of conviction.
- It is lack of poverty in spirit.

They are just not poor enough!

It is humbling to come and acknowledge need. Everyone sees, everyone knows!  
How perfect! What a help! Just what we need to humble ourselves.

Want to be happy? Be poor in spirit.  
Right now you can want it, ask for it, humble self.

Come and be saved.  
Come and ask and humble self today.  
Come and say, "Lord, I want Your happiness. I desire to be poor in spirit. I bow before You now acknowledging my insufficiency, my sin, my failure, my unworthiness."