

## **"The Hungry and Thirsty"**

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### **Matthew 5: 6 (NIV)**

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

### **Introduction**

There exists for Christians, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, a continuous desire for justice and moral perfection, leading one to a fulfillment of that desire, which is a transition and conversion to holiness. Nevertheless, this precious righteousness is God's salvation, not just to those who are saved, but also to those who are seeking a new life in Christ Jesus.

Jesus invites those who are not disciples to become disciples and live according to the values of God's Kingdom. Therefore, God has provided a way by which man may be forgiven, declared righteous and made right in God's eyes.

This is the meaning and purpose of Christ's death for all men, the righteous one dying to make the sinner righteous. For that reason, we have accepted the obligation entailed in such faith to act righteously. Obviously, God's reward as righteous is not something for mere selfish enjoyment, but a greater capacity to enjoy and serve God with good works. Praise God, we have been guided through the Bible in...

### **1 Peter 1: 15-16 (NIV)**

"But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do: for it is written: 'Be holy because I am holy.'"

### **Sermon Body**

Our Lord Jesus presents the "Beatitudes" in a positive sense, which are virtues in life which will ultimately lead to reward for those people who are ready for the kingdom's coming, and those who have willingly devoted themselves to "carry on the cross," and follow Jesus to the end." Also, those who through many obstacles of life have become victorious through him, and those who have persevered in time of oppression, trusting in God's grace through Christ Jesus to overcome defeat.

For that reason, all of the beatitudes promise us assurance of salvation through faith - not in this world, but in the next. We can never be assured of our own salvation in this world because we are weak and vulnerable as human beings. For that reason, Jesus explained in Luke 8: 13b, (NIV), there are those who "believe for a while and in time of testing they fall away." Furthermore, Jesus says, there are also those "who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Peter 1: 5 NIV).

It's in the light of these warnings and admonitions that we must understand Scripture's positive statements concerning our ability and understanding to know, and have confidence in our salvation in this world, and in the next.

We may have assurance of salvation in the next world, because of God's promises to us of

eternal life through Christ Jesus' grace. However, we must remember, there is also in this world the possibilities of falling from grace through our iniquities, and even falling away from the faith entirely. Therefore, our present salvation is an anticipation of what we shall enjoy fully in the future. Nevertheless, the beatitudes also provide peace in the midst of our trials and tribulations on this earth.

Pastor David has been preaching for the last three Sundays about the beatitudes. Last Sunday, he spoke from **Matthew 5: 5 (NASB), 5 "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth."** Today, we are going to continue preaching about the next beatitude:

### **Matthew 5: 6 (NIV)**

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

### **Those people who are hunger and thirsty**

You see my brothers, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness feel a strong and deep desire after God's favor, his will, his image and felicity - joy, peace, happiness. Thus, this passage shows what kingdom-ready people should be like; Hence it shows us prerequisites for the kingdom, and kingdom promises as well.

Now brothers this precious righteousness is a term denoting all spiritual blessings. Thus, the book of Matthew 6: 33 (NIV) states, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

In summary, the Beatitudes message is that it will ultimately be well with those who seek first God's kingdom. Amen!

### **Righteousness**

Now, this righteousness stated in today's passage is a two-fold righteousness, where the defeated sinner "hunger and thirst," expressing a passionate desire of which the soul is intensely conscious. Furthermore, those who longed to be saved by Christ now yearn to be made like Him.

### **Psalms 42: 1 - 2a (NIV)**

"As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, O God.  
My soul thirsts for God, for the living God."

You see, in this passage, he is yearning for a closer walk with him, longing for more perfect conformity to the image of His son. It also tells of those aspirations of the new nature for divine blessings, which alone can strengthen, sustain and satisfy it.

Now, more specifically, "righteousness" in our passage refers to the righteousness of faith whereby a sinner is justified freely by divine grace through redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

### **Ephesians 2: 8-10 (NIV)**

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves. It is

the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast." For we are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

We are completely - totally destitute of righteousness, as a sinner who has constantly broken the law in thought, words, and deed. For that reason...

**Romans 3: 10 (NIV)**

"There is no one righteous, not even one."

However, praise God the father for He has provided righteousness in Christ to all who believe. It is the best "robe" put upon each returning soul. A good illustration is the story of the "prodigal son", which you can read in Luke 15: 11-21, who after living a secular life and wasting all his inheritance money, returned home and received from his father, not just love and compassion, but also the "robe of forgiveness."

