

## Lesson 1 SEEKING GOD'S HELP

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)*

When we compare ourselves to others around us, we don't look so bad. But when we look at the Lord in His purity and holiness, we agree with the apostle Paul when he said, “O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?” (Romans 7:24).

### WHAT IS POOR IN SPIRIT?

Poverty of spirit is a true evaluation of yourself, not in the light of man but in the light of God. When you see yourself in the light of the Lord, the effect on you is poverty of spirit. You realize you are a sinner in need of God's forgiveness. It's a very humbling experience to get a true vision of yourself in the light of God's holiness and purity.

To be “poor in spirit” means to understand that you have no spiritual wealth on your own—that in your own efforts, you could never please God. You could never come close to God. It means saying, “I am a sinner in need of a Savior.”

This humility is the entrance into the kingdom of heaven. This same humility looks only to God for help. It does not consider the world's ways or its philosophies. Only God's Word is acknowledged as truth. This is the beginning consciousness of a person who has a true relationship with God.

Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Why? Because this person has had a true encounter with God, and as the result, the kingdom of heaven belongs to him. He's no longer living in this temporal material realm, but he is now a child of God, and a citizen of the eternal kingdom.

1. When the prophet Isaiah had a vision of the Lord, write down his response. See Isaiah 6:5.
2. What was Peter's initial response after he encountered the Lord for the first time? See Luke 5:8.

### THE PROUD CANNOT SEE GOD

When you really see the Lord, you have the consciousness of being spiritually poor. Blessed are the poor in spirit! They are the ones who discover the truth about themselves and seek God's help.

On the other hand, if you see a man who is proud, pompous, or declares he doesn't need God, this man has not yet really seen the Lord. No one can really see God without a feeling of grief and despair, appealing to God for His mercy, grace and forgiveness.

3. Read Proverbs 16:5 and share how the Lord views the proud and what is their end result.

4. Using a Bible commentary or dictionary, define the meaning of “abomination.”

5. Write James 4:6.

God forgives the humble (the poor in spirit), for the humble seeks His forgiveness; but He resists the proud, for they fail to seek Him.

**Read Matthew 11:28-29.**

If you come to Jesus Christ, He will reveal the Father to you. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life and no man comes to the Father but by Me” (John 14:6). Today many people boast in their knowledge of God. But Jesus in essence said, “It’s only as I reveal Him that you can know God. Now come unto Me, for in knowing Me, in understanding Me, you’ll know and understand God, the Father. ”

6. Whom did Jesus invite to Himself? (verse 28)

7. What does Jesus desire to teach us and what will we find? (verse 29)

Jesus extends the offer of forgiveness and rest from the labors of our sinful nature. He also reveals to us that after He forgives us, He wants to teach us how to have a forgiving spirit like His, a spirit of gentleness (meekness) and lowliness in heart.

The key to receiving this forgiveness is your willingness to humble yourself in the sight of the Lord.

*"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (James 4:10).*