

10.25.20

**Jesus' Teachings are the Keys to the Kingdom of Heaven
Matthew 5:1-3**

As you remember from last week, Jesus has begun His earthly ministry. He has a lot to accomplish during His stay on earth. He will do some teaching, preaching, healing, empowering, dying for sins and one of the most important things, being raised from the dead.

Without His resurrection, nothing Jesus did or taught has any validity. It is His resurrection that proves He was who He said He was. If Jesus would not have been resurrected then He would have joined the ranks of other teachers like Confucius, Buddha and others. Just another good man who taught good morals. But that is not the case is it?

God reached down into the tomb and brought Jesus out alive. Paul writes in Corinthians that over 500 people saw Jesus after His resurrection. Certainly we believe in the resurrection for the Holy Spirit we have been given testifies to us the truth of it.

This morning though, we begin to look at the earliest part of Jesus' ministry. In the gospel of John you can read about Jesus' attendance at a wedding where He performed His first miracle, changing the water into wine. In Luke's gospel Jesus goes into the tabernacle and teaches about who He is. And in Mark, we read about Jesus casting out a demon.

Jesus started His ministry by showing the power of the kingdom of heaven had come to earth. Physical healings, emotional healings, casting out demons, raising the dead and finally His own resurrection. All evidences that the kingdom of heaven had come to earth.

Later in His ministry, Jesus is speaking with His disciples when He says the following.

Matthew 16:19, “I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.” NASB

The kingdom of heaven has come to earth. Jesus demonstrates the power of it and then He tells His disciples, and us, that He will give us the keys to this new thing that has come to them, the kingdom of heaven.

1. Jesus gives us the keys to the kingdom of heaven

This should excite us but we do need to understand what the keys are and how to use them to unlock the things of heaven.

In fact, that is what Jesus is talking about in this verse. If you use the keys to the kingdom that I am giving you properly, then the power of heaven will be unlocked, having a major impact on earthly things. Look how this verse reads in the New Living Translation.

Matthew 16:19, “And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you lock on earth will be locked in heaven, and whatever you open on earth will be opened in heaven.” NLT

The keys to heavenly power. Pretty important stuff wouldn't you say?

I have in this box a lot of keys. They are church keys. Some are marked, some are not. Some are new and some are old. Some are still usable, some are not. Wouldn't you agree that the important thing about a key is that it is still usable and to know what it unlocks.

2. The keys Jesus makes available to us are His teachings

As we learn and follow the teachings of Jesus then we can be witnesses to the power of heaven working on earth for our benefit, for the benefits of those around us and most importantly, to see the Kingdom of heaven and God expanded on earth as it is in heaven.

In the Lord's prayer that is what we are praying isn't it? When we pray, God, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, we are praying let heavenly realities now become physical realities on earth.

PAUSE

So this morning, let's look at the beginning of Jesus' teachings as found in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:1-3, "When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. He opened His mouth and began to teach them saying, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'"

Of all the teachings of Jesus this is the most foundational of them all. In this opening statement of His sermon Jesus shares with us the master key that introduces us to all the keys of heaven that are available to us.

Blessed are the poor in spirit. What does it mean to be poor in spirit? Some would say being humble and I think that is on the right track but when we think of humility what do we think of? If you're like me you might think of humility as how we handle ourselves with other people but not necessarily how we are towards God.

Sure we think of God as being this large spiritual being who is the Creator of the Universe, the giver of salvation through His Son. In comparison we are but a speck in time on the earth and we are humbled by the thought of His vastness. But being poor in spirit is different than this.

A little later in Jesus' teachings, He shares the following.

Matthew 18:1-3, "At that time the disciples came to Jesus and said, "Who then is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, and said, 'Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

When we read this verse, the first thing most people will jump to is life after death, entering into heaven for eternity. This is true. If a person does not come to the place where they admit that of their own ability or goodness they cannot enter into heaven then they will miss entering into heaven.

But I also believe Jesus is also teaching that unless a person comes to a place where they are child-like in their acceptance of Jesus and the things He teaches, then most of the blessings God has from heaven stay locked up in heaven, not to be poured out into their life.

Ask a child to come up. Jordon

Ask the Jordon a question. Thank you for coming up here. Are you having fun downstairs? What are you learning about?

Ask a Jordon to do something. Sixlets

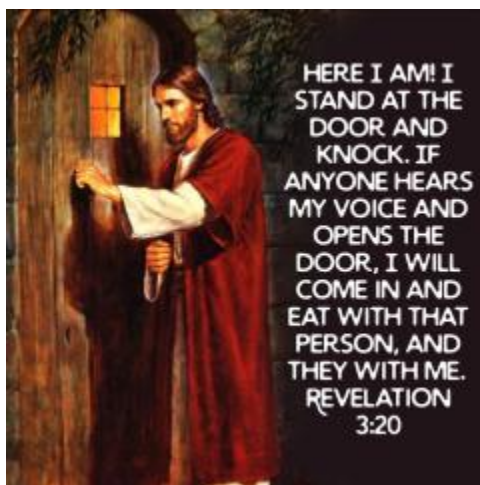
Not what did you see? The first thing you saw was me seeking out Jordon.

The second thing you saw was a child-like faith in an adult. I asked Jordon to come to me. I asked her to put her faith in me. I asked her to pull herself away from her friends and what was going on in her life downstairs.

I have no doubt the kids are having fun downstairs and that Jordon would rather be with them than upstairs on the stage with me. But because Jordon knows me and trusts me she was willing to put her faith in me.

And lastly you saw that I rewarded Jordon for her faith. In fact, I asked her to go and look for something but she didn't even know for sure what it was. Again, because she knows and trusts me, she was willing to go and find it. What occurred? She unlocked her reward and not just any reward. It was a reward that not only could she enjoy but so could all those around her.

The same is true of our lives with Jesus isn't it?



Revelation 3:20, “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with Me.”

First know, that Jesus is always on a journey, looking for you. That is what Jesus does for each of us. He seeks us out. That in and of itself should humble us. Knowing that Jesus loves you so much that He will go and search for you.

Maybe Jesus is looking for you to come to Him so He can lead you into a relationship where eventually, when this life is over, you can live with

Him forever in His heavenly kingdom. Maybe that is the first thing He is after.

Maybe though, and I suspect this is true for most of us here this morning, Jesus comes to us looking to help us enter into the fullness of His heavenly kingdom here on earth. Maybe He is standing right there, in front of you at different times and in different ways asking you to be child-like in your faith and go on a journey with Him.

The question is, will you go on a journey with Jesus? As it says on the front of the bulletin, what are you going to do with the key Jesus has given you?

Back to this box of keys. The box of keys is locked up in our church office. Without a key to get into the office you cannot access all these other keys and what the doors they unlock. But if you have the master key, then every door and what lies behind it is available to you.

3. Being poor in spirit is the master key that unlocks the door to even more heavenly keys

Being child-like in our approach to Jesus' teachings positions us to learn from Him, to learn how things are done in heaven and how we can live kingdom lives here on earth.

As we seek Him the following is true.

Hebrews 11:6, "And without faith it is impossible to please God, for they who come to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

When we come to Jesus and God then we are exhibiting the faith that God knows best. That God has our best in store for us and that the keys He gives us open up heavenly realities that will bless us, those around us and help bring God's heavenly kingdom to earth.

The kingdom of heaven is yours to access. You have been given the keys to the kingdom. Are you availing yourself to the teachings of Jesus is the question.

Let's pray