

In Between

Email deacon Mick at mhumbree@comcast.net if you wish to continue receiving weekly

Monday Dec.1st, 2025

Scripture – Matthew 8:11 And I tell you that many will come from east and west and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of Heaven.

Observation: This is the end of the interaction with the centurion, whom Jesus stated had great faith because the centurion believed He could heal his paralyzed servant without seeing him. Also, in Matthew, Kingdom of heaven is used instead of Kingdom of God as seen in the earliest Gospel (Mark) and Luke, because Matthew was writing to a Jewish audience in which to write, much less say, the word "God" was prohibited.

Narrative: For the author of Matthew, it would seem the interaction with the centurion and Jesus' subsequent comments leave room for not only Jews to participate in the "kingdom of Heaven."

Question: Who do you believe the "kingdom of Heaven" is available to based on the Way, the Truth, and the Life of Jesus? Are there any class or category of individuals that should be excluded? If so, why?

Tuesday Dec. 2nd, 2025

Scripture – Luke 10:21 Just at this time, filled with joy by the Holy Spirit, he said, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to little children. Yes, Father, for that is what it has pleased you to do.'

Observation: Jesus had just had the joyous interaction with the 72 disciples upon their successful outreach into the surrounding communities through the power Jesus entrusted them with. The "little children" are the disciples.

Narrative: For me, this leads me to believe that not only will Jesus' message be more accepted by the "little children" of the world, but also the work of the Holy Spirit will proceed most likely from them as well.

Question: Who do you know that most likely would not be known as one of the "learned and the clever," that has made the largest positive impact in your life?

Wednesday Dec. 3rd, 2025

Scripture – Matthew 15: 35-37 Then he instructed the crowd to sit down on the ground, and he took the seven loaves and the fish, and after giving thanks he broke them and began handing them to the disciples, who gave them to the crowds. They all ate as much as they wanted, and they collected what was left of the scraps, seven baskets full.

Observation: The conclusion of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes in Matthew. Writing to a Jewish community, Matthew uses the number seven deliberately as a symbol of completeness or perfection.

Narrative: If I give completely of what I have, there will be more than enough to go around, in fact, such complete giving will be abundantly returned as well. As the saying, and song goes >> "it is in giving that we receive, in pardoning that we are pardoned, and in dying that we are born to eternal life."

Question: When have you experienced the feeling of getting more in return from an act of outreach, ministry, or giving?

Thursday Dec. 4th, 2025

Scripture – Matthew 7:21, 24-25 'It is not anyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," who will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven. 'Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock.

Observation: Part of the long discourse to the crowd known as the Sermon on the Mount. Just before these verses, Jesus had engaged the crowd on the topics of judging others, ask/seek/knock, narrow the gates, true and false prophets, and true & false disciples.

Narrative: While "saying" has its place, is our "being" focused on fulfilling the will of God and the mission of Jesus >> a life based on love, compassion, and justice. If so, then others will see that we are "doing the will of the Father."

Question: What would others say your "being" is focused on?

Friday Dec. 5th, 2025

Scripture - Matthew 9:27-31 As Jesus went on his way two blind men followed him shouting, 'Take pity on us, son of David.' And when Jesus reached the house the blind men came up to him and he said to them, 'Do you believe I can do this?' They said, 'Lord, we do.' Then he touched their eyes saying, 'According to your faith, let it be done to you.' And their sight returned. Then Jesus sternly warned them, 'Take care that no one learns about this.' But when they had gone away, they talked about him all over the countryside.

Observation: It is scholarly speculation that Jesus did not want his miracles widely known since people would focus too much on himself and the miracles instead of the personal transformation he was asking of them.

Narrative: A parallel to this theme is that when we face a significant challenge, we tend to "shout" out to God for assistance. But as or more important than our intercessory prayer is our "belief" not only in God, but in ourselves as well > "according to your faith, let it be done to you."

Question: Who do you know that has been faithful to the call of love, compassion, and justice against incredible obstacles?

Saturday Dec. 6th, 2025

Scripture - Matthew 9:35-36 Jesus was going through all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.

Observation: A while after the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus remains in the Galilee region. He has been engaging the crowds and healing individuals one-on-one, such as: a leper, the Centurion's servant, Peter's mother-in-law, a paralytic, and the woman with a hemorrhage.

Narrative: While each of us may not be able to physically heal others directly and miraculously, there is "every kind of disease and every kind of sickness" that involves the mind and soul, that we can impact directly...those dispirited, lost, and distressed. Jesus reminds us that we need to "see" them, show "compassion" and be present to them.

Question: What specific example comes to mind when an individual in distress or dispirited, was at least partially or momentarily "healed" by your or someone else's compassionate presence.