

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Ordinary Time – Year A

1. When I got married my wife used to sew – dresses, kids clothes
  - Leftover remnants – into a storage bin
2. Now she makes quilts –
  - From these remnants, she has material for new quilts
  - From the cast-off pieces – beautiful useful creation
3. Zephaniah – from a remnant God will restore Israel
  - One of last books in OT – returning from the Babylonian exile
  - Davidic Covenant – sin – ignore call to repent thru Jeremiah – EXILE
    - Children, in truth, now meek and humble of heart are the remnant that returns
    - Castoff becomes Chosen People
4. In a sense, the same is true with the beatitudes
  - Jesus says Blessed are the poor in spirit
  - Blessed are those who mourn
  - Blessed are the meek
  - Blessed are those that hunger and thirst for righteousness
  - Blessed is the remnant, the poor, mourning, meek cast-off that remains faithful & thirst righteousness
    - *That's important* it doesn't say 'Blessed are the persecuted'
    - *It says* 'Blessed are they that are persecuted for the sake of righteousness' *Because of me*
      - It is because of Jesus we are comforted, satisfied, receive mercy, & gain the Kingdom
5. I've learned that patterns in script are important
  - When something repeats – it's important:
    - God doesn't repeat Himself for no reason **NB**
    - 1<sup>st</sup> beatitude and last beatitude both receive the same thing
      - Both receive the Kingdom of God
      - Because the Beatitudes are about the Kingdom of God
      - God's goal – since Genesis – has been the KOG on earth
    - How we live our lives – is how we grow the Kingdom of God
      - Do we hunger and thirst for righteousness?
      - Are we merciful?
      - Are we clean of heart?
      - Are we peacemakers?
      - Are we growing the Kingdom of God?
6. The prophet Zephaniah led the remnant back to Israel with message of HOPE
  - To re-establish the Kingdom in Israel
    - "I will leave a remnant in your midst, a people humble and lowly who will take refuge in the name of the Lord. The remnant of Israel"
    - Kingdom of God is being restored in Israel – by the humble, the lowly
7. Jesus teaches the crowds that same message of HOPE through the beatitudes
  - With Jesus, we **can** grow the Kingdom of God – but only with Jesus.
    - Do you want righteousness? Be righteous
    - Do you want mercy? Be merciful
    - Do you want peace? Be peacemakers
    - How do you grow the KOG? YOU NEED Jesus – it all starts and ends with Him!
      - Turn from your pride, greed, anger and jealousy
      - Live together as merciful peacemakers, thirsting for justice – because of JC.

- Live as Christian men and women - one day at a time - with JC, & grow KOG