
Session 05 Poverty of Spirit: The Foundational Beatitude (Mt. 5:3)

I. REVIEW

- A. The Sermon on the mount is Jesus' most excellent teaching on grace, and we need to understand and remember that grace is not a passive thing where we just take it easy and wait for God. No! Jesus calls us in this sermon to be active in pursuing it. However, we're not to pursue it in our own strength, the whole idea of this teaching is that as we press into the beatitudes he will give us grace to obey. That is how we are to pursue God.
- B. Our spiritual growth comes from how we live out and cultivate the eight beatitudes. Our life's aim or goal should be to obey these eight beatitudes with all the light we have. To do this we must resist the six temptations and engage in the 5 kingdom activities that Jesus identifies in these three chapters. We are to do this while continually asking Him for the grace to obey.
- C. I want to challenge us to be really intentional about praying, fasting, serving, giving, and blessing our enemies on a weekly basis. Like we should ask ourselves the question "did I do these activities this week?"

II. POOR IN SPIRIT THE FOUNDATION BEATITUDE (MT. 5:3)

- A. ³***Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (MT 5:3)*** Being poor in spirit is the foundational beatitude. We should think of this one as the foundation on which all the others are like the stones that build the rest of the building.
- B. When Jesus says "***blessed***", He's talking about cultivating a vibrant heart in God. Your heart will experience more of the power of the Holy Spirit as you commit not only to being poor in spirit but to all eight different beatitudes.
- C. Being poor in spirit is to be aware that we are in great need of experiencing spiritual growth in our heart, ministry, church, and society. Seeing our lack in God as compared to how much He has given us and offers to us, is a heart posture we must learn to position ourselves in if we are going to be successful in walking out the Sermon on the Mount. It all starts with approaching God knowing that unless He pours out His grace in our situation, we have nothing. The blessing in this is that the more we do this, the more of His power will come forth in our hearts and ministry.
- D. The context of being poor in spirit is this: Jesus has provided us spiritual wealth -exceeding wealth in the grace of God. It's freely and fully provided to us because of His work on the cross. He says to us, "This wealth of grace, the riches of grace is yours, but you must seek Me for it so that you experience it in your thoughts and emotions; in your heart and in your ministry to others. If we press into this God will release an anointing (*blessing*) on you that is beyond your personal abilities.

- E. In this foundational beatitude God is trying to cultivate urgency in us, because as believers our legal position before God is that we have the grace of God fully available to us. ***Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3)*** However, our living conditions are a much different story. So when Jesus talks about being poor in spirit, it means, “Do you see the spiritual lack compared to that which is made available?” And if you see it, does it concern you enough to take action?
- F. Poverty is an important sense to have because it creates the urgency we need to keep reaching, but if we see our lack and it doesn’t move us to action, that’s called “spiritual passivity.” If we don’t see our lack but we think we’re doing great, that’s called *pride*. We don’t want either of these, but instead we want to diligently seek God with urgency for the fullness of what he offers us.

III. POVERTY OF SPIRIT RELATED TO OUR MINISTRY IMPACT

- A. All the Beatitudes have unique promises attached to them, but only two of them place a strong emphasis on the here and now. Poor in spirit is one of them. When it says, ***“Theirs is the kingdom,”*** it’s speaking in a present tense. This means that those who cultivate being poor in spirit and pursue it as a lifelong journey will experience more of the true power of God—that is, grace that transforms our hearts and lives, as well as the hearts and lives of those around us.
- B. The Sermon on the Mount is the litmus test for our spiritual growth and ministry impact. Being poor in spirit is the salt and light of our ministry assignments. The question we need to ask ourselves is, “Do we have the grace to cultivate poverty of spirit in our own lives over the long term so that we can impart it to others?” Without this, we may have talents and gifts, but those will only get us so far. Only a life marked by being poor in spirit will produce the hunger and urgency that constantly seeks and finds His power.
- C. 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—¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten¹ Therefore be zealous and repent. (Rev 3. 17-19)***
- D. ²¹ ***“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ (Matthew 7:21-23)***
- E. ¹³ ***“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it.¹⁴ Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13-14)***