



RESILIENT

The Poor in Spirit

Matthew 5:1-3



Matthew 7:24-25

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock.”



Matthew 5:1-3 (p. 809)

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”



Narrowing in...

1. What do we need to know about the Gospel of Matthew?
2. What do we need to know about the Sermon on the Mount?
3. What do we need to know about the Beatitudes?
4. What do we need to know about the first Beatitude?



The Gospel of Matthew



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John Stott

“...as Israel was oppressed in Egypt under the despotic rule of Pharaoh, so the infant Jesus became a refugee in Egypt under the despotic rule of Herod. As Israel passed through the waters of the Red Sea, so Jesus passed through the waters of John’s baptism in the River Jordan. As Israel was tested in the wilderness of Zin for forty years, so Jesus was tested in the wilderness of Judea for forty days...As Moses from Mount Sinai gave Israel the law, so Jesus from the Mount of Beatitudes gave his disciples the true interpretation and amplification of the law.”



The Gospel of Matthew

1. Matthew shows Jesus to be the fulfillment of Old Testament history.
 - a. Events in the life of Jesus reflect Old Testament events.
 - b. Specifically, the “mountain” is highlighted in Matthew with seven key moments from the ministry of Jesus taking place on a mountain (4:8, 5:1, 14:23, 15:29, 17:1, 24:3, 28:16).



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 - b. Jesus began his ministry by preaching “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (4:17)
 - c. Matthew mentions that the crowds were astonished because Jesus taught with authority (7:28-29).



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2. The Sermon describes the King's standards for life in the kingdom and calls us to obedience.



C.S. Lewis

“As to ‘caring for’ the Sermon on the Mount, if ‘caring for’ here means ‘liking’ or enjoying, I suppose no one ‘cares for’ it. Who can like being knocked flat on his face by a sledgehammer? I can hardly imagine a more deadly spiritual condition than that of a man who can read that passage with tranquil pleasure.”



Psalm 119:127

Therefore I love your commandments
above gold, above fine gold.



The Sermon on the Mount

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2. The Sermon describes the King's standards for life in the kingdom and calls us to obedience.
3. The Sermon reminds us of our dependence on the King for our citizenship and our ability to live righteously.



Frank Thielman

Beeson Divinity School

“In short, the Sermon shows us what life should look like for a heart that has been melted and transformed by the gospel of grace, while also making clear the true nature of God’s standards of righteousness—high standards which mean that our right standing with God is ultimately dependent on the grace of the One who tells us of them.”



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The Beatitudes

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1. They provide the general introduction to the Sermon, describing an inward character before getting to specific applications of that character.



Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“We are all of us ready to fix on certain particular statements, and to concentrate on them at the expense of others. The way to correct that tendency, I believe, is to realize that no part of this Sermon can be understood truly except in the light of the whole.”



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2. They begin and end with “the kingdom of heaven”, indicating that they reference citizens of the kingdom.
3. They are a description of every Christian, not eight individual types of people, and each Beatitude demands all the others.
4. They describe the way of happiness.



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Matthew 5:3

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



The Poor in Spirit



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2. To be poor in spirit is to recognize your spiritual poverty before God.



D.A. Carson

“The kingdom of heaven is not given on the basis of race, earned merits, the military zeal and prowess of Zealots, or the wealth of a Zaccheus. It is given to the poor, the despised publicans, the prostitutes, those who are so ‘poor’ they know they can offer nothing and do not try.”



Martyn Lloyd-Jones

“And if one feels anything in the presence of God save an utter poverty of spirit, it ultimately means that you have never faced Him. That is the meaning of this Beatitude.”



Matthew 8:5-10

When he had entered Capernaum, a centurion came forward to him, appealing to him, “Lord, my servant is lying paralyzed at home, suffering terribly.” And he said to him, “I will come and heal him.” But the centurion replied, “Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but only say the word, and my servant will be healed.”



Matthew 8:5-10

For I too am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. And I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes, and to another, 'Come,' and he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he marveled and said to those who followed him, "Truly, I tell you, with no one in Israel have I found such faith."



The Poor in Spirit

1. There is an order to the Beatitudes and “poor in spirit” is the initial and fundamental quality of a Christian that all the others rest on.
2. To be poor in spirit is to recognize your spiritual poverty before God.
3. This would have been revolutionary to his listeners, just as it is with us.