



### **Grain**

The first step toward community is recognizing our common humanity. Instead of seeing strangers in the dark, we recognize fellow climbers in the light.” –Steven Charleston  
Submitted by Vernita Kennen, Roseville, MN

### **Field**

5When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2Then 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. 11“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5:1-12

### **Thoughts**

“Are the Beatitudes still relevant?” That was a question that popped up when I was searching for an article online. It caused me to let out a sight laugh. Such an odd question. I recalled how only a few years earlier some pastors were accused of selecting the Beatitudes to read, on a Sunday the lesson was assigned, to intentionally criticize a certain political leader. Within my lifetime, the power of the Beatitudes created an outward stir, not in the interpretation of them, but by their being stated out loud within a frenzied period in our history. How timeless the Sermon of the Mount, breaking through our egos and calling us to return to notice who we and our neighbors really are in the face of God.

Some say Jesus’ sermon was his Manifesto for the Christian life, which will always disrupt ideologies such as Christian nationalism rooted in domination. Preaching the Beatitudes, Jesus pointed us to a scenery of salvation where we pause from our own incessant grabbing for more, be it more money, notoriety, or focus on other obsessions.

The first Beatitude in Luke asks us to engage with those who are experiencing poverty, “Blessed are the poor.” The first one in St. Matthew, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” draws us in to noticing our neighbor’s poverty and our own fallibility and need for God. Recognize our shared humanity.

On All Saints Sunday, we may honor saints and martyrs and/or remember those close to us who have died. We ask who has made an impact on our spiritual lives. Who reflected the beatitudes in their love and vulnerability, giving us permission to love?

How relevant the Beatitudes are in this time of wars and inhumanity. Let us read and reread the words of Jesus, calling us back into love. Happy Monday!

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy