

God's Word in the Dark

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:3). "Poor" in the Greek means "beggar," or figuratively, "distressed." The "poor in spirit" are those who cry out for God like a beggar in the streets. The "kingdom of heaven" is a saying Jesus used often. In this phrase "heaven" is used as a substitute for God's name. The Jews had different words they used in place of God's name for fear they would use His name "in vain." The "kingdom of God" is not referring to a place you can go, but rather a condition of the heart; a heart that acknowledges God as ruler. It is a spiritual kingdom where your heart meets with God's heart. When God is acknowledged as ruler, His power is free to flow (Matthew 13:58). When you cry out for God He answers your call and makes you an heir to His kingdom, so you have access to the King and to His many riches. These riches include wisdom (James 1:5), love (1John 4:7), hope, joy, peace (Romans 15:13) and the assurance that God "will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).

There have been times when I have doubted if God was there with me. There have been times when so many things seemed to be going wrong and I felt so desperate. Here are some things God has shown me:

- Do not doubt in the dark what God has told you in the light. (anonymous)
- The presence of God in your life is not a feeling, He doesn't come and go.
- Faith is trusting when you do not feel, see, hear, smell, or taste.
- The will of God will never lead you where the grace of God cannot keep you.
- God wants sincere frankness. He wants you to trust Him, but when you do not He wants you to tell Him.
- Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)
- And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed. (Deuteronomy 31:8)

God promises that if we come to Him, He will stay with us and not leave us, therefore, we have no need to fear. If things feel rough and you cannot seem to see the light at the end of the tunnel, remember God's promises, hang on and rejoice. In my life I have found that when I am going through a hard time and I lean on God, He helps me through. When I doubt or feel alone, and cry out for help, God reminds me of His presence and faithfulness. When I am confused, and give it to God and stop trying to figure out things on my own, He shows me the way. When I trust God during temptation, I conquer. But through it all I have found that when I "surrender while I suffer," I enter one of my deepest levels of worship. God truly is faithful.

Reflection:

- ♥ With a neighbor, talk about a difficult situation you are experiencing or have experienced in the past.
- ♥ How did you give your difficult situation to God?
- ♥ Talk about how you can seek God's face during your trial.



Closing Prayer:

God, thank you for always being there for us and loving us even when we do wrong. Please help us to lean on You when it seems the hardest. Help us to praise you when all seems to go wrong. Reveal yourself to us when we think we cannot go on. We love you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Mary Long is a 20 year old young woman from Coker, Alabama. She is active in her home church, Coker CPC where her father, Tim Long is the pastor. She sings beautiful harmony with her two younger sisters, Laura and Sarah. Mary is constantly supported by her loving parents, Tim and Deborah.