

Living Large

Scripture Reading — Matthew 5:1-10

*He began to teach them... “Blessed are the poor in spir-it, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”
—Matthew 5:2-3 —*

Sometimes we “squint” without even knowing it. Often, in fact.

Probably even daily, we find ourselves looking for ways to deal with the frustrations of life. We rummage around, mentally looking for something to help a hard day feel better. Many of our most common temptations creep in at such times. Whether we realize it or not, we’re shopping for comforts.

If you want an interesting spiritual exercise, read the book of Ecclesiastes and the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) together. They fit like a matched set. While Ecclesiastes walks us through the false comforts we might naturally turn to, the Sermon on the Mount points us toward the sources through which God intends to nourish us into real life.

Ecclesiastes helps me notice the false comforts I might be fooled into trusting—money, success, sensual pleasures. The Sermon on the Mount helps me find what really satisfies. Together they lead me away from my illusions into realities I can trust. Pruned by the challenge of Ecclesiastes, I can more easily let go of the worries, lusts, and grudges that can seem so urgent. And I can cling to the forgiveness and healing through which God wants to make me whole.

If it wasn’t for Ecclesiastes, we might settle for so little. If it wasn’t for the Sermon on the Mount, we might miss so much.

Prayer

Lord, we could settle for so little. Teach us to want what only you can provide. Amen.

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