



Connect Discussion Guide

06.13.21 Message | Tyler Myers | Matthew 5:3

Key Scriptures:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

- Matthew 5:3

“But I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the LORD.”

- Zephaniah 3:12

“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;”

- Isaiah 61:1

“And there was a woman who had had a discharge of blood for twelve years, and who had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was no better but rather grew worse. She had heard the reports about Jesus and came up behind him in the crowd and touched his garment. For she said, “If I touch even his garments, I will be made well.” And immediately the flow of blood dried up, and she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease. And Jesus, perceiving in himself that power had gone out from him, immediately turned about in the crowd and said, “Who touched my garments?” And his disciples said to him, “You see the crowd pressing around you, and yet you say, ‘Who touched me?’” And he looked around to see who had done it. But the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came in fear and trembling and fell down before him and told him the whole truth. And he said to her, “Daughter, your faith has made you well; go in peace, and be healed of your disease.”

- Mark 5:25-34

“Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We bless you from the house of the Lord. The Lord is God, and he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, up to the horns of the altar! You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God; I will extol you. Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever!”

- Psalm 118:25-29

Message Highlights:

- The Poor in Spirit are those who see what many don't, and they are blessed because they have vision and because the vision compels them to act (Mike Glenn).
- Jesus is not advocating a lifestyle of poverty or riches, but rather helping us assess our spiritual well-being.
- God would like every space of our life to be a place where heaven is welcomed and his nature is on display by the way we share that space with him and others.
- By resting in Jesus' teaching, we see that it is significant for those of us who have money, tangible control, networks, security, etc., to learn a key lesson in pursuing God like those who don't have anything like this to depend on.

Conversation Starter:

Look up the lyrics to "Blessings" by Laura Story. Allow this song to turn your perspective upside down and see His blessings no matter your circumstances. Can you think of any other "upside down" moments where you received God's blessings in a way you wouldn't have expected?

Discuss the Message:

1. We can find a framework for what it means to be "poor in spirit" from Zephaniah 3:12, "But I will leave in your midst a people humble and lowly..." Reflect on a time when you were humbled to the point of feeling emptied of the riches of this world, which allowed you to seek blessings from the Lord alone.
2. Having a posture that is poor in spirit is a choice we get to make, and one that requires turning away from pridefulness. How does pride creep into your life, and how does that hinder your ability to live out this beatitude? How can we practically turn away from pride?
3. While some of us struggle to make ends meet and others have more than enough, it's safe to say that most of us are somewhat far removed from the abject poverty that millions of people face globally. Discuss this tension we find ourselves in, acknowledging our spiritual bankruptcy before God while also humbling ourselves as we seek to steward wisely that which we have been abundantly blessed with.
4. Reread Matthew 5:3; what belongs to those who are poor in spirit? Donald B. Kraybill points out, "It is not a kingdom *in* heaven, but *from* heaven -- one that thrives *here* and *now*." Does this change the way you view the kingdom of heaven, knowing that it is not merely a blessing to look forward to, but a reality that we have the privilege of living in here and now? What encouragement do you draw from this truth today?
5. We find a beautiful example of this beatitude in the story of the woman who was healed by Jesus in Mark 5:25-34. Align this passage with the beatitude we focused on today; how does this woman display being "poor in spirit", and how does Jesus' response reflect the blessing that those who are poor in spirit are promised?

Pray:

Father in Heaven, we walk in a world that is filled with pride and we confess that our own hearts are no different at times. Open our hearts and our minds to see what we have not seen before. Whether we have much or little in this life, help us to trust in you more than we trust in the false security of worldly riches. Help us, by your Spirit, to let our pride fall down. May we truly become poor in spirit so that all areas of our lives reflect the reality of heaven coming to earth, lives in which your nature is on full display. Fill us with your joy as we anticipate, above all things, the rich and eternal inheritance of your Kingdom through your Son, Jesus our Christ. Amen.