

## Gleanings from the Gospels

Title – A Hunger for Righteousness

Prayer

Purpose/Review

Continuing in our series.... Gleanings from the Gospels

I feel that this mornings lesson is one of the utmost importance...

**As the lesson unfolds... we will see that it will point to the core of who we are**

It will reveal to us how the influence of the Holy Spirit builds our character...

**SERMON TITLE – A Hunger for Righteousness**

**Righteousness** - Purity of heart and rectitude of life; conformity of heart and life to the divine law. It includes all we call justice, honesty and virtue, with holy affections; in short, it is true religion.

**RC Sproul asks this question...**

**Do You Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness...?**

Some years ago, I spoke with a man whose business was to help people plan for the future. He asked me about my goals, about what I wanted to accomplish in life. As I went through this exercise, I noticed that one thing was conspicuously absent from my goals: there was nothing there about righteousness.

I thought, "What's wrong with this picture? How could a Christian establish life goals and not have at the top the attainment of righteousness in the sight of God?"

**Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness....?**

**Our reading is found at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount...**

## **INTRODUCTION-**

Within the Beatitudes, Jesus continues to describe the character of those who belong to the Kingdom of Heaven. These are not natural human traits, but spiritual qualities produced by grace in those who have been born again.

Each Beatitude builds upon the previous one, forming a progressive portrait of the true disciple. In Mt 5:6, He speaks of a deep, spiritual longing, a hunger and thirst not for food or drink, but for righteousness, a right standing with God and a life that reflects His holiness.

Spiritual appetite is the engine that pulls the entire Christian life forward. Without this longing, there can be no growth, no depth, no intimacy, and no satisfaction of the soul.

**Our reading is the fourth Beatitude listed...**

## **Reading**

### **Matthew 5**

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

## **Doctrinal**

**Spiritual appetite is the engine that pulls the entire Christian life forward**

Let us look at our reading in the context with which it is presented

**OPEN YOUR BIBLES TO Matthew 4:23-25**

## **Our reading takes place...**

Within the first few weeks after Jesus was tempted in the wilderness

Within those first few weeks of the beginning of His ministry

### **Matthew 4**

23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

24 The news about Him spread throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all who were ill, those suffering with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics; and He healed them. 25 Large crowds followed Him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond the Jordan.

### **Let's focus on a couple of things that Matthew points out...**

#### **NOTE-**

Jesus was going throughout all of Galilee  
Proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom

Galilee was a small area in northern Israel  
Roughly 30 miles wide

**SLIDE – Map of Galilee and Syria**

#### **NOTE-**

Jesus traveled throughout the area teaching in the local synagogues  
Proclaiming the Good News about the Kingdom of God wherever He went

### **But notice what else Matthew tells us...**

## **Matthew 4**

23 Jesus was going throughout all Galilee ... and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.

### **Healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness**

All who came to Him were healed...

#### **NOTE-**

One can imagine how quickly this news would have spread throughout the land

#### **NOTE-**

As the news spread of this massive healing  
More and more people would have made the journey

Once healed many would have followed Jesus... maybe

And this is the setting of when Jesus began to give His Sermon on the Mount

## **Matthew 5**

1 When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. 2 He opened His mouth and began to teach them...

#### **NOTE-**

Jesus saw this massive crowd and did something  
Notice what He did to find those who were true followers

**He went up on the mountain... and His disciples came to Him**

## **NOTE-**

How many disciples were there who followed Him  
The bible does not tell us

Those who were committed followers of Jesus  
Went up on the mountain with Him

**Those who are true followers of Jesus wanted to hear what He had to say...**

### **Matthew 5**

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

#### **Jesus didn't say...**

Blessed are those whose goal is righteousness, for they shall attain their goal.

#### **He didn't say...**

Blessed are those who have a desire for righteousness, for they will get to their heart's desire.

#### **Instead... He spoke to them in everyday language**

We are not simply to seek righteousness or have righteousness as a goal

We are to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

#### **What does that look like...?**

#### **Gleanings from Matthew**

- 1) A State of Mind
- 2) A State of Action
- 3) A State of Peace

## Application

### First Bullet Point

#### Gleanings from Matthew

##### 1) A State of Mind

**State of Mind** - refers to the overall condition of your thoughts, emotions and moods.

It is your subjective mental and emotional climate—the "weather" inside your head.

