

October 28, 2018

The 6th Beatitude

Matthew 4:23-5:8

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. ²⁴ So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. ²⁵ And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

⁵¹ When Jesus saw *the crowds*, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. ² Then Jesus began to speak, 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 will be comforted.

⁵ “**BLESSED** are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ “**BLESSED** are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

⁷ “**BLESSED** are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

⁸ “**BLESSED** are *the pure in heart*, for they will *see God*.

Mark 7:1-23

New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12) are identified as the essential teaching of Jesus. They have been taken seriously from literal to metaphorical, from concrete pragmatic directives to poetic unrealistic hopes of how heaven is. They include a tension between now, and what is to come, as each beatitude contains the first verb in the present tense, with a dependent clause articulated in the future tense.

the crowds. While the crowd seems like a faceless mass, the text implies that it's made up of all those we've heard about suffering from illness, disease and social rejection in Matthew 5:23-24.

BLESSED: in Greek – μακάριος; pronounced [**MAKARIOS**]: most often translated at “blessed,” “fortunate,” or “happy.” In the Ancient World could also mean “wealthy,” seeming to be tied to a notion of blessing related to material well-being, given by the gods. Here then Jesus seems to be saying something radically divergent from the established social-religious notion of blessing as possessing lots or good things. It's also implies a dynamic call to action and engagement extended to those who don't usually see themselves as actors worthy, capable and needed to participate in the transformation and redemption of the world. It could thus also be translated as “congratulations”; “Let's roll!”; “Get up! Get going!” “Let's do this thing!”; or the Spanish expression “Vamos!”

the pure in heart:: καθαρός (katharos): clean, pure, unstained, either literally or ceremonially (as in the ancient Jewish rituals of purification and sacrifice) or spiritually. ; guiltless, innocent, upright. It's the state of metal after being refined by fire; and the fruit-bearing state of a vine or tree that has been pruned.

καρδία (kardia): lit: the heart; mind, character, inner self, will, intention, center It's the center of the circulation of our blood: the seat of life. For us modern Americans it's most associated with what we mean when we talk about someone's soul as the center of their being.

Possibly a more appropriate or resonant translation for us to day for the expression is less about purity and cleanliness and more focused on notions of authenticity, sincere faith, genuine integrity; practicing what is preached, doing what one says or believes.

see God:: Throughout the Bible humans are unable to see God. of their salvation. The word to see (greek) and (Hebrew) is literal and metaphorical a perception, vision, knowledge, an experience that makes one woke, a relationship. It's given only to those of sincere faith like Moses in Exodus 33; and the Psalmist Poet in Psalm 11.

¹⁸ Moses said, “Show me your glory, I pray.” ¹⁹ And God said, “I will make all my goodness pass before you, and will proclaim before you the name, “The Lord’; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. ²⁰ But,” he said, “*you cannot see my face; for no one shall see me and live.*” Exodus 33:18-20

“For the Lord is righteous; he loves righteous deeds;
the upright shall behold God's face.” Psalm 11:7

¹ Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, ² they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with **defiled** hands, that is, without washing them. ³ (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; ⁴ and they do not eat anything from the market unless they **wash** it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the **washing** of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) ⁵ So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, “Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?” ⁶ He said to them, “Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,

*‘This people honors me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me;
⁷ in vain do they worship me,
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’*

⁸ You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.”

⁹ Then he said to them, “You have a fine way of rejecting the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition! ¹⁰ For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever speaks evil of father or mother must surely die.’ ¹¹ But you say that if anyone tells father or mother, ‘Whatever support you might have had from me is **CORBAN**’ (that is, an offering to God)— ¹² then you no longer permit doing anything for a father or mother, ¹³ thus making void the word of God through your tradition that you have handed on. And you do many things like this.”

¹⁴ Then he called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand: ¹⁵ there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.”

¹⁷ When he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about the parable. ¹⁸ He said to them, “Then do you also fail to understand? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, ¹⁹ since it enters, not the heart but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) ²⁰ And he said, “It is what comes out of a person that defiles. ²¹ For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, ²² adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. ²³ All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.”

QUESTIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF EXAMEN & CONTEMPLATION

- **What grabs your attention in this reading?**
- **How do you need to be “purified of heart” in order to have your vision awakened and centered in Christ?**
- **The word Jesus uses in Mark 7 to talk of washing is baptism. How do you need to renew your baptism?**

Psalm 24 is underneath Matthew 5:8:

¹ The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it; ² for the LORD has founded it on the seas, and established it on the rivers.

³ **Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord?**

And who shall stand in his holy place?

⁴ **Those who have clean hands and pure hearts, who do not lift up their souls to what is false, and do not swear deceitfully.**

⁵ **They will receive blessing from the Lord, and vindication from the God of their salvation.**

⁶ **Such is the company of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.** *Selah*

⁷ Lift up your heads, O gates!

and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

⁸ Who is the King of glory?

The Lord, strong and mighty,
the Lord, mighty in battle.

⁹ Lift up your heads, O gates!

and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
that the King of glory may come in.

¹⁰ Who is this King of glory?

The Lord of hosts,

Adonai YHWH is the King of glory. *Selah*

Defiled :: meaning to make unclean, pollute, desecrate, which literally means to treat that which is holy and special as common or ordinary.

Wash:: βαπτίζονται (baptismo)
from which we get baptism.

CORBAN:: Κορβάν (Korban); properly, a gift (offering) dedicated to God, thus unable to be used for anything else besides as an offering to the Temple. Here it’s misused by the Jews as a way to evade their rightful duty to God to care for aged parents in “Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.” (Exodus 20:12)