

FAMILY PAGE: BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT

FAMILY QUESTION: WHAT DOES OUR FAMILY DO WHEN SOMEONE HAS BIG FEELINGS?

Jesus says true honor, belonging, and power (God's kingdom!) belong to the poor, the humble, the ones without. Jesus calling poor people "blessed" was the opposite of their expectations. We all feel poor in spirit sometimes—discouraged or powerless. What does your family do when someone is feeling powerless or feeling overwhelmed with big feelings? Does your family have a special remedy for discouragement? Talk about what you as grown-ups do when you know your child is feeling down and make a plan about what someone in your family should do if they ever feel like they need help feeling better.

BRIEF REFLECTION

A huge crowd of people followed Jesus. He saw their hurts and pains and cared for them in many ways. He led them to a mountain and told them about God's kingdom. You can think of a "kingdom" as the way the world works or is set up. In God's kingdom, there is abundance: more than enough honor, food, money, love, power, and resources for everyone to thrive.

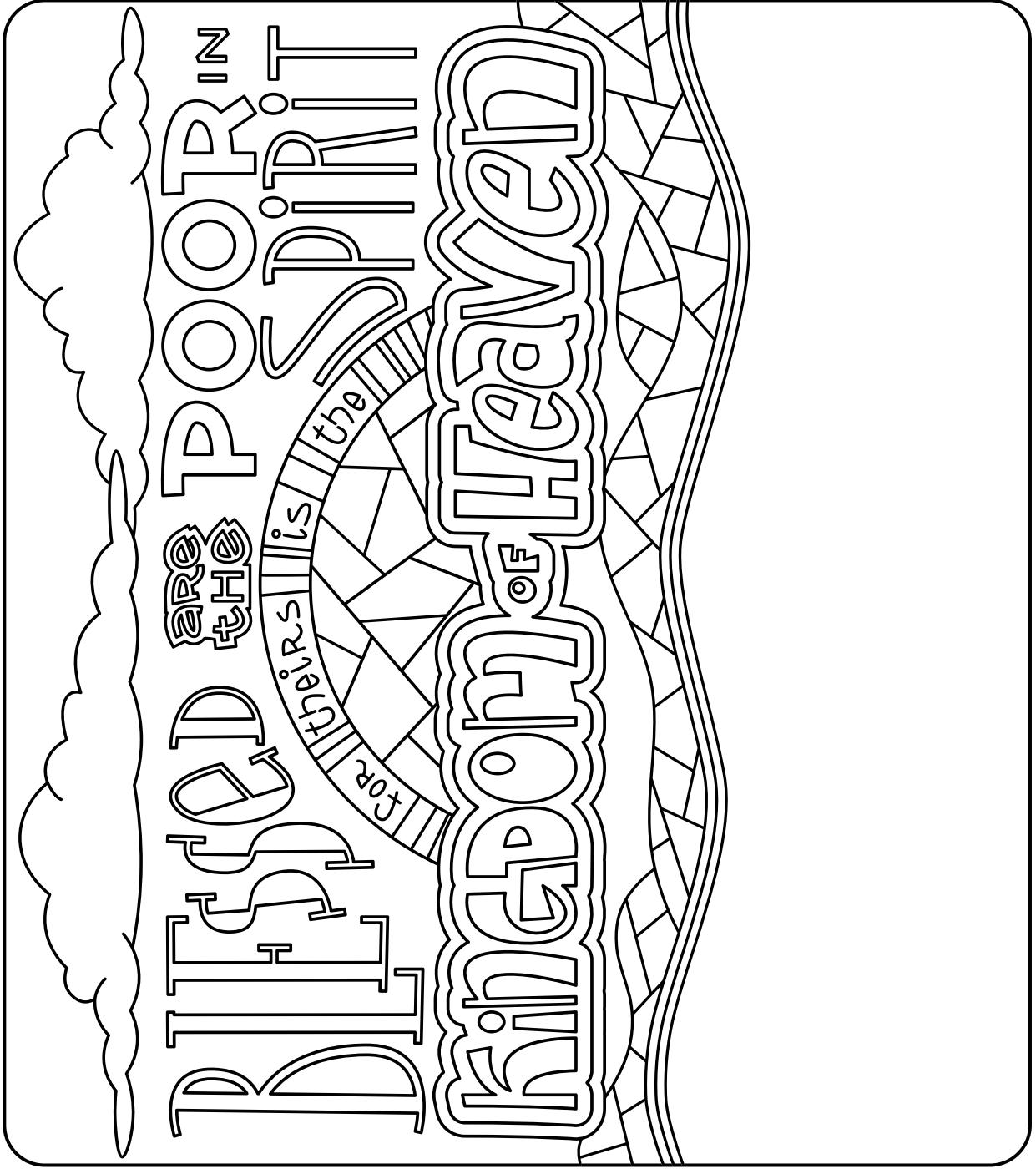
Jesus says, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" When you hear the word "poor," what do you think of? Maybe not having enough money to buy food, live in a home, get clothes, and provide for daily life? The wealthy people in charge of the government demanded lots of taxes—money people earned—to run their cities. People were already struggling to provide for what they needed. When they could not pay the taxes their government expected, they lost most of what they owned. Their land, money—and in turn, their honor—were all taken away from them. Many of the people Jesus spent time with were poor like this, yet also felt "poor in spirit." They were sad, and worried things might never get better. They felt trapped, and their biggest fear was that tomorrow would be just like today, or maybe even worse. They did not feel blessed. Maybe you have felt this way, too.

And Jesus tells them, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." Huh? Jesus turns what they've been taught upside down! He said heaven and the kingdom of God belong to all the people who are poor in spirit! They are the blessed, happy ones. When it feels like the rich, the ones who seem to have it all and know it all, have all the power, Jesus says true honor, belonging, and power (God's kingdom!) belong to the poor, the ones without.

We can live this out with our bodies. Try clenching your hands to make fists. We often think of fists as a sign of power and strength. But when our fists are closed, they can't receive anything new. Jesus had a different idea. Open your hands on your lap with your palms facing up. This is a physical way to remind us we depend on God and must be open to learning, growing, and changing. It's a great thing to do when we pray. When we feel helpless, God promises to fill us with what we need—things better than we could make or imagine.

PRAYER

Loving God, We open our hands, we open our hearts, and we open our minds to your loving spirit. Thank you for promising to fill us with what we need, and to give us hope when situations feel stuck. We trust and depend on you. Amen.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Have you ever had a time when you wondered if things would get better?

Do you know anyone who is feeling "poor in spirit" right now? How can you encourage them?

Where do you see the gap Jesus saw—people who are very rich, and others who are very poor

How is being open (think about open hands!) a sign of power?

In the coloring page's blank space, write or draw what this beatitude looks like or means to you, or write or draw a modern-day version of the beatitude.