Recent ecclesial scholarship explores the difficult areas of missional leadership and missional discipleship (Beard, 2015). One of the most challenging elements within this field of study continues to pertain to the actual examination of how this type of spiritual formation is carried out (Beard, p. 175). The current paper seeks to consider embodied discipleship through the lens of authentic leadership theory and a rich exegesis of Jesus’ beatitude statements in Matthew 5. Through this work, it is possible to identify the beatitudes as a framework of kingdom values that Jesus not only believed but also embodied as he conducted his ministry and leadership. The implications of this reveal a number of insights for ecclesial leaders today.

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, interest in missional theology and the resulting practices of discipleship and spiritual formation continue to grow (Beard, 2015). Beard (2015) suggests that the idea of discipleship within the missional church movement as a potential "key to success" for the Western Church is hampered by the "conceptual clarity" of the term discipleship today (p. 175). The call for Christ followers, ecclesial leaders, and church congregations to live on mission in partnership with God’s activity in the world has paved the way for increased focused on discipleship. The great question in this growing body of literature, however, centers on what this type of missional discipleship might look like (Beard, 2015 p. 175). While thinkers such as Beard focus on experience and journeys moving forward in identity formation, others such as Vanhoozer (2015) are reorienting theology around theatrical models where disciples of Christ are called to "act out" their faith in everyday life (p. 147). In all of this, it has become evident that a model for discipleship and spiritual formation rooted in the life of a disciple rather than a programmatic curriculum is incredibly important. In this regard, I suggest a return to understanding the ways that Jesus himself embodied his own spiritual formation. Through an understanding of both authentic leadership and the
beatitude statements defined in Mathew 5:3-12, the current paper explores how Jesus embodied each of these values in lived experiences throughout his ministry. Resulting from this, it becomes possible to offer a framework of values for embodied discipleship for ecclesial leaders today.

II. EMBODIED DISCIPLESHIP: SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Throughout the New Testament, Paul often identifies the church as the body of Christ (Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 4:4, Colossians 1:18). Utilizing this imagery, Paul paints a vivid picture for believers. In Christ, the work of God had been made manifest to the world in a flesh and blood way. At his ascension and the Pentecost moment, the same power that empowered Christ was now dispensed to the church to continue the work of God. Therefore, as Jamieson (2016) states, “the church in the New Testament is shown to be a diverse group of people… called to follow Christ by using their gifts to manifest God’s love to the world” (p. 65).

In this regard, Jamieson (2016) suggests the phrase “embodying Christ” as way of understanding the church’s “inner life focused on God and its outer expression of loving God and neighbor in the world” (p. 61). This direct correlation with Paul’s body of Christ imagery offers a lens for understanding spiritual formation in the postmodern world. It is this embodying of Christ that allows Christians, when they “speak, act, and engage with others…” to “…manifest the essence of Jesus’ character… in the church and the world” (Jamieson, 2016, p. 67). What Jamieson suggests here is that discipleship and spiritual formation are deeply connected to a Christian’s life in the world and not merely a spiritual ascent built on intellectual knowledge. This embodying of Christ allows believers to offer a “unique presentation of Christ” that represents the great diversity of God’s church (Jamieson, 2016, p. 68).

Vanhoozer (2015) speaks similarly from a systematic theology model that he calls the theo-dramatic. For Vanhoozer, doctrine reveals what is “in Christ,” and those who believe this doctrine should engage their belief by “playing their parts in the drama of redemption” (p. 147). This points to the grand historical narrative of God’s work in the world and the believer’s role in bringing that narrative to life in his/her own localized world. While Vanhoozer develops a very rich and complex understanding of doctrine in the life of a believer, at the simplest level he defines discipleship as the “project of growing into/putting on Christ” (p. 149). Like Jamieson, Vanhoozer suggests that spiritual formation means little if it is not embodied or acted out in the actual life of a Christ-follower.

