

December 10th

Matthew 11:2-11

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Two verses stand out in this story of Jesus responding to John the Baptist's followers questioning about Jesus' work: "Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them" (Matthew 11:4-5).

You would think the list from Jesus would end with the miracle of miracles, "the dead are raised." Rather the teaching lifts up "the poor have good news brought to them." This echoes Jesus quoting the book of Isaiah in his first sermon at his hometown of Nazareth, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor" (Luke 4:18). The concern for poor people is also in Jesus' teaching about the final judgment in Matthew 25:31-46 emphasizing that our care for "the least of these" is God's criteria for our final judgment.

How can we follow Jesus in bringing "good news to poor people"? Words without deeds are condemned in the Bible. We need to generously, sacrificially support Presbyterian and ecumenical efforts to help the poor. The poor suffer unjustly from climate change.

Action: This Christmas, as we remember that our Savior was born into a poor family that could only provide him with a manger for his first resting place, let us explore giving gifts to Presbyterians for Earth Care and other environmental groups countering climate change's growing disasters that impact poor people.

Prayer: Guide us, O God, in your ways of truly caring for poor people and your creation. May our deeds help bring joy to the world, in Jesus' name. Amen.