

Matthew 5:1–6

¹ 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 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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

⁵ Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

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

The Beatitudes – Part 3 **Matthew 5:6**

INTRO:

We are in the process of working through the beatitudes in the beginning of the famous ***“Sermon on the Mount”*** in **Matthew chapters 5-7**. These beatitudes are vitally important because they describe those who possess the Kingdom of Heaven. We desire to be found in these statements. So, what do those who are in the kingdom of God look like? We will consider the fourth Beatitude today.

I. BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS (v. 6)

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

A. There is a logical progression in the beatitudes so far. **(1)** A believer lives under God’s favor because he recognized his spiritual bankruptcy and he threw himself on Christ alone. **(2)** This person mourns over his sin because it divides him or her from God. **(3)** Because the believer realizes that our God rules the world, the Christian accepts that God has every right to do what He wills in his life. **(4)** Now we learn what the one who possesses the kingdom desires.

B. ***“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.”***

The one who possesses the kingdom of God desires to be righteous and to live in righteousness. The language of this beatitude reminds me of two Psalms.

1. Psalm 42:1-2 says

“As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?”

The Psalmist wants to come to God not just to have his prayers answered or his condition changed. He wants to spend time with God Himself.

2. David, the sweet singer of Israel, wrote in **Psalm 62:1**,
“O God, You are my God; Earnesty will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.”

David thirsts for God Himself more than he thirsts for water. While neither of these verses use the word, ***“righteousness,”*** the idea is about seeking the righteous one.

C. What is this righteousness we are to hunger after? When we think of righteousness we must think of the righteousness God gives to us in Christ. Still, this cannot be the righteousness our Lord is thinking of here, because we cannot seek or earn this righteousness. This beatitude puts into words the heart desire of everyone who really has been changed in salvation.

1. The righteousness we seek is the righteousness we learn to love, even though we can never fully experience it in this life. Here are two examples. First, the Apostle Paul in the midst of his struggle against sin in **Romans 7:22** said, ***“For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.”*** Although I cannot in myself keep the law, I delight in it because it is holy, righteous, and good. Second, Robert Murray M’Cheyne often prayed, ***“Lord, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be made.”*** This is someone who hungered and thirsted after righteousness.

2. This is also seen in other places in the Bible. For example, it is found in **1 Peter 1:12-16**. Verse 12 summarizes what Peter wrote in the paragraph leading into this one.

“To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.”

This is the wonder of God’s plan. Peter then told us how we must respond.

3. ***“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”*** (v.13)

We must be ready to serve Him. Second, we are obligated to: ***“As obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He Who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”*** (vs.14-16) We are to seek to be as holy as our God is holy. The quote is from **Leviticus** where it appears several times. The point is, when the Lord Jesus came into our lives our

manner of life and the goals of our lives need to be aimed at being like our God and Savior.

D. At the risk of being redundant, I want us to see it from another point of view.

“Therefore do not be partakers with [the workers of darkness]; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),” (Ephesians 5:7–9).

Because our Holy God saved us, we need to walk in a likeness as close to Him as we can. We should want to please Him.

E. There is a promise attached to this beatitude.

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.”

How will our craving for God and His righteousness be fulfilled? The answer is found in **1 John 2:28-3:3**.

1. ***“And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.”***

1 John 2:28-29 emphasizes how we need to abide in Him and walk in Him so we may exhibit the habit of righteousness that marks us as His own.

2. Now look at **1 John 3:1-2**.

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.”

When our Lord Jesus appears we shall be like Him. How? We will never be God. Yet, we will no longer sin. We shall be righteous and pure as He is! Do you want that?

3. What do we do in the meantime until He returns? That is **verse 3**.

“And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.”

Now comes the difficult question you and I need to answer to the Holy Spirit. Do we really hunger and thirst after righteousness? Do we work on confessing and overcoming our sins with God’s help?

Hymn #201 Grace Greater Than Our Sin