



still waters

home church studies

Psalm 15

[Worship]

1 O LORD, who may abide in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy hill? 2 Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, and speak the truth from their heart; 3 who do not slander with their tongue, and do no evil to their friends, nor take up a reproach against their neighbors; 4 in whose eyes the wicked are despised, but who honor those who fear the LORD; who stand by their oath even to their hurt; 5 who do not lend money at interest, and do not take a bribe against the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be moved.

Consider:

[Words]

The appearance of Jesus has demanding ethical implications. Christians are to exhibit the rule of Christ in their lives by conduct that is congruent with God's will and character. Psalm 15 is a recital of behavioral norms expected of those who come to worship YHWH: Act like good neighbors! Depart from the conventional ways of power and control. The poetry in Micah famously commends Israel to justice, mercy, and humility (verse 8). The specifics of the psalm and the large summons of the prophetic oracle of Micah both concern neighborliness. They resist actions that seek power or control at the expense of the neighbor. They remind us both of how radical the summons of faith is, and how ignoble the power practices of common life have become among us.

The "beatitudes" of Jesus in Matthew are fully congruent with these norms of covenant. Israel knows that covenantal obedience results in covenantal blessings. Jesus offers an inventory of

behaviors that will result in blessings of well being. The sum of them attests to faithfulness that matches the faithfulness of God, a way of life that resists self-serving initiatives. Paul radicalizes such conduct by appealing to the wisdom and strength of the cross. The people around Jesus shun worldly strength and worldly wisdom and live out the life that Jesus modeled and to which he summoned his followers. Clearly "life in Christ" is a radically different life in the world. – Walter Bruggemann

[Scripture]

Matthew 5.1-12

1 When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: 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 receive 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 for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Reread

Micah 6.1-8 & 1 Corinthians 1.18-31

Question: Micah 6 is a courtroom drama - and only steadfast love, not elaborate offerings and rituals, are going to get them out of court. The meek are getting ready to inherit the Earth. "And what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8).