

## The Eager Desires of Hungering and Thirsting

TEXT: “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”  
(Matt. 5:6)

THESIS: As long as one is seeking God, he will be spiritually fed with a never-emptying supply.

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Matthew 5-7 is often referred to as the greatest sermon ever preached.
  - a. And within this constitution of Christianity, we find the beatitudes or to put it simply: the attitudes to become.
  - b. This is why the beatitudes are often referred to as the 10 commandments of Christianity.
2. Likewise, the sermon on the mount is a pattern of growth and blessings that are truly attitudes we should become as we reflect Christ in our lives.
  - a. Therefore, the pursuit is a hunger and the diligent attitude to possess is the strong parched thirst that only God and his word can fulfill.
  - b. Furthermore, hunger and thirsting is one of the beatitudes that reflects a true mark of a follower of the Lamb of God by which he has an appetite for that which is good.
  - c. For, if one is hungry and thirsty for spiritual things, he will go where his appetite can be satisfied.
3. Thus, to hunger and thirst is not for the gratification of their fleshly passions, but to have the character trait to hunger and thirst after righteousness.
  - a. For, it is the desiring to do the right, to feed upon the promises of God and to drink from the fountains of living waters are qualities that Jesus expects of one who would enter the kingdom.
4. Therefore, are we hungering and thirsting for righteousness with the same desire a physical hunger or a parched thirst brings upon us?
  - a. Hunger and thirst are good emotions for they remind us we are hungry and we need food to fill us and to help us grow.
  - b. We are thirsty and we need our thirsts quenched with water thus, to keep our bodies functioning properly.
  - c. Therefore, to ignore these needs will affect our physical bodies.
  - d. In addition, eating and drinking the wrong thing will not satisfy in just the same way as feeding ourselves the wrong spiritual food will not satisfy.
5. Therefore, it is our purpose that we always fill our spiritual hunger with the right food: **Righteousness.**
  - a. And as we do so, we grow in the way Christ will have us to grow.
6. Therefore, let us briefly look at:
  - a. The choice to consume, righteousness
  - b. The meal that maintains, righteousness
  - c. The food that fills, righteousness

## DISCUSSION:

## I. THE CHOICE TO CONSUME, RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. As one that spiritually hungers and thirsts, there is only one food to consume that will satisfy and fill us: **Righteousness** or quite simply, things right and good according to God.
1. Now, righteousness is defined best by the inspired Psalmist who wrote, “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.” (Psa. 119:172)
  2. Righteousness is a key word in this beatitude and therefore to hunger and thirst after righteousness is:
    - a. To desire to be like the perfect righteousness of God. (Matt. 5:48)
    - b. To desire to please God by knowing his will and obeying his commandments. (Jn. 14:15)
- B. Now, can one think of anything that would stand out more in the life of an individual?
1. Imagine the beauty it is to hear when one passes from life, that one states, “He wanted to simple be perfect before God and pleasing to God.”
  2. Can we imagine the impact in the lives of the people this individual met and touched?
  3. Notice the beauty of those that desired God:
    - a. David said, “O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.” (Psa. 63:1, 2)
    - b. Isaiah proclaimed, “With my soul have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee early: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.” (Isa. 26:9)
    - c. Job stated, “Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!” (Job. 23:3)
- C. Our souls are thrilled to see such desire and as we hunger and thirst, we continually turn to the Holy Bible, the Word of God.
1. God’s Word should be in the daily diet of every Christian.
  2. It is sufficient to fill us with righteousness.
    - a. For, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction **in righteousness**: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17)
    - b. “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” (2 Pet. 1:3).
  3. Therefore, what more is needed?

