

peace be with you

weekly devotional

from the desk of Rev. Marta Wheeler
SAINT PAUL BENSON

Filling in the Gaps

Back then Miss Knox lived
on the corner
in the red brick house
built during the Civil War
in the period General Dodge
famously lived a mile or so away.

Two doors down lived five
children in the
ordinary white
house with this ancient Elm rising
out back, pine 2x2's nailed to
the trunk leading to a rough tree house.

There must have been a
short in the wiring
of that old white house.
If you didn't hold the plug
of the Christmas lights just right a
minor shock would startle, cause
you to wince and jump back just a little.

Continued

January 25, 2023

Matthew 5:1-10 ***The Beatitudes***

Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.

Jesus said:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Filling in the Gaps

Continued

Even now the sting
of that shock is
felt when there's a short
in this person's mind that causes
a lapse in memory, forgetting
that they are trustworthy as anyone else.

The synaptic gap
can be mended
for a while with happy
thoughts, familiar songs,
a warm embrace, smile, and glance that
says, "I see you, dear one. I see you."

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Imagine climbing the hillside and gathering around Jesus as he sits down to teach what he desires for his followers. He asks that they be humble, meek, and have a passion for justice. Then he blesses those who take part in acts of piety such as prayer, singing, and reading of scripture. He also blesses those who take part in acts of mercy while taking care and offering comfort to others in countless ways. Jesus offers a blessing to us in the entirety of life.

In *The Message*, Eugene Peterson paraphrases verses 3 and 4 of the Beatitudes in this way:

*"You're blessed when you're at the end of your rope.
With less of you there is more of God and his rule.*

*"You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you.
Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you."*

For several reasons this week I hear verse 4 these ways:

*You're blessed when memories of what is most dear to you feel lost.
Only then can you be fully embraced by the One most dear to you.
Blessed are the forgetful, for they and their caregivers shall receive mercy.*

Memories are so important to us and when they are lost it can be very difficult for both the forgetful one and their loved ones. The constant clatter around us does not seem to help! God is merciful and continues to offer blessings throughout life. Whether or not we can remember the names of every person, place, and thing, we are always beloved children of God. There is no shame or blame, only acceptance and love.

I offer you a breath prayer. Let's settle in and relax.

On the inhale pray: *I am*
On the exhale pray: *worthy*

We pray blessings of God's compassion upon you and your loved ones.

Marta

Rev. Marta Wheeler