

An Accurate Description of the Lifestyle

by K.P. Yohannan

The author shares his personal experience of poverty and cultural shock, highlighting the stark contrast between the American economy and the struggles of the poor.

Scripture: Matthew 25:35

Topics: "Poverty", "Compassion for the Needy"

Description

K.P. Yohannan shares a vivid depiction of the stark contrast between his impoverished upbringing and the abundance he encountered in America. He describes the stripping away of basic necessities and services, illustrating the harsh realities faced by many in his homeland. This experience left him in awe and confusion, prompting deep spiritual reflections on the disparities in lifestyles and economies. Yohannan emphasizes the need for awareness and compassion towards those living in poverty, urging listeners to evaluate their own lives in light of these realities.

Transcript

We move to the kitchen. The appliances have already been taken out, so we turn to the cupboards. . . . The box of matches may stay, a small bag of flour, some sugar and salt. A few moldy potatoes, already in the garbage can, must be rescued, for they will provide much of tonight's meal. We will leave a handful of onions and a dish of dried beans. All the rest we take away: the meat, the fresh vegetables, the canned goods, the crackers, the candy.

Now we have stripped the house: the bathroom has been dismantled, the running water shut off, the electric wires taken out. Next we take away the house. The family can move to the tool shed. . . . Communications must go next. No more newspapers, magazines, books--not that they are missed, since we must take away our family's literacy as well. Instead, in our shantytown we will allow one radio. . . .

Now government services must go next. No more postmen, no more firemen. There is a school, but it is three miles away and consists of two classrooms. . . . There are, of course, no hospitals or doctors nearby. The nearest clinic is ten miles away and is tended by a midwife. It can be reached by bicycle, provided the family has a bicycle, which is unlikely. . . .

Finally, money. We will allow our family a cash hoard of five dollars. This will prevent our breadwinner from experiencing the tragedy of an Iranian peasant who went blind because he could not raise the \$3.94 which he mistakenly thought he needed to receive admission to a hospital where he could have been cured.

This is an accurate description of the lifestyle and world from which I came. From the moment I touched foot on American soil, I walked in an unbelieving daze. How can two so different economies coexist simultaneously on the earth? Everything was so overpowering and confusing to me at first. Not only did I have to learn the simplest procedures--like using the pay telephones and making change--but as a sensitive Christian, I found myself constantly making spiritual evaluations of everything I saw.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/kp-yohannan/an-accurate-description-of-the-lifestyle/>

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