- a. In a day and age when God’s Word is attacked with falsehoods, liberalism, evolution, and every other multiple error known to man, God’s holy word stands firm and strong as always.
  - b. One may recall the story of the Anvil:
    - Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith’s door**
    - And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime:**
    - Then looking in, I saw upon the floor**
    - Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.**
    - “How many anvils have you had,” said I**
    - “To wear and batter all these hammers so?”**
    - “Just one,” said he, and then, with twinkling eye,**
    - “The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.”**
    - And so, thought I, the anvil of God’s word,**
    - For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;**
    - Yet though the noise of falling blows was heard,**
    - The anvil is unharmed . . . the hammer’s gone!**
  - c. As one hungers and thirsts, one continually follows the commandments of God through obedience.
  - d. Therefore, one must eat that serving of righteousness to survive!
- D. Now, one who is born again through the waters of baptism upon one’s faith should continue to walking with the Father.
- 1. Yet, how does one learn of this righteousness to be born again?
  - 2. It is from hearing it clearly from one that loves his/her soul as Paul did with Felix. (Acts 24:25)
  - 3. Likewise, “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.” (1 Jn. 2:29)
- E. Secondly, as one walks faithfully, one continually walks in the right way and does not subscribe to this doctrine or that doctrine.
- 1. One will not be deceived for one knows the right way and nothing else detours them.
    - a. Again, “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth **righteousness is righteous**, even as he is righteous.” (1 Jn. 3:7)
    - b. The beautiful beginning words of Psalms says, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.” (Psa. 1:1, 2)
  - 2. Think of the opposite of this “blessed” man.
    - a. If an individual is walking in the counsel of the ungodly, he is going in a direction that he does not need to pursue.
    - b. He is certainly not walking toward righteousness, but rather, he is pursuing the counsel of the ungodly.
    - c. He is listening to the wrong people, reading the wrong things, and

constantly filling his mind and heart with the wrong things.

- (1) But, it does not stop there.
  - d. For, this individual will stand in the way of sinners meaning he is not only walking, now he is taking a stand for error.
  - e. Slowly, the ungodly counsel is affecting him more and more until finally, he sits.
    - (1) He is relaxing, keeping his guard down as the ungodly counsel is affecting him.
    - (2) He is deceived and now is a deceiver of others.
- F. Third, the Lord blesses us as we ask of him because we are faithful.
1. “And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.” (1 Jn. 3:22)
  2. “For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto **their prayers**: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.” (1 Pet. 3:12)
- G. Therefore, the food of righteousness is the only food the Christian should desire **for nothing else will satisfy**.
1. One is filled with the righteousness of God as he takes the word of God, obeys its commands and becomes obedient to God’s will, faithfully preserving and doing things pleasing in the sight of God.
  2. For as the song is sung and taken from Psalm 42:1, 2
 

**As the deer panteth for the water  
So my soul longeth after Thee.  
You alone are my heart’s desire  
And I long to worship Thee.**

## II. THE MEAL THAT MAINTAINS, RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. The food of righteousness one consumes in obedience, does not stop there.
1. We eat a physical meal and we are full, but we know we will need food later when hunger and thirst arise again.
    - a. Such keeps our physical bodies healthy.
  2. Likewise, our desire for righteous food goes onward and allows us to maintain and grow.
    - a. For Paul said, “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants **of righteousness**.” (Rom. 6:17, 18)
- B. Now, a servant strives in that area which he serves.
1. He is a slave to it and must do his part.
  2. Therefore, the Christian desires this righteous service and will be filled and rewarded for such.
  3. Furthermore, it is sad to see beloved individuals obedient to Christ, no

longer hungry.

Perhaps, one of the most disappointing things that could possibly happen to a hostess, is to have slaved in the kitchen, preparing a savory meal for guest, have her few, or many guest arrive, and then to sit down at the table prepared so wonderfully well by a hostess interested in entertaining her friends to the best of her ability, and then have them say, as they look upon this table well-laden with food, “I am just not hungry.”

Perhaps it has happened to you. There is certainly a letdown.

There is certainly a feeling of disappointment, and sometimes, a feeling of chagrin (embarrassment). These people whom I have invited to come and partake of these blessings of life that God has bestowed upon me, and which I have worked to prepared, are just not hungry. What a disappointment!

Friends, how do you think the Lord feels, after having made preparation over a period of 4,000 years to save the souls of men by their partaking of the spiritual blessings which God in His mercy has given? How do you think God feels toward those who would say, if they stated the matter honestly, “I am just not hungry?”

Surely God is disappointed. God is disappointed at this very moment, because there are those who claim to be Christians, who are just not hungry.