Jamieson and Vanhoozer both offer the underpinnings of what Beard (2015) identifies as missional discipleship. In recent years, a growing interest in missional theology has emerged from a concern for the church and disciples of Jesus to see their role in the world as deeply connected to God’s missionary purposes of bringing the reality of the Gospel and the presence of his kingdom to life on earth. Beard suggests that while increased interest in discipleship continues to bloom in the missional literature, definitions of missional discipleship are difficult to pin down (p. 175). Perhaps Beard’s own definition is as helpful as any in this regard: “Missional discipleship is the experiential process of identity formation which results in a disciple who exhibits tangible evidence of mission, community, and obedience in his or her life” (p. 175).
Considering ideas of missional discipleship, these researchers and theologians reveal four key themes that continue to emerge as the hallmarks of recent thinking concerning spiritual formation and embodied discipleship in the 21st century context. First, experience is critical. Discipleship means little if it is not experienced. In a postmodern setting, truth is often contingent on something that can be experienced (Beard, 2015, p. 180). Second, embodied discipleship will mean more than learning correct answers or memorizing a series of Bible verses. At the very foundation of discipleship today is an increasing clarity in one’s own identity. Beard calls this identity formation (p. 175). Vanhoozer (2016) identifies this as the process of growing in the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). Regardless of the differences, for discipleship to be embodied a disciple’s identity in Christ must be in the process of being formed. Third, as result of embodied discipleship, the spiritual formation of Christ-followers today will demonstrate what Beard calls the “tangible evidence of mission” (p. 175). It is in the formation of a disciple that the Gospel is lived out—through real efforts toward justice and care for the least of those in the world around them; these markers are seen, felt, heard and touched by the watching world. Finally, embodied discipleship implies that disciples understand their larger role in the work of God’s historical-redemption movement in the world. Again, Vanhoozer calls this the drama of redemption, and it roots a disciple in the biblical narrative that began at creation and will only end at Christ’s full consummation of heaven becoming present on earth. For a disciple today embodying Christ, they are formed spiritually not as an individual in a certain moment, but as another player in the grandest of stories.

Authentic Leadership and Embodied Discipleship

Frequent in leadership theory today is a type of leadership known as authentic leadership (Fusco et al., 2016). Authentic leadership emerged from the work of Avolio and Gardner (2005) and is composed of four unique but deeply ingrained areas: (a) self-awareness, (b) internalized moral perspective, (c) relational transparency, and (d) balanced processing (p. 118). Self-awareness relates to a leader’s own internal awareness and ability/maturity in knowledge of the self (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). A leader’s internalized moral perspective reflects the deep conviction of a leader’s internal beliefs and view of the world and right and wrong (Avolio, 2010). Third, relational transparency demonstrates the self-disclosure of a leader in relationship to others. This transparency reveals the truest self of a leader offered to followers (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Finally, balanced processing is the ability of leaders to approach situations with objective data analysis for making decisions (Fusco et al., p. 118).

Authentic leadership theory offers a strong connection from secular organizational thinking that deeply relates to the ideas above pertaining to embodied discipleship. Avolio (2010) reveals the great difficulty in understanding authentic leadership today by saying that “one of the least researched areas in the science of leadership is in fact the science of leadership development” (p. 722). This is the same difficulty faced by missional discipleship thinkers pertaining to embodied discipleship. How are authentic leadership and embodied discipleship developed? What are the precursors for this type of authentic faith to be lived out? What are the guiding values that serve to create fertile soil for embodied disciples to authentically live out their faith?
In the following sections, it will become apparent that the beatitude statements of Jesus taught on the Sermon on the Mount not only offer a starting point for embodied discipleship values, but also a framework for considering the way Jesus himself embodied his own spiritual formation throughout his ministry. Understanding now the ideas of embodied discipleship and authentic leadership theory, a strong exegesis of the beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12 followed by portraits from Jesus’ ministry of how these beatitudes were lived out will offer a compelling vision for today’s ecclesial leaders considering how they might better embody Christ.

III. MATTHEW 5:3-12: UNDERSTANDING THE BEATITUDES

The section of Matthew’s gospel known as the beatitudes have long been studied and cherished as a snapshot of the type of heart God looks for in his people. Lindberg (2007) calls the beatitudes a “dizzying commentary designed to turn upside down the political and social world of the Roman Empire of Caesar Augustus and of the Jewish religious elite…” (p. 3-4). The brief statements of Jesus, before his longest discourse in the Sermon on the Mount offer “a more drastic and fundamental reassessment of political and social affairs, applying not only to its own time but to all future times, down to our day” (Lindberg, p. 4). The power of and attraction to the beatitudes as a framework for God’s kingdom cannot be understated. In this section, it is necessary to explore the nature of these 10 verses in Matthew’s gospel.

