

From the Rector's Study, the Rev. Bryce Sangster  
Sunday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, All Saints & Legion for Remembrance  
Revelation 7: 9-17, Psalm 34: 1-10, 22, 1 John 3: 1-3, Matthew 5: 1-12

The beatitudes in Matthew are also in Luke in a different form. They're obviously not the same. The Lucan version reads,

<sup>20</sup> *Then he looked up at his disciples and said:*

*'Blessed are you who are poor,  
for yours is the kingdom of God.*

<sup>21</sup> *'Blessed are you who are hungry now,  
for you will be filled.*

*'Blessed are you who weep now,  
for you will laugh.*

<sup>22</sup> *'Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you<sup>al</sup> on account of the Son of Man. <sup>23</sup> Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.*

<sup>24</sup> *'But woe to you who are rich,  
for you have received your consolation.*

<sup>25</sup> *'Woe to you who are full now,  
for you will be hungry.*

*'Woe to you who are laughing now,  
for you will mourn and weep.*

<sup>26</sup> *'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.*

Some similarities and differences. The obvious difference is the number of beatitudes, and Luke has both blessed and woe, but there is a subtler difference in who Jesus is talking about. In Matthew it is they, Blessed are.... For they shall....

And in Luke blessed are you, and woe to you.

So, what does this all mean? Maybe Luke by saying you as opposed to them is thinking of the reality of life, and God in Christ is with us through all of this, and that we will feel both blessed and the woes. And for us not to get too full of ourselves and let our egos get the best of us when we feel blessed, and not to abandon hope when the woes come, because God will help us through those times as well.

And although there is some of that in Matthew, that God will be with us though the

tough times as well, there is more to Matthew. Jesus again is setting the bar high, like the parable of the Good Samaritan.

In particular: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness and Blessed are the peacemakers.

I like the translation, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice because this suggests looking beyond ourselves, to care for those in need, and those facing injustice in their lives.

This fits in with both All Saints and Remembrance Day.

All Saints: one of the definitions of a saint I came across is: someone who has their feet or their focus on two aspects or times at virtually the same time. This means that they enjoy living in the moment, the present and yet are concerned and live out striving to make the world a better place for others. It is not always easy. There are those who enjoy life but have no interest or concern for others and the world around them. And some who have an agenda issue about how to make the world a better place, but they are so focused that they come across as angry and don't seem to enjoy life in the present.

And Remembrance Day: we remember and pay our respects for those who sacrificed their lives and those who were willing to sacrifice their lives for peace and for those being oppressed. They all made a sacrifice for peace and justice the world at the time.

Then the question; does All Saints and Remembrance Day go together? I don't think any who are or were in the military would think of themselves as saints. Probably a long list of words to describe themselves would come to mind before saint if even at all. And the same for the rest of us.

But where do we fit on the spectrum of enjoying life in the present and acting out our cares for others?

In first letter of John today: *See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are.*

So today we remember and pay our respects to the children of God who sacrificed to bring peace and justice for others at that time, and the remembering is not just for today and Saturday, but the remembering is to recognize we too have a part to play in the world and as children of God.

And maybe Luke was direct in using the word; you, blessed are you and woe is you. Meaning all of us, but does Matthew in using the word they being more indirect and wanting us to feel like it is not about us, but it is possible for us to feel like we could

be part of the they he talks about?

That not only will we face the woes and blessings Luke talks about, but we too can make choices which move us closer to being like a saint, yet if not, we are still and always will be children of God.

Amen

May God, who has bound us together in the company of all, in this age and the age to come Strength and encourage us all. Amen.

And May God, who has given us, in the lives of his saints, patterns of holy living and victorious dying, strengthen our faith and devotion, and enable us to bear witness to the truth against all adversity. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. Amen.