

One Step to Freedom Chapter 3: Lesson 1; Recognizing our spiritual poverty.

**Jesus proclaims a blessing to those who recognize their state of spiritual poverty before God:*

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

1.) What does it mean to be poor in spirit?

2.) What is the blessing proclaimed to those who are poor in spirit?

**Jesus Christ himself set the example for spiritual poverty:*

2 Corinthians 8:9 (NKJV) ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

1.) What riches did Jesus give up to become poor for our sake?

2.) What was Jesus Christ motive in becoming poor for our sake?

John 6:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

1.) What did Jesus Christ give up or become poor in coming down from heaven to earth?

2.) What was the will of God for Jesus Christ? reference; john 6:39-40

John 8:50 (NKJV) ⁵⁰ And I (*Jesus Christ*) do not seek My *own* glory; there is One Who seeks and judges.

1.) In this verse what spiritual aspect did Jesus Christ become impoverished?

2.) What was Jesus Christ motive in this poverty?

3.) Who is the One Who seeks and judges?

John 5:30 (NKJV) ^{30a} *Jesus said* I can of Myself do nothing. ^bAs I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

1.) In verse 30a; what spiritual aspect did Jesus Christ become impoverished?

2.) In verse 30b; what 2 spiritual aspects did Jesus Christ become impoverished?

3.) What are Jesus Christ`s 2 motives in this poverty?

John 12:49 (NKJV) ⁴⁹ For I have not spoken on My own *authority*; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.

1.) In this verse what spiritual aspect did Jesus Christ become impoverished?

2.) What was Jesus Christ motive in this poverty?

**We need to follow Jesus Christ example to give up “our fleshly riches” to include our own standing, our own authority, our own motives, our own desires, our own intentions, our own thoughts, our own voice, our own will, our own judgement, our own opinions, our own glory, our own righteousness, our earthly relationships, our own lives!*

Mark 14:36 (NKJV) And Jesus said, “Abba, Father, all things *are* possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”

Matthew 16:24 (AMP) Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to follow Me as My disciple, he must deny himself, set aside selfish interests, and take up his cross expressing a willingness to endure whatever may come and follow Me believing in Me, conforming to My example in living and, if need be, suffering or perhaps dying because of faith in Me.

Matthew 10:37-39 (NKJV) ³⁷ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

Genesis 12:1-2(NKJV) Now the LORD had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, From your family And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you.² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing.

**The proper perspective of earthly riches verses spiritual riches:*

Philippians 3:7-11 (NKJV) ⁷ But what things formerly were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

**God wants His children to have this understanding and recognition of spiritual poverty regarding true spiritual things, and possess the drive to seek their spiritual enrichment which comes from and through a relationship with Jesus Christ:*

John 6:67-69 (AMP) ⁶⁷ Jesus said to the Twelve, Will you also go away? And do you too desire to leave Me? ⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.⁶⁹ And we have learned to believe *and* trust, and we have come to know surely that You are *the Holy One of God*, the Christ the Anointed One, the Son of the living God.

John 15:5(NKJV) *Jesus said* ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

**The riches we have from God by His grace and mercy through Jesus Christ;*

Ephesians 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Romans 9:22-23 (NKJV) ²² *What* if God, wanting to show *His* wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, ²³ and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory,

Romans 11:33 (NKJV) ³³ Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out!

Ephesians 1:7 (NKJV) ⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

1 Corinthians 1:4-6 (NKJV) ⁴ I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, ⁵ that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, ⁶ even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you,

**The blessings of our Spiritual riches in God and Jesus Christ:*

Ephesians 1:3-13 (NKJV) ³ Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, ⁵ having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.⁷ In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹ having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him. ¹¹ In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, ¹² that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.¹³ In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

1.) How many blessings of spiritual riches can you find in these verses?

**Understanding poverty of spirit in 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 is a revealed poverty of spirit which should humble you and bring you to repentance:*

Luke 18:9-13(AMP) ⁹ He also told this parable to some people who trusted in themselves *and* were confident that they were righteous posing outwardly as upright and in right standing with God, and who viewed others with contempt:
¹⁰ “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ^{11a} The Pharisee stood and began praying to himself ^b in a self-righteous way, saying: ‘God, I thank You that I am not like the rest of men; swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I pay tithes of all that I get.’ ^{13a} But the tax collector, standing at a distance, ^b would not even raise his eyes toward heaven, ^c but was striking his chest in humility and repentance, saying, ^d ‘God, be merciful *and* gracious to me, the especially wicked sinner that I am!’

1.) In vs.11a; What was the posture of the Pharisee praying before God in the temple?

2.) In vs.11a; Who does it say the Pharisee was praying to?

3.) In vs.11b; What way does it say the Pharisee prayed?

4.) In vs13a; Where was the tax collector standing in the temple?

5.) In vs13b; What was the posture of the tax collector praying before God in the temple?

6.) In vs13c; What was the response of the tax collector in his prayer before God in the temple?

7.) In vs13d; What was the tax collectors prayer to God?

Romans 12:3 (KJV) ³ For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

**Poor in Spirit not in terms of being economically poor but in terms of being poor in spiritual qualities or poor in regards to our relationship with Jesus Christ:*

John 3:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

1.) In what ways should Jesus increase that we might decrease in our relationship with Him?

Psalms 40:16-17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; Let such as love Your salvation say continually, “The LORD be magnified!” ¹⁷ But I am poor and needy; Yet the LORD thinks upon me. You *are* my help and my deliverer; Do not delay, O my God.

Proverbs 22:4 (NKJV) ⁴ By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *Are* riches and honor and life.

1.) What qualities bring riches honor and life?

2.) Are these qualities fleshly or spiritual?

3.) What portion of scripture can we look to define whether these qualities are fleshly or spiritual?

**God`s warning of losing sight of your spiritual poverty leading to spiritual blindness:*

Revelation 3:17-18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’ and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked ¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.

**To be “poor in spirit” means to understand that you have no spiritual wealth of your own, that in your own efforts, you could never please God.*

Ephesians 2:8 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

John 3:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.

** Examples of people in the bible recognizing their spiritual poverty before The Lord:*

Job 42:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵ “I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, **But now my eye sees You.* ⁶ Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes.”

Isaiah 6:5 (NKJV) ⁵ So I said: “Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I *am* a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; **For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts.*”

Luke 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ **When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!”*

1.) In all of these verses what is the one thing that brought these individuals to recognize their spiritual poverty?

2.) What was the common response of all these individuals?

3.) What characteristic was ultimately produced in these individuals?

Exhortation: **James 2:5 (NKJV) listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?*