

The People Who Are Blessed

Psalm 1:1-6 Blessing

1 Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, 2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night.

3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. 4 Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

6 For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.

Matthew 5:3-12 (The Beatitudes) Fullness of Blessing

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 be shown 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 because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Introduction

A good friend of mine, David Steveline, suggested this parallel between Psalm 1 and the Beatitudes Matthew 5:1-11. Both passages of Scripture are an invitation. Both are meant to wet our appetites, to draw us in, to create in us what they describe.

Psalm 1 is an invitation to pray the psalms. It is an invitation to enter into the worship of the Lord, the God of Abraham, of Sinai, and of the Messiah. It beckons us from the way of folly and calls us to embrace, meditate on, and love the word of God. The Beatitudes are an invitation into the Kingdom of God now brought by the Messiah and anticipated by the psalms. It beckons us to embrace God's rule as brought by Jesus, to enter into God's realm, to take our place in the new and blessed order that Jesus came to establish. The foundation of blessing in Psalm 1 leads to the fulfillment of blessing in the Kingdom of God.

Discussion Questions

1. How many contrasts do you see in Psalm 1? Note especially the contrasting descriptions of the blessed person in verses 1-2 and the contrast between the blessed person and the wicked in verses 3-5.
2. In your own words how does Psalm 1:1-2 describe the blessed person? What would it look like for us to be those who are blessed?
3. What insight do Psalm 1:3-5 give us into the lives of the righteous and the wicked?
4. What is the poverty of spirit necessary for those who will inherit the Kingdom of God? See Matthew 18:1-3, 19:13-14
5. According to the second Beatitude, about what should we "mourn"? See Psalm 51 and Romans 1:18-32.
6. How can the "meek" inherit the earth. Compare Psalm 37:1-11, Ephesians 4:1-6
7. What does it mean to "hunger and thirst for righteousness"? Read Psalm 42:1-5 and Psalm 63:1-11.
8. How can we be "pure in heart"? See Deuteronomy 6:4-6; Mark 8:34-38; and Matthew 10:17-22.
9. What does it mean to be a Biblical "peacemaker"? Have a look at Matthew 10:32-39; John 14:27; 16:33; Romans 12:14-21.
10. How can persecution for Christ's sake be a blessing? You might want to look at Mark 8:31-38; Philippians 1:20-30; and 2 Corinthians 3:7-18.
11. What insights can we receive by comparing Psalm 1:6 and Matthew 5:11-12?
12. In light of our discussion, what does it mean to "inherit the Kingdom of God"?