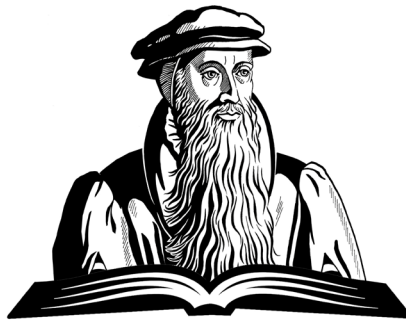


STUDY GUIDE
for
The Beatitudes
A VIDEO LECTURE SERIES

by Rev. A. T. Vergunst

Lecture #3

Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit



The John Knox Institute
of Higher Education

Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

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Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

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STUDY GUIDE FOR
The Beatitudes

10 Lectures

by Rev. A. T. Vergunst

1. A General Introduction to the Sermon on the Mount
2. A General Introduction to the Beatitudes
3. Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit
4. Blessed Are They That Mourn
5. Blessed Are the Meek
6. Blessed Are They Which Do Hunger and Thirst After Righteousness
7. Blessed Are the Merciful
8. Blessed Are the Pure in Heart
9. Blessed Are the Peacemakers
10. Blessed Are They Which Are Persecuted for Righteousness' Sake



STUDY GUIDE FOR
The Beatitudes

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Lecture #3

Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit

Scripture Text

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

Key Points

1. There are 30 beatitudes throughout the Bible. They define who are the blessed people according to God’s standards.
 - a. Blessings come from who you are and who you are related to, and not outward things.
 - c. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who declares these blessings in Scripture.
 - d. These blessings are only found in being a born-again believer in Jesus Christ.
 - e. Definition of the word “blessed.”
2. What it means to be “poor in spirit.”
 - a. It is not material poverty.
 - b. It is not the same as being spiritually poor. God created man spiritually rich; but Adam’s fall in sin made us spiritually powerless, morally bankrupt.
 - c. It is a mindset of growing increasingly aware of one’s own spiritual poverty. We are dead in sin, unable to reconcile ourselves to God.
3. Reasons why the poor in spirit are blessed.
 - a. They bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit’s saving ministry in their heart.
 - b. Through this, the Holy Spirit leads them to come to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.
 - c. They are given the promise that theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4. Real spiritual life is always accompanied by a convicting and a humbling sense of our spiritual poverty, and our need for salvation in Jesus Christ.

5. The blessedness Jesus declares is not gauged by feelings or experiences, but it is being emptied of self, in order to be filled with Christ. This is a foundational aspect of our spiritual ground.

Review Questions

1. How does it comfort you to know that it is the Lord Jesus Christ himself who declares these blessings? Can you think of errors we should avoid about this?

2. Please define the term “blessed” as it is used in the Beatitudes.

3. Rev. Vergunst says, “To be poor in spirit is not the same as to be spiritually poor.” What does he mean by this? What do we learn from Genesis chapters 1 and 2 about being “spiritually rich” and “spiritually poor”?

4. How do you understand the saying, “To be poor in spirit is a mindset that is growing increasingly aware of one’s own spiritual poverty”?

5. How can it be a blessing to discover that you are spiritually poor, or spiritually bankrupt?

6. How is being *poor in spirit* a fruit of the Holy Spirit's saving ministry in preparation for what is coming next?

7. The Bible tells us that great multitudes of people followed Jesus, but later many of them forsook him. How do we know that they never embraced the main purpose of Jesus' ministry?

8. What spiritual richness can be seen in Jesus' promise, "For theirs is the kingdom of heaven"?

9. In this lecture, we've learned that, as believers, we need a humble sense of spiritual poverty and conviction throughout our spiritual life. Can you prove this from the Bible?

10. Explain why we should not think that the promises in the Beatitudes are based on our own feelings or experiences.

Personal Applications

1. Have you looked to find something within yourself to match this Beatitude? Why is it that we should focus on listening to the Lord Jesus Christ himself?

2. Meditate on the teachings in this lecture. Have you known this first Beatitude yourself experientially, spiritually?
