

Beatitude 1 – Poor In Spirit



Children – are you happy? How do you know? For the next few weeks I'd like to tell you a story about two fictional characters – One is Freddy the Frog and the other is Oslo the Otter. They are two children who are quite different. You see, Freddy is rarely happy, and Oslo is almost always happy. You most often see it in the way they talk about things. When asked this question – “Are you happy?” Oslo almost always replies “Well, yes I'm happy! The water might be a bit cold but I'm thankful that I have it.” Freddy on the other hand almost always says “No! I'm not one bit happy! I am quite the opposite. The water is

cold and I'm bored!”

Now if you took the time to ask each one their reasons for feeling this way, you'd find two different points of view. Freddy is a complainer and only thinks of himself—he thinks he is the king of his world. Oslo and Freddy both live in the same cold pond. But, if you ask Oslo about the water he generally doesn't complain. He understands it's his home. Even if it isn't as nice (or in this case as warm) as he might like he has learned to be grateful. Part of how he learned is by asking questions – sometimes he asks his parents; often he asks God questions and looks for answers in the Bible. He doesn't lean on his own understanding but trusts in the Lord (Prov 3:16). Freddy is stubborn and won't listen and thinks he knows everything. Oslo on the other hand is eager to learn and listen and almost always believes that things are not as bad as they might seem -- for he has learned to hope in God.



As I mentioned last week we want to study the beatitudes – the teaching of Yeshua on a mountain to his disciples. There are nine that we are going to learn.

The first one reads, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt 5:3) Now, do you have some ideas about what it means to be poor?

Back to our story. Freddy the frog is very rich – he comes from a very rich and famous family of frogs. Oslo is very poor and comes from a family of very poor and unknown otters. Now you may instantly have ideas about how each lived. What kinds of things would Freddy have that Oslo wouldn't? Maybe Freddy would live in a very fancy frog castle and Oslo would live in an old broken down otter shack... And returning to what Yeshua taught ... what did He mean by “poor in spirit” -- this is important not just because it is the first thing you need to memorize for our study, but because Yeshua is the teacher! He wants us to learn something. So, we need to pay close attention and consider what He meant. Could it mean poor in other ways? “Poor” here may not be just in terms of the “things” we have or don't have... like bikes, books, or computers... Poor in spirit is different. Like most of the beatitudes this is a matter of the heart. It is knowing in your heart that you need God's help and crying out to Him.

Now you might ask, “How can I know that I'm poor in spirit? I want the kingdom!!!” If you are asking that question and seeking God for an answer – you may be poor in spirit. Those who are poor in spirit recognize their need for God's provision – not just once but at all times. They have learned to depend upon God to meet their needs. They understand that the kingdom is ruled by a King – the King of Kings! They have a childlike faith that trusts in God and cleaves to him. As Yeshua taught another time, "... whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it at all." (Mark 10:15)

For Further Study Families read and consider these topics for discussion:

- 1) Review Psalm 84 and consider Isa 57:15 -- Humility
- 2) Prov 16:19 – King Solomon won battles. Under his rule the kingdom grew – yet a greater truth can be learned about one who is humble
- 3) James 4:6-10 – How does the King act toward the proud and humble?