The Structure of the Beatitudes

Considering the structure of the beatitudes in Matthew 5 must begin with an understanding of the broader structure of Matthew’s gospel. The book carries a heavily Jewish understanding in its structure and content. It opens with a detailed genealogy (Matthew 1) of Jesus built around famous Jewish figureheads (i.e. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David) and a few rapscallions (i.e. Rahab) who might have subverted the assumptions about this Messiah about whom Matthew was writing. Throughout the gospel, Jesus teaches five discourses, each ending with the phrase “when Jesus had finished” (Issler, 2010, p. 367). Most scholars agree that this connects with the Jewish Torah and its five books of Moses (Issler, p. 367). The longest of these discourses is the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-7:27). It is at the opening of this sermon that readers find the beatitudes.

While scholars and interpreters often disagree about the number of beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-12, most agree that there are at least seven specific statements Jesus makes (McEleney, 1981, Guelich, 1976, Albreu, 2006). Some suggest there are eight and others go as high as nine. The difficulty lies in verses 10-12 as the language shifts from “Blessed are the…” (5:3-9) to “Blessed are those…” (5:10) and a longer “Blessed are you…” (5:12). Most common, scholars tend to identify eight beatitudes—connecting 5:11-12 with 5:10 to form an inclusion with 5:1—and divides the structure of the beatitudes in two sets of four (Lioy, 2016, p. 166; Powell, 1996). The first four beatitudes (poor in spirit, mournful, meek, longing for righteousness) reveal a progression in a disciple’s relationship with God from spiritual emptiness to hungering for righteousness (Lioy, p. 165). The second four (merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers,
and persecuted) connect to a believer’s interaction with others and the world around them (p. 166). This structure further connects Matthew’s gospel with the Jewish tradition through a structure similar to the Decalogue. While the first four commandments are given as laws in relationship to God, the last six reveal laws for relationships with others.

The Themes of the Beatitudes

Substantial research centers on the thematic elements of the beatitudes. Central to understanding the beatitudes is the Greek word *makarios* (Lioy, 2016). Typically interpreted as “blessed,” the term can accurately be understood as “happy” or “fortunate” (p. 147). In this way, the beatitude statements reflect, according to Lioy, an “interior joy that becomes manifest in the external world” (p. 147). It is essential to understand, then, that the beatitudes are intensely focused on a way of living that brings about joy and satisfaction because of the rewards for this type of action or condition of the heart. Along with understanding the makarios rhythm—“blessed are...”—followed by the “for they...” promise, a reader must step back to glimpse the larger picture of the world the beatitudes reflect. Put simply, the beatitudes are first and foremost a bold revelation of those who are happy and fortunate in the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God motif—according to Lioy (2016)—emerges from the inauguration of Jesus’ ministry in Matthew 4:17. The call to repentance Jesus makes comes because “the kingdom of heaven has come near” (Lioy, p. 149). In the beatitudes, the kingdom is brought to bear again as the first promise offered is for the “poor in spirit” who truly possess “the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). This kingdom (“basileia”) is the revelation of “God’s reign as future reality operative in the present” (Lioy, p. 149).

The importance of the beatitudes as a framework for life in the kingdom of heaven is not to be missed. Witherup (2015) suggests that these statements are more than good principles, but rather a way of inhabiting the kingdom of God on earth (p. 43). Witherup quotes the *Catechism to the Catholic Church*, “The Beatitudes fulfill the promises by ordering them no longer merely to the possession of a territory but to the Kingdom of heaven” (Witherup, p. 43). All of this reveals a driving theme in the beatitudes. At their core, these statements that frame and introduce the great Sermon on the Mount are a portrait of life, fortune, and happiness for a people seeking that the kingdom would come, on earth as it is in heaven.

Difficulty of the Beatitudes

The message of the kingdom Jesus proclaims through the beatitudes is not without some difficulty. Scholars have long debated several issues surrounding Matthew 5:3-12. As mentioned above, the exact number of beatitudes can be debated and range from seven to eight to even nine (Lioy, 2016, Powell, 1996). Other discussions of the beatitudes pertain to the exact intention of these statements. Are they intended as future promises only to be fulfilled in God’s triumph over the brokenness of the world (Witherup, 2015) or a way of living ethically in the present...
(Mattison, 2013)? Or, is there a tension between the future and the present somehow encompassing even the past (Guelich, 1976)?