- C. We should recall the inspired warning of 1 Cor. 15:34 which says, “**Awake to righteousness, and sin not**; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.”
  - 1. Furthermore the same writer recorded, “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; **but righteousness**, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.” (Rom. 14:17)
  - 2. It is of interest and joy to the student of God’s Word to see the following spiritual meals that we may feed off of.
- D. And the meal to pursue, is the Bread of Life.
  - 1. “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; . . .” (Jn. 6:32-35)
  - 2. Jesus will keep us full because he is the bread.
    - a. Therefore, we continually feast on Him or as Matthew says, “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his **righteousness**; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matt. 6:33)
- E. Another meal is the Water of Life.
  - 1. As the latter part of Jn. 6:35 states, “. . . he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”
  - 2. Furthermore, Jesus gives us the assurance of himself as the Water of Life. (Jn. 7:37)

3. Let us also consider the sweet words to that woman at the well in Jn. 4:10-14: “Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”
  - a. Now, the human body is composed of 2/3rds water and it is suggested that one drink 8, 8oz. Glasses of water daily.
  - b. Physically, water is necessary for survival and of course spiritually speaking, it is a necessity for survival as well.
- F. Now, let us consider another meal . . . the milk unto life.
  1. “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” (1 Pet. 2:2, 3)
  2. Milk is necessary for a little ones’s early days and months of life.
    - a. Eventually, the child must go onward to soft foods then, of course, harder foods as little teeth develop and the little one grows.
    - b. It would do us well to seek out those among us who are still fed with the milk of the word.
      - (1) For, there is a time when one should spiritually grow onward in maturity.
      - (2) Did not Paul make this point with those in Corinth when he said, “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?” (1 Cor. 3:1-3)
- G. Furthermore, there comes a time when the man in the pew should be a leader before the pews at the Lord’s table, leading a song, reading scriptures or leading prayer.
  1. There comes a time when the young man and young woman should be standing before a class room, not consistently sitting in a class room.
  2. Therefore, we must seek, train, encourage and steady our people in the way they should grow, maturing and serving our Lord in the local congregation.
- H. Thereby, from the meal of milk, we must hunger and thirst for the meat of life.
  1. And as we think of meat, one cannot ignore the words of Heb. 5:12-14,

“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

- I. With the meals that maintain and of the diet of righteousness, we will increase our spiritual weight and our health will be nourished.
  1. “Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your **righteousness;**” (2 Cor. 9:10).
  2. “Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.” (Phil. 1:11)

### III. THE FOOD THAT FILLS, RIGHTEOUSNESS

- A. It seems that the story of the Prodigal Son in Lk. 15:11-24 is referred to more than any other parable of Christ.
  1. No matter how many times this parable is read, studied and pondered, it seems that something new can be drawn from its deep spiritual well.
  2. Consider for a moment, something that came to the young man’s mind as he was in dire straits and despair in that cesspool of a “slop hole:” Not only did he remember the bread the hired servant had to eat, he recalled “bread enough **and to spare.**” (Lk. 15:17)
    - a. He realized that in his father’s house, there was always something left over.
    - b. Likewise, we hunger and thirst after righteousness and when we are filled, there is still food (righteousness) left over! This is a great blessing from God.
- B. For, when one is filled with “. . . all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope . . .” (Rom. 15:13), there is no limit meaning that, spiritually speaking, it is bread enough **and to spare!**
  1. Again, when one is also “. . . full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.” (Rom. 15:14), again, there is no limit and spiritually speaking, it is bread enough **and to spare!**
  2. This is why the apostle Paul in Col. 2:10 said, “And ye are complete in him (*meaning Jesus Christ*), which is the head of all principality and power:”
- C. Therefore, one can be filled because the past was made right (Isa. 1:18), by which one can be right in the present (1 Jn. 1:7-9; 2:1) and one can be right for the future. (2 Tim. 4:6-8)
- D. Hence, righteousness is the only food that will fill the Christian.
  1. Our hunger and thirst must be filled with what is good and right.
  2. For, nothing else will satisfy, for the Lord and Master we serve: **is**

**righteousness.**

3. “But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, **and righteousness**, and sanctification, and redemption:” (1 Cor. 1:30).

CONCLUSION:

1. The choice to consume, the meals to maintain and the food that fills is **righteousness!**
  - a. When it comes to the spiritual appetites one should have for God, nothing else will matter.
  - b. The “junk foods” of liberalism, denominationalism and every other “ism” against God will never satisfy.
2. But, those that continually hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled completely when they enter into the beautiful home of the blessed and “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” (Rev. 7:16,17)
3. “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.” (Acts 17:31)
  - a. We need to watch our spiritual diets!