

God uses the weak to show his strength!

Zephaniah 2:3, 3:12-13

Psalm 146:6-10

1Corinthians 1:26-31

Matthew 5:1-12a

In the first reading Zephaniah encourages the Israelites to seek the Lord, seek humility, and act justly. Salvation is promised to a remnant, a people humble and lowly who will do no wrong and never be deceitful. In this way they will be sheltered from dangers and be able to work in peace.

The Psalmist praises the Lord, our God, who created heaven and earth and this implies his reliance on God alone. The oppressed will secure the Lord's justice, the blind will be given sight and those bowed down will be raised up while the way of the wicked will be thwarted. In some ways this Psalm reflects the Gospel theme of the beatitudes.

In the second reading Paul tells the Corinthians they are among those called even though they are not worldly wise, or influential, or even well-born. Under God's guidance the absurd and weak will shame the wise and strong. Our wisdom, justice, sanctification and redemption have life in Christ Jesus while the worldly wise and powerful will have their empty boasts eliminated.

In the Gospel Jesus notes how blessed are the poor in spirit, the sorrowing, the lowly, those seeking holiness, the merciful, the single-hearted, the peacemakers, and the persecuted. The faithful who live out the values of the Kingdom in their present lives anticipate and share the joy that eternal life with Christ will bring.

Praise the Father who created all,
The Son who blesses all,
The Holy Spirit who perfects all.

The Old Testament prophet reminds the people of how important honesty is in dealing with others and no one is to lie or be deceitful in any way. The world was created, the Psalmist notes, by God who loves the truthful person. Jesus, who is central to life in the Spirit, draws a sharp distinction in what the world considers important and in what he considers blessed. If one was not financially gifted or have a respected position in the community, it was often looked upon as punishment for sin. The beatitudes challenged those accepted beliefs of the time.

If you encounter a difficult relationship with neighbors consider these attitudes:

If they are irate, respond with calmness.
If they are arrogant, let your humility show.
If they are profane, keep them in your prayers.
If they are mistaken, keep steadfast in conviction.
If they act roughly, be gentle.
If they are hypocritical, be sincere.
If they are intolerant of others show impartiality.
If they are judgmental, exemplify understanding.
If they are rude, be kind and considerate.
If they are in need, extend a helping hand.

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