

The Poor in Spirit





The Poor in Spirit

Getting' Empty



Present various items to the class which are empty such as an empty bag of cookies, an empty piggy bank or an empty jewelry box. Create anticipation for the kids to see what's inside. Ask, "What do you expect to find?"

Who wants to be the first to open one of them up?" (*You might allow a few kids to come open them.*) "Did you expect to find them empty? Is being empty ever a good thing?" Most often we like things to be filled up. When we go on a trip, we want our gas tanks filled. When we're hungry we want our stomachs filled. When we get a box of candy, we want candy in it. In fact, I can't think of anything that when empty, it's a good thing!

When Jesus began his teaching, he said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." What do you think of when you hear of someone being poor? (*Discuss*) What do you think Jesus means? (*Poor in spirit means spiritually broke.*)

Poor in Spirit

Digging Deeper: Being poor in spirit is realizing that we have nothing without Jesus. Our "spiritual piggy bank" is empty! We also have nothing we can give to Jesus. It is understanding that we are completely sinful and do wrong, and that nothing in and of ourselves choose to follow God's ways.

The Bible says it like this, "There is no one who does right, not even one person" (Romans 3:10). And, "All of our ways of doing right are like dirty rags in God's sight" (Isaiah 64:6). In other words, being poor in spirit means we are completely lost and empty without Jesus. It is knowing that we do not deserve God's approval, his salvation or his forgiveness. It is also realizing we can't work our way to earning God's favor and approval either.

Another way to say Jesus' statement could be said like this, "Blessed, favored or approved by God, are the empty ones, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." So, being empty, or poor in spirit, is exactly what Jesus wants from us. He wants us to see our emptiness, and then ask him to fill us with himself.

So What? The immediate benefit of being poor in Spirit is being forgiven of our sins, and then being filled with God's Spirit and love—we become rich in God! The eternal benefit of being poor in spirit is being able to enter God's heavenly kingdom.

Power Point

We need a Savior

MEMORY VERSE

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





Intro Activity

Begging for Change

As you're starting class, have someone dressed as a poor person come into your class and ask for money. It's best to disguise this person as much as



possible so that kids don't recognize them. They can also carry a sign that says they're poor and hungry.

Have a jar of pennies or some other money on hand and tell students that you were going to use the pennies to buy snacks for the Sunday School class but that they can give the person the money if they want to.

If students opt to give the poor person the money, give it to them and let them leave. If students want to keep the money for snacks, tell the poor person that you don't have any money for them and ask them to leave.

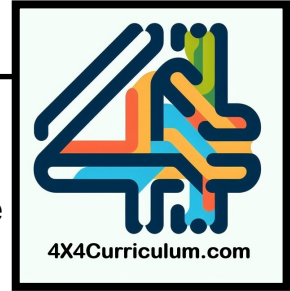
Group Game: Freeze Tag

Divide students into two teams. Team A is It. They try to tag the members of the other team. When a member of Team B is tagged, they freeze in place. They can then call out for one of their team members to tag and unfreeze them. A teammate cannot "unfreeze" a frozen member unless that person calls out for help.

The round ends when Team A tags all of the members on Team B or after 5 minutes. Afterward, switch roles and play again.

Remind students that we're poor in spirit and can't save ourselves. We need to ask Jesus to save us, just like they need to call on their teammates to unfreeze them.





Bible Story: The Prodigal Son

Once upon a time, there was a kind father who had two sons. The younger son was a bit wild and restless. One day, he asked his dad for his share of the family's money. Imagine that! He wanted it right away, even before his father passed away.

So, with his pockets full of coins, the young son set off on an adventure. He traveled far, far away to a distant land. There, he spent his money on fancy clothes, delicious food, and wild parties. But soon, his pockets were empty, and a big famine hit the land. Uh-oh!



Desperate and hungry, the young man took a job feeding pigs. Can you believe it? Pigs! And he was so hungry that he even wished he could eat the pig food. Yuck!

Then, one day, he came to his senses. He thought about his dad back home. "I've made a big mistake," he said to himself. "I'll go back and ask for forgiveness."

Guess what? His dad had been waiting and watching for him all along. When the young son returned, his father ran to him, hugged him tight, and threw a big party!

But wait, there was another son—the older one. He was working in the fields when he heard the music and laughter. "What's going on?" he wondered.

When he found out about the party for his younger brother, he got grumpy. "Why celebrate him? I've been good all along!" he complained.

But the father explained, "My dear son, your brother was lost, but now he's found. Let's celebrate!"

And that's how the story of the prodigal son ends—with love, forgiveness, and a joyful feast. The end.

