

## Jens Birkholm, *Gospel of the Poor* (1900)

### Abstract

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This painting by Danish artist Jens Birkholm (1869-1915) depicts a Social Democratic agitation meeting. A gleaming bust of Karl Marx assumes pride of place in the right background – as do the police officers seated directly beneath it. Presumably, they have come to monitor the meeting and will break it up at the slightest hint of unlawful activity. Birkholm has portrayed himself as the speaker. The manner in which he raises his right hand suggests that he is about to bestow a blessing upon those gathered before him. Combined with the title of the painting, this gesture hints at the quasi-religious elements of socialism.

### Source

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Source: Jens Birkholm, *Gospel of the Poor*, oil on canvas, 1900. Deutsches Historisches Museum, Berlin.

<https://www.dhm.de/lemo/bestand/objekt/jens-birkholm-evangelium-der-armut-1900>

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