

POOR IN SPIRIT Newsletter – July/August 2021

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Excerpt from Newsletter
Poor in Spirit
by Pr. Teddy Santos
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Matthew 5:3 *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

The Old Testament provides the knowledge of our Lord Jesus' use of "poor." We discern that when God prophesies regarding the Lord Jesus in **Isaiah 61:1**-

"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound."

—He is not addressing the economically poor but those deficient in spiritual qualities. Poor in terms of a relationship with The Lord.

An individual can be spiritually poor regardless of how wealthy they are. They can be grieved even if they live in grand houses, drive luxury cars,

wear the most elegant attire, and circulate in the highest levels of society. Is being bound to sin or addicted to drugs, fashion, or empty flattering of men restricted by economic boundaries? Godly qualities are also not.

The Lord Jesus is not addressing any specific group. He says the poor are blessed, but neither poverty nor wealth can grant spiritual blessings, though at times lack may help lead a person to humility. Though wealth can induce pride, the economically poor possess pride likewise. Both poverty and wealth can entail significant spiritual hazards. Christ's words cover the whole span of humanity's circumstances because anyone without a right and genuine relationship with God can fall within His classification. "Poor," as our Lord Jesus uses it, accurately correlates a spiritual quality.

"Poor" is not isolated; the Lord Jesus combines it with "spirit" to clarify His meaning. The poverty of spirit is a fruit not produced in the ordinary man, but a work of the Holy Spirit - both in the individuals He called AND whom He is converting, demonstrating why being Poor In Spirit can span the entire economic spectrum. That is the reason why an Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, or Joseph of Arimathea, all incredibly prosperous men, can be concurrently Poor In Spirit and materially blessed of The Lord.

David attributed himself as a "poor" man, in dire need of what only God could provide. He regarded himself as poverty-stricken of the resources to improve his lot. David saw himself as beyond the help of men, afflicted, crushed, forsaken, desolate, miserable – as helpless spiritually as the poverty-stricken are economical. Therefore, understanding his need, he cried out to The Lord, and God heard him.

In another psalm by a thoroughly subdued and humbled David, in more significant details, reveals his recollection of the spiritual destitution in which he committed his sins. Observe the spiritual things David asked - matters that only God could supply - to satisfy his lack, in the **51st Psalm**:

- Have mercy upon me
- blot out my transgressions.
- Wash me thoroughly
- cleanse me from my sin

- Make me to know wisdom.
- Purge me with hyssop
- Make me to hear joy and gladness
- Hide Your face from my sins
- Create in me a clean heart
- renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and uphold me with Your generous Spirit.
- Deliver me from bloodguiltiness
- Open my lips and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. (verses 1-2, 6-12, 14-15)

Being poor in spirit means acknowledging honestly and understanding our spiritual poverty, spiritual bankruptcy - before The Lord. We have fallen short, and on our strength, deserve nothing but God's judgment. We can offer nothing to appeal to, nothing with which to purchase His favor. But upon declaration of our faith joined with repentance, He grants by His grace the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, shed for the transgressions of this world, to wash away our sins, vindicating us and gifting us with access into His holy presence. Access to, the Kingdom of Heaven!

At His service,
Pr. Teddy Santos