

In Pursuit of the Real Treasure

Matthew 5:6

I. Hunger and thirst are good things.

- A. They are motivators that drive us forward.
 - 1. God gave us physical hunger and thirst so that we live.
 - (a) We are driven to get nutrition and water we need.
 - (b) Imagine the person with no hunger or thirst.
 - 2. God also gives us spiritual hunger or thirst.
 - (a) They are desires, yearnings, longings.
 - (b) We are spiritual beings, needing spiritual nutrition and water.
- B. God blesses those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.
 - 1. Why? Because hunger and thirst are driving forces.
 - (a) They drive us to actively pursue what we hunger for.
 - (b) There is no passivity here; no waiting for someone else to do it.
 - 2. The blessing is fullness because we pursue what we're hungry for.

II. "Righteousness" is a term used several ways in the Bible.

- A. Imputed righteousness is our standing before God as believers.
 - 1. We are given the righteous standing of Christ, forgiven, clean, acceptable.
 - 2. There is no need to hunger for this. It is established.
- B. Righteousness is also something we grow in as we are transformed. One commentator called it practical righteousness.
 - 1. This is about how we live, our character, our practices.
 - (a) We grow in righteousness in the sanctification process.
 - (b) The goal is that we take on the character qualities of Jesus.
 - 2. So, this hunger and thirst is a desire to grow spiritually.
 - (a) Peter: "Long for the pure milk of the Word that by it you may grow in your salvation."
 - (b) Paul to Timothy, "...pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love..."
 - 3. Comparing those 2 forms of righteousness: citizenship.
- C. Be careful not to confuse this with self-righteousness.
 - 1. The Pharisees tried to justify themselves by their own righteousness.
 - (a) This is the so called "righteousness" of religion.
 - 2. The self-righteous view: I make myself righteous by how I live.
 - (a) Work, work, work. Do more, give more, serve more, then God will accept me. That is not the Gospel!
 - 3. Growth in righteousness is a function of God's grace.
- D. Jesus is the King of Righteousness. Jesus is righteousness!

- 1. He is the ever-faithful sinless One, the exact image of the Father!
 - (a) Jesus is righteousness in the flesh (John 16:7-8, 10).
 - (b) We are destined to become like him.
 - (c) In the meantime, we hunger and thirst for him.

- E. This is a call to hunger and thirst for growth and for God.
 - 1. They are so intertwined they are almost synonymous, to pursue righteousness is to pursue Jesus!

III. Taste and see that the Lord is good!

- A. The Lord repeatedly describes himself with food and drink metaphors.
 - 1. The Bread of the Presence, manna, the Bread of Life, the Lord's Supper.
 - 2. The fountain of living water, water from the rock, living Water (John 4 and 7). "Come, all you who are thirsty..."
 - 3. Why?
 - (a) Because we understand hunger and thirst for food and water. We have experienced them. We get it.
 - (b) We know these things are essential for life.
 - (c) We have tasted food and experienced its goodness!
 - (d) It brings us pleasure (sometimes too much pleasure)!
 - (e) It fills us up and satisfies us!
 - 4. God says, "Taste of my goodness. I will fill and satisfy you!"
- B. We experience God's goodness as we encounter his Presence.
 - 1. We seek him through the Word, prayer, worship.
 - 2. He reveals himself. He reveals truth. He fills us with himself!
 - (a) Filled; Greek word is chortazo: gorge, supply food in abundance. Paraphrase: You will be stuffed!
 - 3. He renews our minds, changes our hearts, and we grow
 - 4. This all happens in a relationship. We are made for this.
 - (a) As we are filled, and in his presence, we taste his goodness!
 - (b) We experience the goodness of his love (Romans 5:5).
 - (c) Our hearts go out to him in a response of love (I John).
 - (d) His love is also what enables us to love others.
- C. So, what is it that motivates the pursuit of God?
 - 1. You are not hungry for something until you've tasted it.
 - (a) Gracie's first taste of ice cream.
 - (b) Kids don't eat ice cream to meet the MDR's for protein.
 - (c) It's the "mm, mm," goodness that captures them!
 - 2. As we experience his love and the Gospel goes deeper into our hearts, we see his worthiness to be served!
 - 3. We hunger for growth and for God, and as we pursue, we get filled with his Spirit. He is good, indeed!

