



Happy are the Poor in Spirit

Series Passage: Matthew 5:1-12

Focus for the Week: Matthew 5:3, Luke 18:9-14

Discussion Guide:

The pursuit of happiness is all around us. Everywhere we look, people are trying to either achieve, maintain, or spread happiness. As the term pursuit implies, it is not something that comes to us quickly. Happiness can be elusive and fragile. Based on your own experience, discuss the below questions:

Q: What does it mean to be happy, and what is happiness?

Q: Where do we look for happiness in our own lives?

At the beginning of his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus listed the attributes and characteristics we need to live a truly happy life. This section has become known as the Beatitudes or the How-To-Be-Attitudes. In your Bible, it likely starts each verse with the word blessed; while an accurate translation, a better word to take its place would be “Happy.” With this in mind, read through Matthew 5:1-12, and replace each instance of “blessed” with “happy.”

Read: Matthew 5:1-12

Jesus starts this quite counter-cultural, to both his time and our time, list with one of the more confusing statements. "Happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God." (Matthew 5:3 NIV, modified)

Q: What is your initial reaction to hearing this beatitude?

Q: What does being "poor in spirit" look like to you?

Q: What are the barriers in your life to being "poor in spirit?"

Jesus, in the gospel of Luke, tells the disciples a parable highlighting what being poor in spirit looks like and why that leads us to happiness.

Read: Luke 18:9-14

Q: Why does the way of the pharisee not lead to true happiness?

Q: How in your life can you be like the pharisee?

Q: What is the source of happiness for the rich man? What is the source of happiness for the tax collector?

Finishing Well:

Our happiness is not about filling ourselves up but by pouring ourselves out. We have happiness because we know that nothing we do will earn us salvation, but that through humbling ourselves at the foot of the cross, we have the true source of happiness. Jesus Christ crucified for us.

"God demonstrated his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."
(Romans 5:8 NIV)

We are all sinners.

We are all broken.

We have happiness in recognizing those truths. Only then can we understand the depth of God's love for us, and that is the true source of happiness.

Close in Prayer