



## Peters Green News Sheet Issue No: 34

Sunday 1st November 2020

### The Christian's Core Curriculum-Matthew 5:1-12

The beatitudes are the Christian's core curriculum. Jesus taught them to his disciples, all his disciples and to us, not just the group of 12 or so who had been following him. The teaching Christ gives, goes to the heart of who we were meant to be in the world. So, what are the core curriculum points? Let's look at them together again.

The Poor in Spirit are those who are full of humility rather than arrogance. Jesus says that those who live humbly, relying upon God are already living in the kingdom. Christians look to God for direction and fulfilment rather than to the values of the world around us.

Those who mourn concerns the sort of grief that dominates life, that crushing grief we experience at the loss of someone we are close to. Jesus also is likely speaking about those who have grief in their hearts for the poor and dispossessed of the earth. God wants us to share the grief and pain of the world around us and Jesus promises that there will be comfort for those who grieve.

The meek. Meekness is seen as weakness. But this isn't what Jesus means by meek. Jesus means the "silent strength" that He displayed when he would not defend himself before Pilate. It is the strength he showed when he asked for forgiveness for his executioners and those who reviled him. In Jesus' teaching, meekness is the silent strength that comes from trusting in the ultimate victory of God over evil.

Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness means to long for -- even ache and agonize to see things be right. Things are right when they are as God would have them be. And indeed those who long for this will see it come to pass. When? We don't know but from Genesis to Revelation, God-breathed scripture promises that the right will prevail and the wrong will be defeated. But we too are called to work with God and do whatever lies within our power to see that the right prevails, to bring whatever healing we can, to right a wrong if we can.

The merciful. Those who reach out to hurt and suffering will receive compassion and mercy from God. It is the sense of being moved to pity and compassion by pain or suffering and includes recognizing that this could happen to me.

The pure in heart. The pure in heart are those who give themselves as fully as they can to the Jesus commandment." You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." [Mark 12:30] This love is to dominate every other love in our lives. Everything and everyone else is a close second, plays second fiddle to love for Jesus in the

committed Christians.

The peacemakers We are called to be children of God, followers of Jesus Christ, and so to bring peace to the world around us. The peace and peace-making Jesus speaks of is much more than the simple absence of warfare or conflict. Peace here concerns wellbeing, prosperity, reconciliation, oneness with self and with God and wholeness of heart.

There is a cost Jesus' sermon reminds there is a price to pay when we commit to following him. If you always pursue honesty, integrity and justice, you will encounter first- the cold shoulder, then the caustic remarks and finally persecution. And Jesus says "How blessed you are when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account!" And we are so often called out of our comfort zone, to go where He sends.

Most of us do not experience the kind of persecution Jesus' original followers did as they lived out this radical, risky core curriculum. Freedom of religion is enshrined in the laws of this land. Our freedom to express our Christian faith was bought by the persecution, sacrifice and oppression of our forebears; that great cloud of witnesses, of martyrs; all the saints after whom our places of worship are so often named. At this time of the year we remember all the saints and all the souls who rest with Jesus until the end of time. Jesus, who will then come again as our judge. And it is the sprinkled blood of Jesus that seals a new reconciling covenant of blessing with God. Our participation in that covenant is by worship. For to worship is to encounter God, to hear God's voice, to be transformed, to be the people we were meant to be in the world; so that the Beatitudes, the Christians' core curriculum, come to fulfilment in us. Amen.

Rev'd Linda Williams

Priest-in-charge, St Peter & St Paul, Kimpton with St Lawrence, Ayot St Lawrence

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us  
Through this world's tempestuous sea;  
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us  
You our only help and plea;  
Here possessing every blessing  
If our God our Father be.

Saviour, by your grace restore us -  
All our weaknesses are plain;  
You have lived on earth before us,  
You have felt our grief and pain:  
Tempted, taunted, yet undaunted,  
From the depths You rose again.

Spirit of our God, descending,  
Fill our hearts with holy peace;  
Love with every passion blending,  
Pleasure that can never cease:  
Thus provided, pardoned, guided,  
Ever shall our joys increase.

