

Beatitudes Lesson One: Blessed are the Poor in Spirit

(adapted from a lesson by Tara Lynch at ministry-to-children.com)

Props: On the wall put up a Map, Book and Picture, upside-down.

Set up a white board and write “poor in spirit” on it.

Print Table Discussion questions (one copy per table) and place on tables.

Large Group

“This fall we are learning about the Beatitudes. Does anyone know what the word “Beatitude” means? It means “blessed.” Who gave the Beatitudes? Jesus. These are part of a teaching that Jesus gave to his disciples. Through the Beatitudes, Jesus showed them what life in God’s kingdom looks like. These paint a picture of a life lived for God, a life that God approves of, and blesses.

“The Beatitudes are a list of attitudes that God wants to see in his children. Sometimes they are called the “be-attitudes.” These are attitudes that show we are living in a way that God approves of.

“[Point to map, book and picture on the wall.] See anything funny about these? Right, they’re upside down. The “blessed life” that Jesus talks about in the Beatitudes often looks upside-down to people. These aren’t the life experiences that people normally consider blessed! But this is God’s view of things. And if we want to know God and to live in his favor, we must learn to adopt His upside-down thinking.

[Pray]

1. Read Matthew 5:1-12.
2. What is the first Beatitude? (Blessed are the poor in spirit.)
3. What does it mean to be poor? To be poor means to not have enough, or not do well enough. Someone can be poor and not have enough money, or someone can do a poor job at cleaning their room. Poor means low quality or low standard. So to be poor in spirit means to not have enough or not be able to do enough to be in right standing with God.
4. [Have volunteer write “needy for God” next to “poor in spirit” on board.]

Table Discussion (Print one copy per table to be used by discussion leaders)

1. Read Psalm 104:10-23 and 27-30. What does this Scripture say about our dependence on God? (We depend on God for everything. Everything we have, including life itself, comes from him.)
2. Do you think it's hard for people to admit their dependence on God? Explain.
3. Read Ecclesiastes 7:20, Isaiah 64:6 and Romans 3:23. What is the common message of these Scriptures? (They all declare that people are sinners. Our natural state is to do things that go against God and God's will.)
4. Do you see many people admitting they are sinners? Explain.
5. Is it hard for you to admit when you fall short of God's standards?
6. To be "poor in spirit" is to admit my total dependence on God. I won't have what I need for life without God's provision. I can't be the person I should be without God's help. Is this your attitude?
7. Read John 1:12-13 and John 3:16. To "poor in spirit" people God makes a wonderful promise: when we confess our sins to him and ask Jesus to forgive our sins and lead our lives, God will make us rich! He will forgive us all our sins. He will make us his children. He will give us his Spirit. He will give us eternal life with him!
8. Have you turned from sin and given your life to Jesus?
9. Will you celebrate Jesus' amazing love today?
10. Who do you know who needs to hear about the love of Jesus, and what will you do to share the gospel with them?

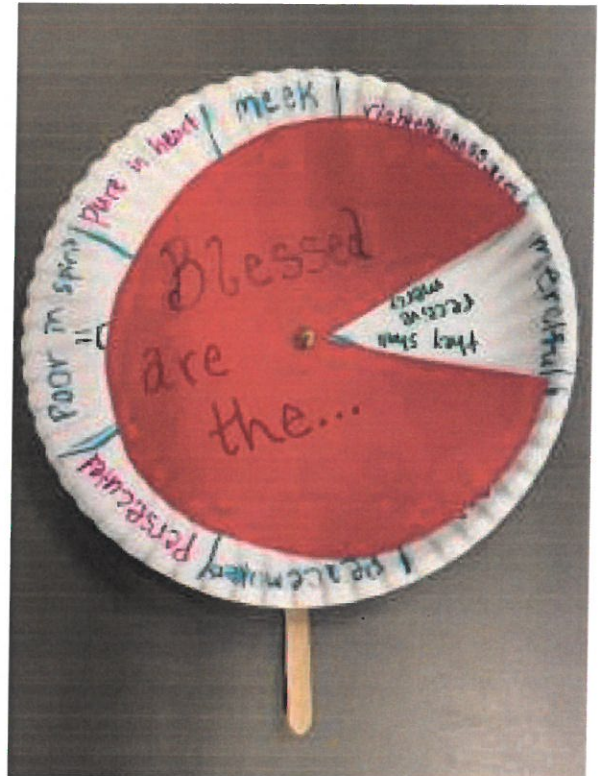
Craft/Activity

POOR IN SPIRIT CRAFT

Craft: "Wheel of Remembrance"

You will need (craft supplies)

- Cardstock
- Paper plates
- Brad fasteners
- Scissors
- Markers or Crayons



Procedure and Directions

1. Cut the construction paper into a circle, slightly smaller than the paper plate.
2. Divide the plate into sections, drawing lines like a "pie."
3. Write the things God has blessed you with on the outside of the paper plate, giving one to each section. Inside the wedge, draw a picture that represents the title for that section. (e.g. "FAMILY" is written on the outer edge of the plate and a picture of the family is on the inside section)
4. Cut a triangular piece out of the circular paper so that one "slice" of the wheel is fully available at a time. On the paper, decorate and/or write "Blessed are the Poor in Spirit"
5. Line up the paper on top of the plate, and carefully poke the brad through both. This may require a pre-punched hole with scissors.
6. Spin the "wheel" to remember the good things God has given you! Attach the plate to a stick for ease of carrying, if desired.