

Discipleship in Today's World: The Way to True Blessing

A few years ago the WWJD wristbands (What would Jesus do?) were very popular. They remind us that disciples of Jesus Christ are called to live Jesus' life on a daily basis in order to impact society today. In the opening section of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5: 1-12) Jesus outlines the values which form the basis of this lifestyle. The eight beatitudes each bring a promise of the blessing of kingdom life. As 'be-attitudes' they emphasize being as opposed to doing as the foundation of a Christian countercultural lifestyle for today.

What do they look like in practice?

Letting go of my need to be somebody: 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

Letting go of my need to feel good: 'Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted.'

Letting go of my need to be right: 'Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth'.

Letting go of my demand to have it all now: 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.'

Letting go of my need for revenge: 'Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.'

Letting go of my need to look good: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.'

Letting go of my need to win: 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.'

Letting go of my need to be liked: 'Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'

Of course, as G K Chesterton said 'this is 'impossible stuff' unless we allow the Holy Spirit to empower to live out these values on a daily basis. So it's over to you now!

The Rev Paul Hardingham continues his series on discipleship

A Sioux prayer

You, O God, are the Lord of the mountains and valleys. You are my mother and my father. You have given rain to make the corn grow, and sunshine to ripen it. Now in your strength the harvest begins.

I offer you the first morsels of the harvest. I know it is almost nothing compared with the abundance of the crop. But since you have provided the harvest, my gift to you is only a sing of what you have given to me.

You alone know how many suns and moons it will take to finish reaping. You alone know how heavy the crop will be. If I work too hard and too fast I forget about you, who gave me the harvest. So I will work steadily and slowly, remembering that each ear of corn is a priceless gift from you.