

July 28, 2024 Meeker Christian Church Beatitude Series #4 Hunger & Thirst

Matthew 5:1-6 *5 And seeing the multitudes, He went up on a mountain, and when He was seated His disciples came to Him. 2 Then He opened His mouth and taught them, saying:*

3 #1 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 #2 Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.

5 #3 Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth

6 #4 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

November 30, 1997 "HUNGER AND THIRST" #4 Meeker Christian Church #4 Beatitude

Today is the 4th in our series from the Beatitudes *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.*



Have you ever been weak and faint with hunger on the very brink of starvation not knowing whether there would be or even could be any food for tomorrow? I do not doubt that some of us may have been hungry a few times in our lives, but never to the point of starvation or concerned for tomorrow's meals.

These words just like hunger and thirst do not exist in isolation; they exist against a background of experience and of thought; and the meaning of any word is conditioned by the background of the person who speaks it. A picture that enters my mind when I hear "hunger and thirst" is like the one above or the graphic pictures of soldiers rescued from prison camps, the holocaust or, a terminally ill patient. I thought to show you other pictures but was just not comfortable doing so. Just the mention of those mental visualizations is haunting. I can no longer view a film with scenes of starving persons in third world countries, or the homeless in

our own country. Those visualization of physical hunger and thirst animates this beatitude. It strikes the soul of a Christian to realize that it represents the spiritual condition of persons all around the earth who have not responded to faith in Jesus Christ.

Do you have a mental picture of the totally unnecessary human tragedy of what I am inferring and this is beatitude is teaching?/// I am trying to establish the order of the magnitude of importance of every human being for seeking righteousness during our earthly lives./// God's word is unequivocal, -- all in or none in -- as told to the church in Laodicea in **Revelation 3:16** *So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth.* /// The hunger which this beatitude describes is no mild hunger which could be satisfied with a mid-morning snack; the thirst of which it speaks is no thirst which could be appeased with a cool drink. It is the hunger of the person who is starving for food, and the thirst of the person who will die unless he drinks. That is the most important decision with eternal consequences anyone and everyone ultimately must make. Seeking righteousness comes through salvation in Jesus Christ and is without comparison the most important decision in life. It should be the first thing a child is taught, constantly reinforced, trumpeted from the halls of government, the education system and business. Righteous obedience to Jesus Christ is the solution of the world's problems, the answer apparent to every prayer for a safe and secure life. BUT IT MUST BE AFFIRMED, APPROVED AND TAUGHT WITHOUT COMPROMISE...

Look and listen! **John 6:33-35** *For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."* **34** *Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."* **35** *And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."*

That is the point I am trying to make – seeking for righteousness in the spiritual lives of Holy Spirit infused persons is even more important and eternally essential than the desire for food and water for the physical body.

I pray and desire to have that all encompassing passion and to be a spark that will burst into a roaring fire of faith in your earth suit. Though we may not 100 per cent be able to identify with the extent of hunger and thirsting passion and conviction the beatitude implies-- it does help us identify the incredible desire to do right and to please our HEAVENLY FATHER.

That desire to be a child of God is challenged by satan with the seemingly imposing problem of inadequacy of the human condition. That satanic temptation and intervention into our lives brings us to this study of the beatitudes. These beatitudes are the attitudes of an innocent child reaching their hands with absolute assurance of help from a patient, loving parent who wants the best for them. Peter explains it to us in **1 Peter 2:1-3** *Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking,2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, 3. if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.*

This theme of hungering and thirsting for righteousness is repeated over and over as instruction, training, encouragement and goal for those whom the Holy Spirit of God is drawing into the earthly committed body of believers dedicating themselves to Heaven on earth Kingdom service for the glory and purpose of Heavenly Father.

For instance we have this admonition to keep hungering and thirsting for righteousness: **Hebrews 5:12-14** *12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

Surely the writer of that Hebrew passage had in mind our #4 beatitude: *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.*

We have established the desire and passion for righteousness, let's touch now on being filled with that righteousness. I believe that is established in **Isaiah 55:1-3. 6-9** *"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters. And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. satan tries to convince everyone that if they do not have stuff all figured out, then they can never really be happy, satisfied or fulfilled. WRONG God says for us to come to Him and He will care for us through the provision of the Spirit for that which is of eternal value.*

2 Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good. And let your soul delight itself in abundance. satan says get more stuff, for stuff satisfies, you can never have enough stuff - God says listen to righteousness and delight in His divine abundance of eternal principles of eternal value. #4 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled. God says 3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall life, And I will make an everlasting covenant with you--

... 6 Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. 7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. Let him return to the Lord. And He will have mercy on him; And to our God For He will abundantly pardon. 8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways, "says the Lord. 9 "For as the Heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Jeremiah 3:15 continues instruction on how we will be filled with righteousness: *15 And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.*

Ezekiel 34:14 *I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.*

John 6:51 *I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."*

Revelation 2:7 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."*

Matthew 5:6 *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.*

This beatitude is an encouragement to every believer to grow and grow and grow and grow in righteousness. **Psalms 42:1-2** *As the deer pants for the water brooks, So pants my soul for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?*

It is not the magnitude of the beatitude but it is the conviction and persistence to attain that GOD honors. **Amos 8:11-12** *"Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord GOD, "That I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread, Nor a thirst for water, But of hearing the words of the LORD. 12 They shall wander from sea to sea, And from north to east; They shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the LORD, But shall not find it.*

The question this beatitude begs is: "Does our world, nation, community, families want goodness and righteousness as much as a starving man wants food, and as much as a man dying of thirst wants water? How intense is the desire for righteousness?

O THE BLISS OF THE PERSON WHO LONGS FOR TOTAL RIGHTEOUSNESS AS A STARVING MAN LONGS FOR GOOD, AND A PERSON PERISHING OF THIRST LONGS FOR WATER, FOR THAT MAN WILL BE TRULY SATISFIED!

Because GOD gave you a free will, you must choose to pursue spiritual matters. GOD will not force righteousness on you any more than HE forces maturity on a relationship. Being hungry and thirsty for righteousness is the result of choice. You must decide for yourself that righteousness has great value and you want it even more than food or water.

Helen Stiner Rice captures this in her poetic genius:

GOOD MORNING, GOD!

YOU are ushering in another day
 Untouched and freshly new
 So here I come to ask YOU, GOD,
 If YOU'LL renew me, too,
 Forgive the many errors
 That I made yesterday
 And let me try again, dear GOD,
 To walk closer in THY way...
 But, FATHER, I am well aware
 I can't make it on my own
 So take my hand and hold it tight
 For I can't walk alone!

Helen Stiner Rice

GOD has absolutely promised that one who has the intense motivation to pursue righteousness as they pursue food and water will be filled..... And to confirm that choice first is between you and God, then as a testimony and witness to others... our invitation hymn

Matthew 5:1-6

Picture of Hunger

Revelation 3:16

John 6:33-35

1 Peter 2:1-3

Hebrews 5:12-14

Isaiah 55:1-3. 6-9

Jeremiah 3:15

Ezekiel 34:14

John 6:51

Revelation 2:7

Matthew 5:6

Psalm 42:1-2

Amos 8:11-12