

Blessed

Scripture Reading — Matthew 5:3-12

Blessed are... — Matthew 5:3

I often do my studying and sermon writing at a local Starbucks, and every once in a while I take a moment to watch people. In a coffee shop like this, one often sees hip-looking people buying expensive drinks and pastries from Millennial baristas. But sometimes something happens that sort of flips the script a bit. A homeless man walked in today and asked for some water. Everyone looked uncomfortable. He got his water, meandered around for a bit, and left. Then everything went back to “normal.”

In his teaching to the crowds, Jesus often flipped the script, saying and doing things that were not expected. “Blessed are the poor in spirit”? “Blessed are those who mourn”? “Blessed are those who are persecuted . . .”? This makes no sense to our “normal” way of thinking, and most of it makes us uncomfortable.

But faith isn’t formed in comfort. It is formed when challenged and when we aren’t allowed to sit smugly in our preconceived notions about people and the world around us. Faith is formed when Jesus looks at a crowd of people and points out that the ones who are blessed are those who -realize they are not self-sufficient but depend totally on God. When we wake up to that realization, we are blessed as well.

Though we don’t deserve it, God’s blessing is available to all of us. Blessed are you, dear reader, when you know you depend on God, because his love will see you through.

Prayer

Jesus, thank you for loving and blessing us, though we don’t deserve it. Amen.

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