

Title: The Divine Appetite: Seeking Righteousness

Passage: Matthew 5:1-6

Summary:

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

I. The Condition

II. The Promise

III The Application

Key Truths:

- We all have a longing for something greater and more meaningful. Nothing in this world will be able to satisfy. Only Christ.
- The Beatitudes: First four concern life before Christ: Convicted of sin, mourn over sin, then hunger and thirst for righteousness. Thereafter, the beatitudes show the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit: merciful, pure in heart, peacemaker
- Genuine hunger and thirst for righteousness is only when we are utterly broken and take full responsibility for our sins.
- You are what you eat. Who are you? Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness? See God as truly holy, just, and righteous; then look at yourself and see who you are. In turn, you will hunger and thirst for His righteousness.

Application:

- Question: Have you ever tasted Christ's living waters?
- The marks of one who has:
 - Healthy dissatisfaction with self
 - Freedom from dependence of external things for satisfaction
 - Craving for the Word of God
 - Find the things of God pleasant

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
- What can those who hunger and thirst for righteousness expect?
- How would a person behave if he or she were hungry and thirsty after righteousness?
- What realistic steps can you take this week to make you hungrier and thirstier for righteousness?

Introduction

"You are what you eat"

- Our physical diet affects our physical health.
- Physical hunger is a pale comparison to a hunger we all deal with:
 - spiritual hunger that can only be satisfied in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Passage:

Matthew 5:1-6

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

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

EXPOSITION

Matthew 5:6

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

Context of Passage:

- First three beatitudes focused on who God is and who we are.
 - Not distinct thoughts but rather a progression where all in one:
 - Poor in spirit (spiritual bankrupt in light of who God is)
 - Mourn (emotional reaction to our spiritual bankruptcy)
 - Meek (humility: I don't have anything to bring)
 - Here: Hunger and thirst for righteousness
 - Having realized I am spiritually bankrupt, mourn over our sin, and realize we have nothing of our own to save ourselves, then we seek righteousness not of our own.
- Contrast: if you don't strive to be more like God, then you should re-examine whether you are truly a Christian.
 - Missing the wrong foundation.

I. THE CONDITION

Hunger and thirst

- a metaphors for our spiritual pursuits

Ecclesiastes 3:11

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

- We have a longing for something greater and more meaningful.

Jeremiah 2:12-13

Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD, for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

- We are never fully satisfied by anything of this world

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11

And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

- Though we do all we can trying to be satisfied by this world, it will always come up empty.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,

What does it mean to hunger and thirst for righteousness?

- "hunger" = literally means "to be needy", "to suffer deep hunger"
- "Thirsty" = carries the idea of "genuine thirst"
- "Righteousness" = "to be right with God," "to be approved by God", "to have a right standing with God."

Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

Progression of the Beatitudes:

- First four beatitudes: Convicted of sin, mourn over sin, then hunger and thirst for righteousness.
- Next beatitudes: show the result of being filled with the Holy Spirit
 - Merciful,
 - Purity of heart
 - Peacemaker
- Thereafter Sermon on the Mount fleshes out what righteousness means in different areas of our lives:
 - Anger
 - Lust
 - Marriage

- Our neighbors
- Our enemies

Luke 15:13-17 (Parable of Prodigal Son)

And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger!’

- It was only at the point of starvation and complete brokenness did the prodigal son turn.
- Likewise, only when we are utterly broken and take full responsibility for our sin are we truly at point of salvation.
- One needs to truly hunger and thirst for righteousness.

II. THE PROMISE

for they shall be satisfied.

John 4:13-14

Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

John 7:37-38

On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

Psalms 107:9

For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

Isaiah 55:1-2

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.

The problem is you need to get to the place of "I need Christ's righteousness"

- you do not need merely a "fixer" of your circumstances.
- But you are at a point where you need the Savior.
 - Be at the point where "I am responsible for my actions."

III. APPLICATION

Question: Have you ever tasted from Christ's living waters?

Marks of one who has:

- Healthy dissatisfaction with self
 - Holy discontent: always can be more like Jesus though also have full assurance of salvation. Never feel have fully arrived but always wanting to grow.
- Freedom from dependence of external things for satisfaction
 - How do you respond to changing circumstances?
 - Or focus on God and the Real Thing.
- Craving for the Word of God
 - You are what you eat.
 - If you eat God's Word
- Find the things of God pleasant
 - Focus on the good things and good sides.
 - Not picky. When hungry, one is not picky with what is presented. It is nourishment to one's body.

You are what you eat. Who are you?

- Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness?
 - See God as holy, just, righteous.
 - Then look at yourself and see who you are.
 - In turn, you will hunger and thirst for His righteousness.