

Beautiful Vision

Matthew 5:1-12

Live the Blessings

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Meditative Prayer

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Blessings Game

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Today's Bible Reading

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Additional Bible Readings

Micah 6:1-8

Psalm 15

1 Corinthians 1:18-31

O God, you turn things upside down, calling the wise to embrace your folly.

Help us to grow in acknowledging our need for you. Open us to the vision of your reign on earth and strengthen us to do our part. Amen.

The vision known as the Beatitudes in Matthew 5:1-12 presented for the Christian community in Matthew's gospel is both beautiful and challenging.

Jesus calls a group of disciples. They travel throughout Galilee, sharing the good news that God's realm is breaking into the world. It is a message that the gospel writer's community desperately needs to hear. The gospel of Matthew speaks to a group of new Christians after a disaster. The temple has been destroyed and the people scattered. Jesus is no longer present in the flesh. What laws will govern the community now? What is the good news for those trying to be faithful in a hostile world?

Jesus goes through a litany of statements regarding who is blessed.

There is urgency in Jesus' teaching. He uses the present tense in this series of sentences beginning with the word blessed, or happy in some translations. Blessing is God's gift, a sign of covenant relationship with God. Jesus teaches that the blessed ones are those who are humble of heart ("poor in spirit"), who are gentle, who show mercy, who hunger and thirst for God's ways. Those who mourn will be comforted; those who make peace will be called God's children. Those persecuted in the cause of justice will find themselves part of God's transforming reality.

In Jesus, God's love is revealed and made manifest. This teaching is directed to the disciples, to the Twelve and the larger group of men and women who accompany Jesus. The Beatitudes describe the way of life for those who commit themselves to follow. For the community of the gospel of Matthew, this beautiful vision is what life should be like.