

POOR IN SPIRIT



Between Hope and Despair, Steadfast Rik Berry

Why is it so hard to connect with God?

To hear God's voice.

To know where we fit in this crazy world.

To have faith.

Why are we so deaf to the voice of God, so blind to the glory that surrounds us?

There is a strange arrogance in us all that isolates us from God like a prison wall.

Arrogance.

Until that wall comes down,
not even the Angel Gabriel can get through to us.

So Jesus opens his Sermon on the Mount with these words:

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

To be poor in spirit is to take down that wall,
and keep taking it down every day of our lives.

The wall comes down, when we face reality.

There is nothing in us that justifies our arrogance.

All our claims to “importance” are illusory.

Our wisdom is an illusion.

Where is the wise man? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.

I Corinthians 1:20-21

Even with a soaring IQ we manifest an uncanny stupidity, when it comes to the ultimate issues.

We were born with brains, but not with wisdom.



Our wealth is an illusion.

“The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Luke 12:16-21

Our material wealth is as fragile as the mist. When it becomes our security, we’re setting ourselves up for disaster.



Do Not Covet Kate Austin

Our righteousness is an illusion.

Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments.

Joshua had no idea how filthy he was. He was the High Priest. He was a “righteous man.”

But his righteousness *was an illusion.*

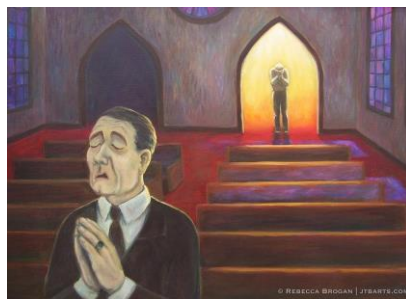
And the angel said to those who were standing before him, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” And to him he said, “Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you, and I will clothe you with pure vestments.”

Joshua’s garment was filthy, and so was his turban, signifying that his mind was also a mess.

And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord was standing by.

Zechariah 3: 3,4,5

We have far more in common with the Pharisee, who prayed, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are...” than with the tax collector who stood afar off and beat his breast, saying, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner!”



The Pharisee and the Tax Collector Rebecca Brogan

Our very life is as fragile as the flower of the field.

For the wind passes over it, and it is gone.

Its place remembers it no more.

Psalms 103:16

No matter how we try to bolster our sense of who we are by comparing ourselves with others, by counting our gold, or multiplying our Facebook friends, we know, deep within, that we are actually tiptoeing on the edge of Eternity.

We are here for a moment, then we are gone. Like a stone falling into a pond, we disappear and we are never seen again.

Our one hope is to pull down that wall and connect with God.

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



When You've Been Broken Rik Berry

**We can do it.
God will help us.**

As soon as the wall is down, the arrogance gone, the door to God's World flies open.

We begin to hear God's voice.

God's glory floods our ordinary days.

The kindness of God finds its way into our hearts and flows out of us as a river of life.

Prayer becomes as natural as breathing.

The joy of the Lord is our strength.

Jesus is truly our Lord and our Friend.

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

Dear Holy and compassionate Lord tear down the arrogance that separates us from you. This separation is draining life from us, crushing our souls. We lay down what keeps us from you...our illusions and delusions about our own importance, about our own beliefs and attitudes and even about our own righteousness. We need you. Without you we are broken. We repent of not opening our hearts to you. Lord in our brokenness, as we bow before your holy throne, flood our hearts with your presence, with your glory, with your life... and these poor spirits shall arise blessed and living once again.

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Throne of God Kate Austin

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