



**Please read St. Matthew 5:1-12 “The Beatitudes”**

November 8, 2022 brings a mid-term election to our country. Certainly it is an important election, much will be decided, which is always true of any election. We listen, learn and decide who will accomplish those things so important to us as a nation.

Jesus taught the commandments of God just as Moses gave the commandments that came from God. Those who followed Jesus in His ministry were looking for something. They came from all over having many expectations. Jesus turned those expectations toward something they did not expect.

The Beatitudes are not simply about being “happy.” Happiness or the good life we expect from political promises often fail. Being “Blessed” is something beyond what we might expect.

“The poor in spirit” are not necessarily pleased with the state of affairs at the moment. “Blessedness” is reflected in a person's life by grace, being assured of something beyond the present moment. “Blessedness” or being blessed by God is the knowledge of God's abundant love from His never ending mercy. Being blessed looks to the future as the sacred writer says in **Hebrews 11:1 “Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for the conviction of things not seen.”**

The Beatitudes do not directly describe Jesus, but are a description of who Jesus' disciples are through His mercy. The first part refers to an emptiness of our own, that left to our own, we are truly poor in spirit given to mourning and hungering for something else outside of us. But in Christ, all these things are given and we are truly blessed. The blessings God offers in Christ transform us to a place beyond our expectations as we mourn sin and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

We might look at an election year and world events, see a culture crumbling around us, see laws enacted and abolished that change culture into something unrecognizable and then lose hope. We see little hope for even our favorite candidates to accomplish anything good when confronted by the evil of this world. We wonder how will life go on this way and even more, we worry about the future of the next generations.

The Beatitudes, however, show us who we are. When God joins us to Him in water and the Word of Baptism; He has given us faith by Grace; nourishes us in the Word and the forgiveness of sins; gives Jesus to us in The Sacrament of The Altar, that union with Christ for us is manifested in our lives. The entire list Jesus gives here in Matthew is a list of things we are not until joined to Christ. All of these things belong to us through Christ our Savior. We hear the Word, we receive the Sacrament and we are strengthened in this life. We are called to participate in government, to vote, to be a part of the community while not conforming to the evil of this world; we serve our neighbor and thus serve the Lord.

The Words of Jesus transform us into His disciples and members of His Church on earth. We who are devoid of any hope until we are made God's own through Jesus are “happy” in the Lord and blessed beyond our greatest expectations. Everything we have comes from God's hand of grace alone, through Christ our Savior. Every spiritual and physical blessing is from God's mercy for us because of the merits of Christ who sacrifices for us.

In and through Christ, we inherit the Kingdom of heaven and are given comfort as we hunger for God's continued Word which nourishes us into salvation. None of these things belong to us by our own merit, nor can they be earned. Instead, God's mercy is given through Christ, and in Him, we receive grace and shall see God in Heaven.

**“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven,...”** our Savior says to us. Our source of joy does not come from earthly status or anything else, but from Jesus our salvation. Whatever happens from this election or in the future or any other event or evil that befalls this world; our salvation is accomplished and the God who sent His Son Jesus to be our Savior will never leave us nor forsake us because nothing will separate us from the love of God that He has for us in Christ our Savior (**Romans 8:38-39**). The hymn writer teaches that our hope is found in Christ alone who has overcome all things for us.

**Trust not in rulers; they are but mortal;  
Earthborn they are and soon decay.  
Vain are their counsels at life's last portal,  
When the dark grave engulfs its prey.  
Since mortals can no help afford,  
Place all your trust in Christ, our Lord.  
Alleluia, Alleluia!**

**LSB 797 “Praise The Almighty” stanza 2**