



Grain

“Blessings to those who are dislocated for the cause of justice; their new home is the province of the universe.”
—Neal Douglas Klotz (translation of Mt. 5:10 using Aramaic)

Field

1 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 Then he 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. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:1-10

Thoughts

When teaching confirmation, sometimes I'd ask a class to use markers, pencils and crayons to draw a picture of God. Maybe that would be a good exercise for adults as well. What kind of picture do you have of God? Someone/something far away or close? The pre-Reformation Martin Luther may have drawn a picture of an angry, distant God obsessed with our climbing a ladder to perfection. Later, he envisioned a God of grace, revealed in a scenery of imperfect people who had room for the holy.

Jesus taught the disciples about a scenery of blessedness. He pointed to the crowd of people hungry for meaning, and some for food. Do not discard them. They have substance, and hearts open to the holy. And don't judge yourselves for your own brokenness; that is where you often make room for grace. This wasn't just something nice Jesus said. His words revealed a reality that the disciples could recognize with a new vision.

Interpretations such as Klotz' using Aramaic can assist us in taking in the ancient scenery of the Beatitudes in renewed ways: ***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness...*** *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for physical justice—righteousness; they shall be surrounded by what is needed to sustain their bodies. Aligned with the One are those who wait up at night, weakened and dried out inside by the unnatural state of the world; they shall receive satisfaction.*

Blessed are the peacemakers... *Healed are those who bear the fruit of sympathy and safety for all; they shall hasten the coming of God's new creation.*

Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness... *Blessings to those who are dislocated for the cause of justice; their new home is the province of the universe.*

We can add more interpretations: Blessed are those at the border separated from their families. Blessed are the children crying out for a safe planet to live on. Blessed are those weary from the news, searching for ways to be part of change. What else? How is the ancient scenery of the Beatitudes new for you today? Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy Crane