



The Bathurst Anglican

The Newsletter of All Saints Cathedral Bathurst

*With St Barnabas South Bathurst—St Peters Rockley— St Stephens Fitzgeralds Valley
Holy Spirit Turondale—St Pauls Yetholme*

Sunday 29th January 2023— Epiphany 4

A Framework for Christian Living



Today's reading is the beginning of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, which is found in Matthew's Gospel. The form of the Beatitudes found here is not unique to Jesus. Beatitudes are found in the Old Testament, in the psalms, and in wisdom literature, for example. They are a way to teach about who will find favor with God.

We quickly note in this reading that the people whom Jesus calls "blessed" and "happy" are not people we think of as blessed or happy . . . the poor in spirit, the meek, the persecuted. This Gospel is one of reversals. Jesus' blueprint for happiness reflects little of what the world might call happiness.

"Blessed" is sometimes translated as happy, fortunate, or favored. In other words, Jesus is saying that divine favor is upon those who are poor, those who mourn, those who are persecuted. This news might have been welcome—and surprising—to the crowds who heard Jesus that day.

The Beatitudes can be understood as a framework for Christian living. Our vocation as Christians is not to be first in this world, but rather to be first in the eyes of God. By referring to the good things that the faithful will experience, Matthew reminds us that those who act in the manner described in the Beatitudes will find their reward with God.

Psalm 15

O Lord, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill?

Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, and speak the truth from their heart; who do not slander with their tongue,

Who has done no evil to their friends, nor take up a reproach against their neighbours;

In whose eyes the wicked are despised, but who honour those who fear the Lord;

Who stand by their oath even to their hurt; who do not lend money at interest, and do not take a bribe against the innocent.

Those who do these things shall never be moved.

We worship on the traditional lands of the Wiradjuri people and we honour and pay our respects to elders past and present.

A READING FROM THE PROPHET MICAH 6:1-8

Hear what the Lord says:

Rise, plead your case before the mountains,
and let the hills hear your voice.

Hear, you mountains, the controversy of the Lord,
and you enduring foundations of the earth;
for the Lord has a controversy with his people,
and he will contend with Israel.

'O my people, what have I done to you?

In what have I wearied you? Answer me!

For I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
and redeemed you from the house of slavery;
and I sent before you Moses,

Aaron, and Miriam.

O my people, remember now what King Balak of
Moab devised,

what Balaam son of Beor answered him,
and what happened from Shittim to Gilgal,
that you may know the saving acts of the Lord.'

'With what shall I come before the Lord,
and bow myself before God on high?

Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings,
with calves a year old?

Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams,
with tens of thousands of rivers of oil?

Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?'

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

For the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

A READING FROM THE FIRST LETTER OF PAUL TO THE CORINTHIANS 1:18-31

For the message about the cross is foolishness to
those who are perishing, but to us who are being
saved it is the power of God. For it is written,

'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.'

Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe?
Where is the debater of this age? Has not God
made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in
the wisdom of God, the world did not know God
through wisdom, God decided, through the
foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who
believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire
wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a
stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to
Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews
and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the
wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than
human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger
than human strength.

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters:
not many of you were wise by human
standards, not many were powerful, not many
were of noble birth. But God chose what is
foolish in the world to shame the wise; God
chose what is weak in the world to shame the
strong; God chose what is low and despised in
the world, things that are not, to reduce to
nothing things that are, so that no one might
boast in the presence of God. He is the source
of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us
wisdom from God, and righteousness and
sanctification and redemption, in order that, as
it is written, 'Let the one who boasts, boast in
the Lord.'

For the Word of the Lord
Thanks be to God

A READING FROM THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 2.1-12

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the
mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples
came to him. Then he began to speak, and
taught them, saying:

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

'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be
comforted.

'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the
earth.

'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for
righteousness, for they will be filled.

'Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive
mercy.

'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see
God.

'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be
called children of God.

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

'Blessed are you when people revile you and
persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against
you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad,
for your reward is great in heaven, for in the
same way they persecuted the prophets who
were before you.

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ

