

**Beautiful Attitudes**  
**The Christian's Character**  
**“The Poor in Spirit”**  
**Matthew 5:3**

**Introduction:** One of the greatest needs in the world today is not just more Christianity, but “*true Christianity.*”

*What does a true Christian look like?*

The answer is found in what is commonly called “*The Sermon on the Mount.*”

It is perhaps the best known, yet most misunderstood of *all Christ teaching!* It's recorded for us in Matthew chapters 5-7.

Jesus gave this sermon to give us a description of the *character* and *conduct* of a true Christian living in the kingdom of God.

In one word, what does a true Christian look like? “*Different.*”

Different from both the “*Religious Person*” and the “*Irreligious Person.*”

**Illustration:**

- The Religious, see Matt. 5:20
- The Irreligious, see Matt. 6:8, 31-32

In this sermon we see the complete *necessity* of the *new birth!* But our focus will be on the first twelve verses of Matthew 5, looking at “*The Beatitudes.*”

- 1. They are “Be” attitudes, not “do” attitudes.** So I have called them “*Beautiful Attitudes.*”  
God looks on the heart!
- 2. They are in stark contrast to the worlds views and values.** Sadly in contrast to the church's views today also! **Illustration:** See Matt. 5:11-12
- 3. All Christians are to have all of these “Beautiful Attitudes.”**

*“None of these descriptions refers to what we may call natural tendencies.” -D. Martyn Lloyd Jones*

Let's look together at the first “*Beautiful Attitude.*”

## The Poor in Spirit vs. 3

### I. What does Jesus mean by the word “*blessed*?”

- Some translate the word *blessed* as “*happy*,” but it’s not the best. Why? Because happiness is a subjective state or feeling.
- Jesus is not declaring how people feel; he is making an *objective statement* about *what God thinks of them*.
- “*Blessed*” is a positive judgement by God on the individual that means “*to be approved*” or “*to find approval*”. When God blesses us, He approves us. It’s called, “*The Applause of Heaven*”. When we gain God’s approval, it fills our hearts with feelings of happiness!

**Who’s approval are you seeking?** *God’s or Man’s?*

**Who are those God approves?** “*The Poor in Spirit.*”

### II. “The Poor in Spirit” vs. 3

**What does it mean to be Poor in Spirit?**

1. It’s not just “Poor”. Luke, “*blessed are the poor.*”  
It’s not a natural shyness or “*poor-spirited.*”  
It’s not a showy humility or Uriah heep type.
2. What is it? It’s Poor in “*Spirit*”. It’s the *awareness* and *admission* that we are *utterly sinful* and *without the moral virtues* adequate to commend us to God!”

It’s knowing you are *spiritually bankrupt before God*.

“*Consists in the consciousness that one has not in himself the abilities which would make him worthy of God’s favor.*” - J.R. Miller

The word “*Poor*” is the root word, “*to crouch or to cower*”. It speaks of an absolute or *abject poverty*. **Illustration:** Isa. 6, Peter, Lazarus, Luke 16, Paul, Romans 7

John Wesley said of the poor in spirit, “*He has a deep sense of the loathsome leprosy of sin which he brought with him from his mother’s womb, which overspreads his whole soul, and totally corrupts every power and faculty thereof.*”

## **“The World Rejects Poverty of Spirit!”**

It's *antithesis* of the *proud self-righteous, self-sufficiency* of today's world. *The opposite of being Poor in Spirit is being Rich in Pride.*” The world has its own ideas of *blessedness*.

**Illustration:** *Blessed are the rich - self-confident!*

God's kingdom is different from man's! *You must see your emptiness before God can fill you!*  
Rom. 7.

Poverty of Spirit is essential for knowing God's approval!

Psalm 34:18, *“The Lord is **close** to the **brokenhearted** and **saves** those who are **crushed** in Spirit.”*

## **III. What Are The Results of Being Poor in Spirit?**

vs. 3 *“Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven”*  
In the Greek it's emphatic, *“theirs and theirs alone.”*

We see why Jesus started with “Poor in Spirit,” for it alone is the way into the kingdom!

It's essential for Salvation!

Only when we acknowledge the gravity of our condition - that we are suffering from a terminal condition the Bible calls sin - will we understand our need of a Savior. *We will never come to know the Lord Jesus Christ as a reality until we see Him as a necessity.*

- Eph. 2: 8, 9 “for by grace....”
- Grace alone
- Faith alone
- Christ alone

### **What's the Kingdom of Heaven?**

Present and Future! It's Essential for Spiritual growth!  
How about you?

## **Salvation**

Luke 18:9-14

Rev. 3:17-18, church at Laodicea.

**“Just as I am poor, wretched, blind....! Sight riches healing of the mind, ya all I need in thee I find O lam of God I come!” - ?**