Another critical conversation surrounding the beatitudes focuses on the meaning behind these statements. Willard (1998) offers perhaps the most well-known treatment of the beatitudes, particularly seeking to repeal the common belief that these statements were conditional requirements for being blessed in God’s kingdom. Ten Elshof (2010) suggests that Willard perhaps travels too far in this effort by suggesting that these blessings are available universally for anyone who might take on these postures of the heart (p. 234). In response, Ten Elshof suggests that the beatitudes fell somewhere in the middle of these two opinions, as a counter-cultural invitation to life in the kingdom of God that looked nothing like how the religious leaders of the day were living (p. 235).

Powell (1996) also engages this discussion. Suggesting that the common view of the beatitudes sees them as a series of rewards for virtue-living believers, Powell also summarizes opposing views such as Guelich (1976) who consider the beatitudes as reversals promised to those who suffer at the hands of an evil regime in the first century world. Powell’s clear conclusion is that the beatitudes serve as a both/and motif, promising both reversal of suffering and rewards for living virtuously amid oppression. The support for this view comes from Powell’s treatment of the beatitude structure as a two-stanza display of Hebrew poetry in which 5:3-6 offer the reversals for suffering and 5:7-10 present the rewards for virtue. Both stanzas have 36 words each (Powell, 1996) and both conclude with the idea of a pursuit of righteousness and a suffering for righteousness (in Greek the word dikaiosune).

While the beatitudes are not easily interpreted, two conclusions can be drawn before moving on to how Jesus embodied the beatitudes in his own spiritual formation. First, they are kingdom-focused, and like Jesus’ teaching throughout the Gospel regarding the kingdom, the beatitudes are both present and future-oriented (Lioy, 2016, Estrada, 2010, Guelich, 1976). Second, the beatitudes are a clearly subversive set of value-statements intended to define the Jesus-movement as it counters the larger empire of Rome and the legalism of Pharisaical religiosity. Lioy suggests that the beatitude ethics “contrasted sharply with the sterile, inert legalism of his religious critics” (p. 160), and Ten Elshof (2010) considers the beatitudes a “profoundly counter-intuitive and unattractive picture of the good life” (p. 231). The revelation of these statements then, show a Teacher-Messiah who fully engages his immediate world of Greco-Roman imperial dominance and Jewish hyper-spiritual legalism with what Willard (1998) calls an upside-down way of living as a disciple of Jesus who is not just surviving, but truly happy.

IV. JESUS AND THE BEATITUDES: EMBODIED DISCIPLESHIP IN AN AUTHENTIC LEADER

At this point, then, it is finally possible to return to our initial proposition—that in Jesus’ life and ministry it is possible to see not only the values of the beatitudes proclaimed but also actually lived out in his own embodied form of discipleship and spiritual formation. The great criticism from the broader, United States secular culture facing ecclesial leaders today is filled with cries of hypocrisy and judgmental hearts. Those leaders who claim to be disciples but seem to disembly the true values of the
kingdom are being called out by the ones who are tired of inauthentic ecclesiology. Jesus’ way of living out the values and ethics of the beatitudes presents a holistic model of ecclesial leadership and discipleship deeply rooted in a theology of incarnation that did not end when Jesus was born, but in fact continued as he became the one who was blessed/fortunate/happy as he lived out and revealed the kingdom of God to those who followed him.

Jesus Lives the Beatitudes

Briefly then, I wish to consider how Jesus embodies each of the beatitude statements in his own ministry. Specifically, I will consider this from Matthew’s gospel as the author has a unified purpose to his own themes of the kingdom and does not therefore, show us how Jesus embodied the kingdom of God. Each of these could be dissected at a much greater length, but for these purposes it will serve to briefly consider these examples. Also, I will consider the beatitudes based on the structure of eight separate statements as this seems to offer the most robust understanding of this passage.