You see, my brothers, righteousness is being imputed to him, and the believer stands legally righteous before God through Christ. Consequently, the soul of the sinner is turned away from self to a new person in Christ, and to a newness of life. Thereafter, the soul is longing after that righteousness, which we do not possess, and which we urgently need. Nevertheless, this precious righteousness for which the awakened sinner longs is to be understood as an inward and sanctifying righteousness. The one whom the Holy Spirit graciously works desires not only to attribute righteousness, but to impart it, which is that divine sanctification bestowed through the baptism of the Holy Spirit who cleansed our sinful - self in perfect love...God's gift.

Thereafter, man's righteousness is positive inclination to goodness, which is more than just outward behavior - an external appearance, although inward righteousness manifests itself outwardly.

My brothers, furthermore, the beatitudes should not be interpreted as portraying separate types of Christian character. Of course not, but rather, as a list of qualities and experiences which are typical of the ideal character of the Christian as conceived by Jesus Christ, and as exemplified in his own life and person.

As I have read from one of my commentaries, the "New Bible Commentary: Revised, " and I quote, "Many of the beatitudes have closed Old Testament parallels." Here are some examples:

**Psalms 1: 1 (NIV)**

"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners, or sit in the seat of mockers."

**Psalms 32: 2 (NIV)**

"Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him, and in whose spirit is no deceit."

You see, the term beatitude is not only used in the Bible as an abstract term denoting blessedness, but also in a secondary, concrete sense of a particular declaration of blessedness. Jesus, however, unites them into one integrated Christian character.

**My question is, can one who has been brought into vital union with Jesus Christ, who is the bread of life and in whom all fullness dwells be found still hungering and thirsting?**

Yes, indeed! Such is the experience of the renewed heart! We will always be hungering and thirsting for spiritual knowledge, spiritual growth, and spiritual maturity as long as we live in this world. We will never reach a level of perfection compared with God's unique perfection; therefore, we need to continue to hunger and thirst for righteousness and justice. Remember this, never in this life or the next can a man be as perfect as God is in the absolute sense.

### **Now let's talk about "They shall be filled."**

My brothers and sisters, when God creates a hunger and thirst in our souls, it is so that he may satisfy it. No one else, for that matter can satisfy this hungers and thirsts. I have researched the Internet through "Matthew Beatitudes, " and I was blessed with this information about "They shall be filled."

I quote, "We would be filled with that divine blessing - to which no sorrow is added." We would be filled with praise and thanksgiving unto Him who has wrought all our works in us." We would be filled with that which this poor world can neither give nor take away." We would be filled by the goodness and mercy of God till our cup runneth over. And yet, all that is enjoyed now is, but a little foretaste of what God has prepared for us that love Him: in the day to come we shall be "filled" with divine holiness, for we shall be made like Him."

### **1 John 3: 2-3 (NIV)**

"Dear Friends, now we are already of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure."

Thereafter, my friends, we shall be done with sin forever...

### **Revelation 7: 16-17 (NIV)**

"Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them; nor any scorching heat. For the lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd. He will lead them to springs of living waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

### **My question again is, what about those who are seeking salvation through Christ Jesus (those who are seeking to be saved) in order to live a newness of life in Christ, and are also hungry and thirsty for righteousness?**

I'm referring to those who are displeased with their unbelief, and who truly desire to clear or free themselves of whatever is unclean or undesirable; those people who long and pray for increased faith and assurance, and who evidence their sincerity by being persistent in all proper means.

Here, then, is divine consolation for them. Our Lord Christ Jesus pronounces them blessed and are accepted of God in Christ, if they sincerely hunger and thirst after righteousness. These, my brothers and sisters, are as God says: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they will be filled."

### **Closing**

Our Lord Jesus promises the kingdom not to those who try to force God's hand in their time, but

to those who patiently and humbly wait for it. They are the meek, the poor in spirit, the merciful and the peacemakers. Moreover, those people who are powerless, and oppressed who are embracing the poverty of their condition by trusting in God.

Brothers and sisters, God's ultimate mercy will be revealed on the "Day of Judgment. " At that time, He will ultimately declare the righteous to be his children. Thus, God says in...

### **Revelation 2: 17b (NIV)**

"To him who overcomes, I will give him some of the hidden manna.

I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it."

Let me clarify this passage, and I quote, "The hidden manna refers to the sufficiency of Christ for the believer's needs, as manna was for the Hebrew's during the wilderness wanderings." "The white stone may refer to the custom of voting for the setting free of an accused person by using a white stone (indicating that the believer can be assured of his freedom before God." Also, "The new name is the name of adoption; when the Holy Spirit shows his own work in the believer's soul, this new name and its real import are understood by him." (I quoted from the Ryrie Study Bible and Matthew Henry's concise commentary).

**Let's pray...**

### **WORKS CITED:**

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