



LIGHT FROM THE LECTIONARY

LEADER PAGES

Epiphany6C

February 15, 2004

From BIBLE STUDIES BY E-MAIL

RCL Readings:

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Ps 1

1 Cor 15:12-20

Luke 6:17-26

KEY THEMES

CHOICES. This is the main theme in the readings today. We have choices to make and those choices make us in many ways. In Jeremiah, the choice is between trusting in ourselves/others and trusting in God. In the Psalm we have a choice of living according to God's will or following the crowd. The epistle reading deals with a choice of what to believe about the resurrection and the difference that choice makes for us in the here and now. The Gospel is Luke's version of the beatitudes - how we should choose to look at our lives and situations.

RESURRECTION is the key theme in the epistle reading from 1 Cor 15. Paul in this whole chapter is making the point of what the resurrection means for us as Christians. It is at the very heart of our faith. Without it, nothing Paul has preached or we believe and teach can be relied upon anymore. In fact, without it we are still living in our sins.

BEATITUDES. Certainly it would be appropriate for the teacher to deal with them as a whole, especially Luke's version of them compared to those in Matthew, or to build a sermon/lesson around one of them. My homily for today deals with just one of them after having reflected on it - that of "blessed are those who mourn..."

Discussion Questions

A. Jeremiah 17:5-10. DO you like plants? Do you like tending a garden and having a nice yard? What's the toughest plant you know of to keep alive and well?

B. To what tree would you compare your life and why?

C. Read vss 1-4. On what or whom had the people been relying?

D. When you think of most people today, on what or whom do they really rely and depend?

E. What's wrong in trusting in others?

F. When have you experienced that you cannot place your ultimate trust in human beings? Or how have you let others down?

G. What times of spiritual drought have you experienced?

H. How deep are your spiritual roots right now?

I. Are you feeling right now more like a scrub in the desert or a tree planted by the waters?

J. Do you agree that the "heart is deceitful above all things"?

K. Ps 1. Suppose you were from another planet. You come to visit earth and to observe human beings. Would you use the word "wise" to describe most of us?

L. What is your favorite psalm and why?

M. Contrast the average Christian today with a person of the world.

N. How do many people today pursue happiness? Where do they look for it?

O. Reflect for a moment on when you rejected the advice of "evil men."

P. Do we sometimes "follow the example of sinners"? If so, how?

Q. Who are the happiest, most fulfilled people you know? Why?

R. Many people today believe that having all the money you want brings happiness. Do you agree or disagree? Why?

S. You've got a friend at work whose been going through some tough times. One day he asks you, "What's the secret to a happy, fulfilled life?" How would you answer that?

T. Does the average Christian enjoy and find joy in Bible study? Or perhaps we need to ask, "Does the average Christian today even read the Bible on a regular basis?"

U. How have you experienced God's protection or guidance recently?

V. 1 Cor 15:12-20. What are your feelings and beliefs about resurrection?

W. What's some question about the resurrection or after life that you have always had?

X. What false teaching were circulating among the Corinthians?

Y. Locate the 7 "ifs" in vss 12-19. What do you make of them?

Z. What are the arguments Paul uses to show that Christ is truly resurrected?

AA. If someone told you he did not believe in the resurrection, how would you answer?

BB. Why does Paul say the resurrection is so important?

CC. Luke 6:17-26. What is it about Jesus that attracts you to him?

DD. Who is in this crowd and why have they come?

EE. What are the four classes of people Jesus lifts out for blessings?

FF. What four qualities of these persons/groups ought to characterize us?

GG. What is the blessing promised each one?

HH. Who do you think Jesus is thinking about in vss 24-26?

II. Which blessing do you most need to hear right now? Which "woe"?