

“Blessed Are the Poor in Spirit (the Humble) for Theirs Is the Kingdom of Heaven.” – Matthew 5:3

- I. Who are the “poor in spirit,” and what did Jesus mean by the “Kingdom of Heaven?”**
- A. The Kingdom (*basilea*) of God, or Heaven, is a term describing the authority of God manifesting through acts of God’s power and compassion (Matthew 14:12-14).
 - B. Two kinds of poverty seem to pull on the heart of God.
 - 1. Poverty of spirit (humility) (James 4:6)
 - 2. Poverty of circumstances (sickness, no money, great need) (Mark 5:21-34; Matthew 10:7-8).
 - 3. It seems the Kingdom works powerfully through the weakness (compassion) of the person releasing the miracles and the weakness of the one receiving the miracles (Matthew 9:35-37; Mark 5:24-34). Both sides are poor in spirit (humble). Oh, the majesty and beauty of Jesus!
- II. Welcome to the Jesus School of Ministry!**
- A. Ministering the miracles of God by faith and weakness (Luke 9:1-6, 10-17)—“You give them something to eat” (verse 13).
 - B. Sometimes we don’t connect the dots when we get in an impoverished place. We forget what God has done for us and through us in the past (Matthew 16:5-12).
 - C. Some of the greatest miracles I’ve ever seen have happened in the most spontaneous and humble circumstances (E.g., miracles in the tent outside of the church).
- III. Consider the ministry of the Early Church.**
- A. The Early Church began with the preaching of an unschooled disciple whose first sermon after Pentecost started like this, “Listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk as you suppose. It’s only nine in the morning” (Acts 2:15-17).
 - B. Notice again, in the beginning of the Church, God’s heart for unselfishness and generosity connected to great power (Acts 4:32-35; 5:1-16).
 - C. What kind of man was Stephen , who died for the sake of the Gospel?
 - 1. A man set aside to look after widows in the distribution of food (Acts 6:3-6)
 - 2. What else accompanied Stephen’s ministry? “Now Stephen, a man full of grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people” (Acts 6:8).
 - D. Philip was chosen to minister to widows (Acts 6:5), but also became an evangelist to the Samaritans (Acts 8:4-8, 12-17).
 - E. In the recognition of Paul’s ministry to the Gentiles, the only thing they added was he “should continue to remember the poor,” the very thing he [Paul] had been eager to do all along (Galatians 2:6-10).

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January 8, 2023