



# THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Formation in the Christian Contemplative Life

## 62: The Beatitudes: Healing the Emotional Programs, Part 1 (cont.)



Photo by Ron Barnett

*Come, O you blessed of my Father!*

- Matthew 25:34

"The beatitudes are the quintessence of the teaching of Jesus. They represent his comprehensive approach to happiness. They are the outpouring of the Spirit in...grace... The beatitudes are wisdom sayings that express the disposition appropriate to each level of consciousness... If one has special gifts, these are exercised in dependence on God. One is completely free of the results and does not draw one's identity from any...role, but is simply, like God, the servant of creation.

"...Identity is rooted in Christ and the unique identity he wants them to have... They not only enter into the peace of Christ but also become sources of the divine life and peace for others. The graced energy received from God, like an ever-flowing stream, is shared with those with whom they live and far beyond. Through them, God is pouring the divine light, life and love into the human family."

-Thomas Keating, *Invitation to Love*

## **A Meditation**

"In our meditations on the beatitudes it is quite crucial that we keep on bringing them back to ourselves, reminding ourselves that 'this means me.' It is not 'they' who are poor, it is I myself. And what is being said is not, 'those poor, poor people, what can we do about it?' but 'you blessed poor people, blessed are you.'

"Whatever else they may be, then, the beatitudes are a call to us to see ourselves, to live with ourselves, in a way that probably does not come easily to most of us, and to forgo an enterprise that is generally dear to us, the enterprise of getting ourselves into a position where we can see ourselves in a 'good' light. Christian righteousness or rightness with God does not *feel* like righteousness, and we should not devote our energy to bringing ourselves into a position that feels right. It is when we feel ourselves to be poor, humiliated, desperate and all the rest of it that we qualify for the label 'blessed.'

"...And so our hope comes to be focused on God's rule rather than our own, and it comes also to expand, reaching far beyond the wildest dreams of earthly planners, because it hones in on that fullness of blessing which God has in store for those who love him, which 'eye has not seen and ear has not heard and it has not entered the heart of man to conceive it' (1 Cor. 2: 9)."

- Simon Tugwell, *The Beatitudes: Soundings in Christian Traditions*

## **To Practice**

- Fr. Thomas refers to the beatitudes as affirmations. Perhaps you will want to reflect and then select one as an affirmation for the time ahead:

*Blessed am I, poor in spirit,  
for mine is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed am I who mourn,  
for I will be comforted.*

*Blessed am I, the meek,  
for I will inherit the land.*

*Blessed are I who hunger and thirst for righteousness,*

*for I will be satisfied.*

*Blessed am I, the merciful,  
for I will be shown mercy.*

*Blessed am I, the clean of heart,  
for I will see God.*

*Blessed am I, the peacemakers,  
for I will be called child of God.*

*Blessed am I who is persecuted for the sake of righteousness,  
for mine is the kingdom of heaven.*  
- cf Matthew 5:3-10

*Amen.*

### **Resources for Further Study:**

You may wish to read Chapter 18 in *Invitation to Love* (20<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition, Chapter 17 in older editions).

### **Notes and Reflections:**