

# Gifts of the Dark Wood

Thursday, April 12



As our exploration of the *Gifts of the Dark Wood* begins to come to a close, we look around us to acknowledge the kingdom -- the family -- that has always and is already right here with us. Sojourners in the Dark Wood do not go it alone but are blessed with the presence of others who help us see, reflect with us and discover together with us the riches of a life lived with intention. As Jesus comes into Jerusalem at the beginning of that fateful week, he is surrounded by those who will live the uncertainty, temptation and emptiness right alongside him.

**This week we focus on “The Gift of Misfits”**

## **Prayer**

Journeying Jesus, enter our lives  
and open us to the gifts residing deep within the Holy Darkness of our lives.  
Help us to be with and for each other.  
In your many names, we pray. Amen.

## Bible Readings

*Matthew 5:1-16 Common English Bible (CEB)*

5 <sup>1</sup> Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up a mountain. He sat down and his disciples came to him. <sup>2</sup> He taught them, saying:

### **Happy People**

<sup>3</sup> “Happy are people who are hopeless, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

<sup>4</sup> “Happy are people who grieve, because they will be made glad.

<sup>5</sup> “Happy are people who are humble, because they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> “Happy are people who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, because they will be fed until they are full.

<sup>7</sup> “Happy are people who show mercy, because they will receive mercy.

<sup>8</sup> “Happy are people who have pure hearts, because they will see God.

<sup>9</sup> “Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God’s children.

<sup>10</sup> “Happy are people whose lives are harassed because they are righteous, because the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

<sup>11</sup> “Happy are you when people insult you and harass you and speak all kinds of bad and false things about you, all because of me. <sup>12</sup> Be full of joy and be glad, because you have a great reward in heaven. In the same way, people harassed the prophets who came before you.

## **Contemporary Reading**

The world is so empty if one thinks only of mountains, rivers and cities; but to know someone who thinks and feels with us, and who, though distant, is close to us in spirit, this makes the earth for us an inhabited garden. ~ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (147)

## **Reflection**

This week, you are encouraged to thank someone who has been part of your “misfit” community -- someone who has been with you at times in the Dark Wood journey of your life. Call them, write them, have a conversation with them and include them in your prayers lifting up your gratitude.

\* All information in this insert is taken from Dr. Marcia McPhee’s worship series titled, “Gifts of the Dark Wood.”