

A photograph of a person sitting on a paved ground. The person is wearing a light-colored, long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. They have a large, woven, conical basket on their back. To their right is a large, crumpled yellow plastic bag. In front of them is a white plastic cup with a red band around it, containing a brown liquid. The background shows a paved area with some shadows and a dark vertical object, possibly a tree trunk or a post.

Who Are the Poor in Spirit?

Matthew 5:3 - "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Who Are the Poor in Spirit?

- It is the opening verse of the Sermon on the Mount in the Beatitudes, the first of nine blessings.
- Luke 6:20 simply has “blessed are the poor”
- Matthew was inspired to include “in spirit”
- The Psalmist states it in principle, but not word for word
 - Psalm 33:18 - “Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy”
 - Psalm 34:18 - “The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.”

Meaning Of The “Poor”

- It does not mean lacking in spirit, courage, the Holy Spirit, or religious awareness or zeal; it is poverty that is not only a physical condition, but also a spiritual one
- Only those who understand the true nature of real poverty and dependence on God are blessed.
- Being poor physically or spiritually is not to be envied, but instead is the condition that opens and prepares one to be blessed by God
- Note that Jesus does not talk about helping the poor; He is teaching the poor and the rich that being poor is not a curse

Meaning Of The “Poor”

- Matt. 11:5 - “The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them.”
- James 2:5 - “Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?”
- Isa. 61:1 - “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me To preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the prison to those who are bound”

Meaning Of The “Poor”

- There are three uses of the “poor” in the New Testament:
- Those who require the charity of others in order to survive, and those who are disadvantaged and forced to the fringe of society
 - Matt. 26:9-11 - “For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor. 10 But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. 11 For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always.”

Meaning Of The “Poor”

- There are three uses of the “poor” in the New Testament:
- Those who willingly surrender their belongings as a work of faith
 - 2Cor. 6:10 - “...as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.”
 - 2Cor. 8:9 - “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”

Meaning Of The “Poor”

- There are three uses of the “poor” in the New Testament:
- Those in general hardship and not simply economic poverty
 - Rev. 3:17 - “Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked”

Meaning of the “Kingdom of Heaven”

- Dan. 7:13-14 - “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. 14 Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.”
- Matt. 16:19, 28 - “And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven... 28 Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.”

Meaning Of “Blessed”

- Blessed - makarios - “supremely blest; fortunate, well off, blessed, happy” (Strong's)
- Each beatitude has a particular form:
 - A declaration of blessing
 - A description of condition or attitude
 - A disposition of the blessing

What Does It Mean To Be Poor In Spirit?

- It is being destitute of what the world considers blessings and wealth; one who is unable or powerless to improve his situation on his own without aid.
- “In spirit” is one who is powerless to improve his spiritual situation on his own.

What Does It Mean To Be Poor In Spirit?

- Luke 18:9-14 - “Also He spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: 10 Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 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. 12 'I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.' 13 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!' 14 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.”

What Does It Mean To Be Poor In Spirit?

- 1Cor. 1:26-29 - “For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. 27 But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; 28 and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, 29 that no flesh should glory in His presence.”

What Does It Mean To Be Poor In Spirit?

- Matt. 20:29-34 - “Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. 30 And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David! 31 Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David! 32 So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, What do you want Me to do for you? 33 They said to Him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened. 34 So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.”
- Rom. 7:24 - “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

Who Are The Poor In The Kingdom Of Heaven?

- Regarding the kingdom of heaven: Jesus is King and Jesus' disciples are His kingdom
 - Matt. 4:17, 23 - “From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand... 23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.”

Who Are The Poor In The Kingdom Of Heaven?

- Matt. 18:3 - “And said, Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”
- Luke 17:20-21 - “Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God does not come with observation; 21 nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”

Who Are The Poor In The Kingdom Of Heaven?

- The Sermon on the Mount is a description of those who will inhabit the Kingdom of Heaven
– Matt. 5:2, 10, 19-20, 6:33, 7:21
- “For theirs is the kingdom of heaven” reads in the original ὅτι αὐτῶν ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν; literally, “of them is the kingdom of heaven” or the kingdom of heaven is made up of them.

Who Are The Poor In The Kingdom Of Heaven?

- The poor are included there; in fact, they belong there
 - John 13:12-17 - “So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

Who Are The Poor In The Kingdom Of Heaven?

- The poor are included there; in fact, they belong there
 - Matt. 18:1-4 - “At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2 Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, 3 and said, Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Who Are The Poor In The Kingdom Of Heaven?

- The poor are included there; in fact, they belong there
 - Mark 10:13-16 - “Then they brought little children to Him, that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. 14 But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God. 15 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it. 16 And He took them up in His arms, put His hands on them, and blessed them.”

Who Are The Poor In The Kingdom Of Heaven?

- Matt. 19:23-30 - “Then Jesus said to His disciples, Assuredly, I say to you that it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. 24 And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. 25 When His disciples heard it, they were greatly astonished, saying, Who then can be saved? 26 But Jesus looked at them and said to them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible. 27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have? 28 So Jesus said to them, Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. 29 And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life. 30 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

What Are The Lessons For The Poor In Spirit?

- Recognize our complete dependence upon God's mercy
 - Titus 3:3-5 - “For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit”

What Are The Lessons For The Poor In Spirit?

- We must consider everything loss to be in Christ
 - Phil. 3:8-11 - “Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.”

What Are The Lessons For The Poor In Spirit?

- We must set aside ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus
 - Matt. 16:24-25 - “Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.”

What Are The Lessons For The Poor In Spirit?

- Consider the wellbeing of others first
 - Phil. 2:2-4 - “Fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”
 - 1Peter 5:5 - “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

Who Are the Poor in Spirit?

- The poor can do this; they have been doing it all of their lives.
- “We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty. Let us touch the dying, the poor, the lonely and the unwanted according to the graces we have received and let us not be ashamed or slow to do the humble work.” (Mother Teresa)

Who Are the Poor in Spirit?

- Even unbelieving ancients understood that the poor in spirit are blessed.
- “Poverty is the schoolmaster of character.”
(Antiphanes)
- “It is not the rich man you should properly call happy, but him who knows how to use with wisdom the blessings of God, to endure hard poverty, and who fears dishonor worse than death, and is not afraid to die for cherished friends.” (Horace)

Who Are the Poor in Spirit?

- Do you understand that the poor man who gives his life to God is far richer and blessed above the wealthy man who has given his life to things and stuff?
 - Mark 8:36 - “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”

