

We are Blessed

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany) is Luke 6:17-26. Luke begins the larger section (6:17–49) with Jesus standing on a level place. This could be a level place in the hill country, even on the side of the mountain on which Jesus prayed, the same mountain referred to in Matthew's Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7). Jesus' healing and teaching take place in this locale after he has come down from the mountain where he prayed and selected the Twelve.

Luke's Sermon on the Plain, although is much shorter than the one in Matthew, they both begin with the Beatitudes and end with the lesson of the builders

Jesus blesses the crowds and describes their estates in this life and the life to come. Even amid sorrows, God's blessings prevail.

When one enters the Christian community by Baptism, these beatitudes describe the character of those who belong to this community. Luke's hearers then and now should see beyond themselves to the One who was poor for them, who hungered in the wilderness for them, who wept for them as he entered Jerusalem, who received hate, insults, and exclusion for them, who was cast out and crucified outside of Jerusalem as evil – the Son of Man.

In the woes Jesus condemns those who live for today, neglecting the ways of God and the care of His people. When pride and self-interest allure you, turn to the Lord in repentance. Daily He provides for all your needs and forgives you by grace.

Prayer: Dear Jesus, thank you for making all our blessings possible through your life death and resurrection. Thank for calling me into your kingdom through Baptism. Help me to always stay close to you in the Word and Sacrament and helping me to be a blessing to those around me. Amen