

Jan. 30 – Faith in Practice

Story-telling time: Which is your favorite beatitude? Why?

Our scripture: Matthew 5:1-12

5 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons^[a] of God.

10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

What are your observations and questions?

- Jesus' teaching from the mountain calls to mind Moses bringing the law down from Mount Sinai. Jesus is the new Moses.
- Just as Moses laid out the ethics of the Hebrew people as they take possession of the promised land, Jesus is laying out the ethical system of His kingdom.

- The Beatitudes are in indicative mode, not imperative. Not entrance requirements to the kingdom, but descriptions of the way things are. Jesus is not asking the crowd to become poor in spirit, but to receive the consolation God provides to those who are poor. (From Feasting on the Word)

Faith in Practice assignment: What have you learned today about the spiritual discipline of receiving blessedness that you would like to start “practicing?”

Next Week: Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany:

- Isaiah 58:1-9a, [9b-12]
- 1 Corinthians 2:1-12, [13-16]
- Matthew 5:13-20
- Psalm 112:1-9, (10)