#### Matthew 5

6 Blessed are those...

#### NOTE-

Blessed... we've taken a close look at this word before  
But it is worth reviewing again

#### NOTE-

Some translation use the word "Happy" instead of blessed  
And this really waters down what Jesus is saying

#### Webster's 1828 Dictionary...

**Blessed** - an inner satisfaction and sufficiency that does not depend on outward circumstances for happiness.

#### NOTE-

Being Blessed... is not a temporary emotional state

Being Blessed... is to be spiritually content from receiving God's blessings

Warren Wiersbe has this to say about the Greek word we translate as blessed...

The root idea is “approval.” When we bless God, we are approving and praising Him; when He blesses us, He is expressing approval of us... **Warren Wiersbe**

*And because we are blessed by God...*

*This brings us to our second bullet point....*

### **Gleanings from Matthew**

1) A State of Mind

2) A State of Action

When you know that you’ve been blessed by God it should be a call to action...

### **Matthew 5**

6 Blessed are those **who hunger and thirst for righteousness...**

**Hunger** - to crave after; to long for; to be famished; like a starving person seeking bread

**Thirst** - describes intense, consuming thirst; constant longing and unceasing desire, ongoing desperation for what only God can satisfy

### **QUESTION-**

How many of us have experience real hunger...?

How many of us do intermittent fasting...?

**To hunger and thirst... such a difficult condition to really understand...**

Today we live in a time of plenty...

**Thirsty...?** Go to the sink and draw a glass of water

**Hungry...?** Go to the refrigerator or the kitchen cabinet

You don't see something you like...

Most of us are 5 minutes from a food store or restaurant

**EXAMPLE-**

When I tell people we live in Eagle Rock  
And that the closest supermarket is 30 minutes away

A common response is... how do you shop?

I mean...

What happens if you drove all that way to get the ingredients to make a special meal  
Only to drive all the way home and realize that you forgot one essential ingredient

**NOTE-**

When Jesus used that expression to hunger and thirst  
His audience would have known exactly what He was talking about

You had the working poor who worked today for food tonight

You had the poorest of the poor who had nothing

***Give us this day our daily bread...***

**We are blessed because we live in a land of plenty**

**Fortunately... most of us have never really experienced famine**

That is... until we understand what Jesus is teaching

### **Matthew 5**

6 Blessed are those **who hunger and thirst for righteousness...**

Is that me...? Is that you...?

Do we actually hunger for God's righteousness...?

**Or are we living in a land of famine...?**

**Am I partaking in intermittent fasting when it comes to seeking God's Righteousness?**

**OPEN YOUR BIBLES TO John 7:37-39**

### **John 7**

37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive

Once a sinner becomes a saint, Jesus says their character is such that they begin to display an intense desire to live a life of righteousness, to be pleasing to God with their daily life... **Dr. Bruce Hurt**

**Third bullet point...**

### **Gleanings from Matthew**

- 1) A State of Mind
- 2) A State of Action
- 3) A State of Peace**

### **Matthew 5**

6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, **for they shall be satisfied.**

**Satisfied** – to fill; to satisfy the desire of any one

**Matthew used this word for satisfied in one other well known story...**

**The feeding of the 5000...**

### **Matthew 14**

19 Ordering the people to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up toward heaven, He blessed the food, and breaking the loaves He gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds, 20 and they all ate and were satisfied.

***Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled***

So this begs the question... Are you thirsty?

**How do you know when you are hungering and thirsting for righteousness?**

**1) There is an increasing desire to be in God's Word and to obey that Word.**

**Psalm 63**

1 O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

**NOTE-**

David's pursuit of God was not casual but intention  
He was seeking God with his whole heart...

His soul thirsted for God

His physical well being depended on a close relationship with God...

**2) There is an increasing love of the things God loves and a hatred of the things God hates.**

**Psalm 101**

3 I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not fasten its grip on me. 4 A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil.

**NOTE-**

We choose to live differently  
Not only do we guard our eyes

We develop a type of allergic reaction to those things  
That corrupt our relationship with God

**3) There is a growing longing to do God's will.**

### **Psalm 143**

10 Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

Notice that David makes a personal declaration about his relationship with God...

You are my God...

David also shows us that he had a teachable spirit...

**Teach me... show me your ways... and I will follow...**

This is why... we read that David had a heart after God...

**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst... for that type of relationship with God...**

And because of the cross... we too have the opportunity to call ourselves blessed...

### **1 John 5**

14 This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

**Confidence-** in this context refers to the boldness and assurance that we as believers possess in our personal relationship with God.

**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst... for that type of relationship with God...**

**Blessed are those who can say... Oh God... you are my God**

**Blessed are those who proclaim... I am a child of the Most High God**

**CLOSE**