

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

Hungering and thirsting for righteousness is having an insatiable desire for God and all things pertaining to Him. It's not the kind of thirst you have after running on a hot day--it's more like the kind of thirst you would have after days in the desert without even a drop of water. It's not the kind of hunger you have when you've missed lunch--it's more like when you've gone several days without eating! Maybe the English words 'parched' and 'starving' would be more descriptive.

Jesus says that those who have that kind of hunger and thirst for God are blessed! One of the proofs of true conversion is that you have a new desire to know God and to make sure you are right with Him! We all drift away sometimes, but there's something that pulls us back when we have this hunger and thirst.

Would you trade me your house for a glass of water? I doubt it! But...there may exist a set of circumstances where you would. Picture this...if you had been crawling on your face in the Sahara desert for days without water; if your tongue was swollen and your lips chapped, and you had a mouth full of sand; if you were at death's doorstep, you'd probably give your house and everything in it to me for an 8 oz glass of water!

Jesus said that those who desire righteousness in that manner are blessed!

Psalm 42:1-2:

“As the hart pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God...”

It's not just giving God a passing thought. It's not like how the children of Israel responded to Him:

Hosea 6:4:

“O Ephraim, what shall I do to thee? O Judah, what shall I do to you? For your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goes away.”

This is a hunger that motivates us to action, it demands to be fed, and each morsel makes us want another! The person who really wants something doesn't just sit around waiting for it to come to them...no, they are motivated to 'make it happen!'

If we say, I don't have that kind of hunger for God, we obviously need a new attitude that is focused upward! This intense desire for God doesn't necessarily happen just because you are baptized. Even if it did, it can quickly wane and flee away if we don't feed and water it.

There are some things we can do to help us develop that longing for the Lord...a passion for the Christ!

You've heard the old saying: "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink." That's true, but you can put salt in his oats, and he will want to drink! So, how can we put some salt in our oats? Let's let James tell us:

James 1:5-8: <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

James 1:16-17: <sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

James 1:22-25: <sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. <sup>25</sup> But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

When you are physically sick, like having the flu, the last thing you want to do is eat or drink! As you begin to feel better, you will notice your appetite begin to return.

Like a virus or bacteria affects us bodily, sin can do great harm to our spiritual digestive tract. It can affect our taste buds and dull our spiritual appetite. When our spiritual digestive system is on the fritz, our spirit can starve!

For many believers, the devil's weapon of choice isn't "out and out sin"—he uses 'stuff.' I'm talking about things that aren't sinful in and of themselves, but we just get involved in so much 'stuff' that we don't make God the priority He deserves to be!

Some things may be sin—some may be just stuff; however, Satan’s goal is the same: to kill our spiritual taste buds! Deal with the sin, throw away some ‘stuff’, and see what happens...

Jesus promises that those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled. Do you know what that means? You can have as much as you want! You can keep feasting! You can be as close to God as you want to be! God can be as real and personal as you want Him to be.

Since James has already given us some good advice, let’s let him give us some more:

James 4:8: “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”

Let’s seek that new attitude that is focused upward and make a total and unending commitment to God and His way of life.