The poor in spirit. First, Jesus models and values those who are poor in spirit. He is a wandering rabbi, consistently relying on the hospitality and provision of others to provide for his needs. Not only this, but Jesus is moved with compassion, preaching and teaching and healing sicknesses because the people were “harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (9:37). Even his parables consistently show a focus of how just a little in the kingdom of God has a great potential for magnificent impact (13:31-33, 19:21-36).

Those who mourn. Second, Jesus exhibits a type of discipleship that embodies the depths of his own emotional grief. He is found grieving over Jerusalem (23:37-39), as well as mourning the suffering he knew was coming as he prayed in Gethsemane (26:36-42). We see in Jesus a man who considers his relationship with God not limited by or hiding from his emotions but rather embracing the way of sorrow as an opportunity for intimacy with his Father.

The meek. Perhaps the clearest display of Jesus’ willingness to be meek comes as he stands before Pilate and the religious leaders (27:11-14). Jesus’ silence before the leaders and simple assertion that Pilate has called him the king of the Jews reveals the very core of biblical meekness—a power that is restrained, not retained.

Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. Common in Matthew’s gospel are the teachings of Jesus. In the five discourses a common theme of Jesus inviting his listeners to pursue righteousness is clear. The parable of the hidden treasure—directly related to the kingdom of heaven—is one example (13:44-46). According to Jesus, the kingdom is worth everything; it is more important than any possession and will fill the deepest hunger or thirst.

The merciful. Again, Jesus’ merciful spirit is seen throughout Matthew’s gospel. His compassion for the crowds (9:37, 15:32), care for children who were cast aside (19:14), and healing of those who were in hopeless situations (8:1-4, 8:28-34, 9:1-8) are all indicators of the great mercy Jesus embodied in his ministry.

The pure in heart. Sixth, Jesus shows a special concern for purity of heart. He sends his disciples to preach, but only to those who would welcome the message
The peacemakers. Jesus’ humble submission to his suffering crucifixion and teachings about peace display a great passion for peacemaking in his ministry. His teaching about dealing with a brother who sins against you (18:15-17), as well as his response during the night of his arrest and the subsequent command for Peter to put his sword away reveals the great lengths Jesus was willing to travel to maintain peace (26:47-54).

Those who are persecuted. Finally, the building momentum of Matthew’s gospel reveals a Messiah-King who embraced persecution. The consistent drumming of the threats from the religious leaders surrounding his ministry efforts building to his arrest, torture, and brutal death on the cross all show the level of persecution Jesus endured.

Jesus as Embodied Disciple and Authentic Leader

What these explorations of beatitude values lived out in Jesus’ ministry reveal is a Savior who lived as the fullest expression of both an embodied disciple and an authentic leader. Avolio’s (2010) constructs of authentic leadership are nowhere more evident than in Jesus’ ministry. He shows his own self-awareness time and time again through the intentionality of his teaching (i.e. speaking in parables so that listeners will seek the kingdom) and the effects of his presence in various settings (i.e. from spending time with religious leaders who did not agree with him to a Canaanite woman that he was culturally not supposed to welcome). He models a truly internalized moral perspective of the authentic leader as he confronts religious hypocrisy (Matthew 23). He displays a relational transparency with his disciples (revealing his anger, grief, sorrow, compassion, and joy). Finally, he is the epitome of balanced processing even as he approaches the cross—praying for God’s will in Gethsemane, submitting to the authorities who arrest and torture him, and never dishonoring Pilate in their confrontations. If anything, it can be boldly affirmed that Jesus had a powerful impact on his followers through his own authentic leadership.

But how does this connect to the core of this discussion and Jesus’ spiritual formation through embodiment of the beatitude values for discipleship? Earlier, I made the claim that embodied discipleship in our 21st setting must entail four characteristics. This type of formation must be experiential, tangible, identity-forming, and rooted in God’s grand redemption-narrative. The power of Jesus’ embodiment of the beatitudes in his own ministry reveals each of these characteristics lived out.

Experiential. Searle (2009) suggests that discipleship is the embodiment of the kingdom vision (p. 46). The great debate concerning whether the beatitudes are promises and postures or a call to ethical living disappears when one can see them in this way. For Searle, it is impossible to not consider the beatitudes calling for a sort of “morality as embodied spirituality” (p. 43). This paves the way for understanding the beatitude values as an internal reworking that means nothing if it is not translated to experiential mission in the world. For Jesus, the values he preaches are directly connected with his posture in the world. He lives as an overflow of the beatitude
statements in a way that creates not only his own experience of discipleship, but a transformational and authentic relationship for all those who encounter him.

