

livingtheword

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Hearing and Living the Sunday Readings

Reading I

[Jer 17:5-8](#)

Thus says the LORD:

Cursed is the one who trusts in human beings,
who seeks his strength in flesh,
whose heart turns away from the LORD.

He is like a barren bush in the desert
that enjoys no change of season,
but stands in a lava waste,
a salt and empty earth.

Blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD,
whose hope is the LORD.

He is like a tree planted beside the waters
that stretches out its roots to the stream:
it fears not the heat when it comes;
its leaves stay green;
in the year of drought it shows no distress,
but still bears fruit.

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6](#)

(40:5a) **Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.**

Blessed the man who follows not
the counsel of the wicked,
nor walks in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the company of the insolent,
but delights in the law of the LORD
and meditates on his law day and night.

Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

He is like a tree
planted near running water,
that yields its fruit in due season,
and whose leaves never fade.

Whatever he does, prospers.

Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

Not so the wicked, not so;
they are like chaff which the wind drives away.
For the LORD watches over the way of the

just,

but the way of the wicked vanishes.

Blessed are they who hope in the Lord.

reading II

[1 Cor 15:12, 16-20](#)

Brothers and sisters:

If Christ is preached as raised from the dead,
how can some among you say there is no
resurrection of the dead?

If the dead are not raised, neither has Christ
been raised, and if Christ has not been raised,
your faith is vain; you are still in your sins.

Then those who have fallen asleep in Christ
have perished. If for this life only we have
hoped in Christ, we are the most pitiable
people of all.

But now Christ has been raised from the dead,
the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

Gospel

[Lk 6:17, 20-26](#)

Jesus came down with the twelve
and stood on a stretch of level ground with a
great crowd of his disciples and a large
number of the people from all Judea and
Jerusalem and the coastal region of Tyre and
Sidon. And raising his eyes toward his
disciples he said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for the kingdom of God is yours.

Blessed are you who are now hungry,
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who are now weeping,
for you will laugh.

Blessed are you when people hate you,
and when they exclude and insult you,
and denounce your name as evil
on account of the Son of Man.
Rejoice and leap for joy on that day!
Behold, your reward will be great in
heaven.
For their ancestors treated the prophets in
the same way.

But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

Woe to you who are filled now,
for you will be hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will grieve and weep.

Woe to you when all speak well of you,
for their ancestors treated the false
prophets in this way.”

Reflection Questions

- Reading the passages slowly and reflectively, what word, phrase or idea strikes you in the readings? (circle or underline them)
- What do you think God is trying to say to you personally through these words?
- Jeremiah shares a blessing and curse prophecy which is frequent in the Old Testament. It is designed to ‘wake us up’, to help us honestly uncover who we ‘trust’ and give our lives over to (human beings or the LORD). Allow your imagination to ponder the two images - a barren bush in the dry salty desert earth versus a tree always green beside a stream. What comes to mind when you place yourself inside the ‘image’. What do you most fear ‘losing’ in life?
- St Paul continues to speak to some in the community at Corinth who choose not to believe in the resurrection. They cannot believe that our ‘bodies’ could be ‘glorified’ in heaven. Jesus’ resurrection helps us state in our creed our belief in the resurrection of our bodies. Our bodies are truly ‘temples of God’ with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit given to us at our baptism. Consider how you are respecting and honoring your ‘body’ with food, drink, clothing..... Is there anything you are doing with your body that Jesus wouldn’t do?
- Jesus has just spent the night in prayer, chosen ‘the twelve’ (his team!) and he sits them down. The stage is set for his most important teaching. Nowhere in Luke does the Gospel challenge us so severely. What are my ultimate pursuits? What world order am I living for? What measurement system of ‘success’ am I committed to? Am I on the side of the ‘poor’ and ‘hungry’ or the ‘rich’ and the ‘full’? What does your lifestyle and actions show? Are you ‘good news to the poor’? (note Luke means primarily economically poor not the tame version of ‘poor in spirit’ of Matthew)
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- The Beatitudes bring together a clashing of two ideas and worldviews. It causes a conflict within us. All things being equal, to have riches and to be ‘full’ is a ‘good’. But the reality of our world is inequality. The status quo is unacceptable for God and Jesus’ disciples. Luke’s version of the Beatitudes does not let Christians off the hook. There will be a radical reversal of fortune in God’s judgement. Woe to you who are rich, filled, laugh now. What is your reaction?
- How will you be ‘livingtheword’ this week?