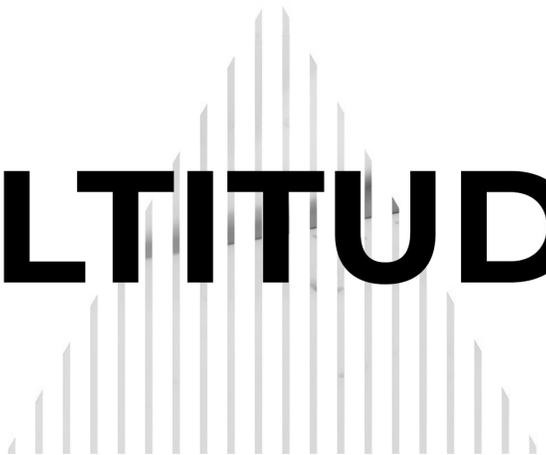


NOTES & QUOTES

ALTITUDE



CONNECT (BUILD RELATIONSHIPS)

1. As we celebrate Thanksgiving, take time to share three things that you are especially grateful for. Then, if you are meeting as a group, take time to give thanks to God by offering short prayers of thankfulness.
2. What do you think it means to be blessed?
3. Jesus was famous by reputation. But the more time people actually spent with Jesus the more amazed they were because of his teaching and the way he lived. Who is the most famous person you have spent time with? Not just someone you've met, but someone famous you have actually spent time with. What was it about them that impressed you?

THRIVE (EXPLORE BIBLICAL TRUTH)

4. Read Matthew 3:1-2. What did John the Baptist mean when he said, "The kingdom of heaven is near"? How did he tell the people to respond to this news? How is repentance related to being poor in spirit?
5. In Matthew 4:17, Jesus repeats John's message, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." What is the significance of the phrase at hand?
6. Read Matthew 4:23-25. What do these verses tell us about the crowd Jesus was speaking to? How might this be connected to Matthew and 5:1-2?
7. Read Matthew 5:1-14. What words would you use to describe someone who is poor in spirit?

8. Focus in on Matthew 5:3 and Luke 6:20-21. What is the relationship between being poor and being poor in spirit? How do you think Christ would define true wealth? Poverty?

COMMIT (BE ON MISSION)

9. It has been said that sharing our faith in Christ is like one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. In light of this, how does being poor in spirit fit in with telling your friends about Jesus? How important to the Gospel is it to be aware of your own spiritual bankruptcy?
10. Write a private note to God about the things that keep you from spiritual poverty. Be honest with him, are they things that you want to give up?
11. The kingdom of God and heaven are central themes in the Sermon on the Mount. What does it mean to live in the Kingdom of God? Practically, how do we "seek first the kingdom of God" in our days, weeks, giving, serving, and relationships (Matthew 6:33)?

Pause, Ponder, and Meditate

"God blesses those who realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is given to them."

Matthew 5:3 NLT

"You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope. With less of you there is more of God and his rule."

Matthew 5:3 MSG