Tangible. Second, Jesus’ embodiment of the beatitude values in his own ministry reveals the tangible nature of embodied discipleship. As discussed above, the beatitudes are oriented both toward the present and the future. The eschatological dimension of these beatitudes—the time when persecution will be no more and the kingdom will be given to the poor in spirit—is offered as a taste test through the life of Christ. His healing ministry, prophetic voice confronting religious hypocrisy, and teachings calling for justice lived out all point to a type of spiritual formation that tangibly displays the power of God in Christ’s life and ministry. Lindberg (2007) calls this the “scale running from passivity and paralysis in this world, through increasing levels of engagement… in accordance with what Jesus is teaching, up to a pinnacle of earthly conduct” (p. 7). In Christ, we see an authentic and embodied display of spirituality that tangibly steps into the broken places of the world with the kingdom vision of God communicated in the beatitudes.

Identity-forming. Next, Jesus’ ministry leadership can be considered through the lens of identity formation. He is, always, informed by his own acknowledgement of his identity as God’s Son given a very clear mission on the earth. It could be said that the only possible way for someone practicing embodied discipleship to live out the beatitude values and ethics is if they are deeply rooted in their own identity as a child of God, for otherwise it would be too difficult. Jesus was of course fully divine, and he still asked his Father to remove the cup of suffering that paved the way for a blessing of persecution.

An interesting side note at this point pertains to Mattison’s (2013) treatment of the beatitudes through the lens of virtue ethics. This work states that if the beatitudes are truly about happiness, they must deal with the “intrinsic relationship between the qualities of those called blessed and the happiness obtained” (p. 820). For Mattison, the qualifying conditions of the beatitude blessings and the resulting rewards are not contingent on human efforts, but the human does play a part as his or her internal motivations become shaped by these values defined by the beatitudes. Put simply, Mattison’s virtue ethics in relationship to the kingdom beatitudes are about identity formation taking place in followers of Christ so that they are increasingly conformed to his image (Romans 8:29).

Rooted in God’s narrative. Finally, embodied discipleship is deeply connected to the grand narrative of God’s work in the world toward salvation-history. Guelich (1976) considers this from the past, present, future understanding of the beatitudes as a part of God’s eschatological work (past), his present calling (ethical kingdom living), and future consummation (the hope that all will be made right). Albreu (2006) perhaps states this most clearly: “The beatitudes are not a utopia for other and distant times, an unachievable ideal for the present generation. Matthew is not providing us with a history and a prophecy, but with an ecclesiology. The beatitudes are a way of life for God’s people, for the community of Christ” (p. 35, emphasis mine). Jesus knew this, understood this, and lived this out in every area of his life. His ministry—the teachings, healings, confrontations, and ultimately suffering and resurrection—all reflected the deep awareness that God was working in history and Jesus had a part to play in that narrative.
V. CONCLUSION

Through this long road of exploration intertwining ideas of authentic leadership, embodied discipleship, and the kingdom vision described in the beatitudes and lived out in Jesus' ministry, it is now possible to offer several conclusions. I wish to return to Albreu’s statement that I just quoted: “The beatitudes are... an ecclesiology” (p. 35). From what has been considered here, if the beatitudes are truly intended to be a framework for kingdom living in the world that is deeply present and hopeful future, what does it mean for the church to live into them and how might leaders embody these values? Simply put, the ecclesial leader today—facing the great crags of leadership seen as disembodied and distrusted in today’s modern world—must begin to reorient themselves in authentic ways as embodied disciples. Perhaps for the ecclesial leader today, it is more important, as Searle (2009) states, that our morality, our discipleship and our spiritual formation, be “guided primarily not by reason, but by a vision acquired not solely through contemplation but also by participating in practices which aim toward the telos of human life” (p. 47). Perhaps the greatest formation that can occur for an ecclesial leader today is not forward momentum but rather downward mobility experienced through the happiness that comes for the poor in spirit, the mourning, the meek, the hungry and thirsty, the merciful, the peacemaking, the pure in heart, and the persecuted.

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