

The Beatitudes

Being the followers Jesus longs for



Session 4

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

A Few Notes for Understanding the Beatitudes

Audience:

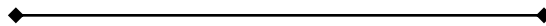
The primary audience is the disciples. There are crowds listening in, but Jesus is directing His teaching to His committed followers.

Purpose:

Jesus is purposefully teaching His disciples the essentials they must know about being His followers and the blessings that result.

Message: The disciple Jesus longs for...

1. is **“poor in spirit.”** They **RECOGNIZE** their desperate need for God and totally trust Him.
The Blessing: You belong to God and know that He is in control.
2. **“mourns.”** They **GRIEVE** over sin and the damage it has caused in their lives and in the world because it separates us from God.
The Blessing: Mourning leads to confession and repentance which brings God’s forgiveness and new life.
3. is **“meek”** meaning they are **HUMBLE**, but **CONFIDENT** in their relationships with God and others and **SUBMIT** to God and God’s ways. They are humble because they recognize they’re own sinfulness and need for God. Confident because they have placed God in control of their lives and know they have received his forgiveness.
The Blessing: In the end, the meek, not the proud, arrogant, and self-centered, will “inherit the earth”—the kingdom of God—for eternity.



BIBLE STUDY

1. Righteousness, simply defined, means to be right. In the Bible it has at least 3 meanings:
 - Spiritual:** To be right with God. This is also called justification. This is a righteousness we only receive as a gift of God’s grace as a result of our faith in Jesus.
 - Personal:** To do right things and live a life worthy of the gift of God’s grace.
 - Communal:** To make sure that others are treated right.

If you had to choose between these three types of righteousness, which do you think Jesus is talking about in this beatitude? Explain why.

2. To understand what righteousness means in this beatitude, it will help to see how the term is used in the rest of the book of Matthew. Read each verse and then identify which one of the three types of righteousness is meant.
 - Matthew 5:10
 - Matthew 5:20
 - Matthew 6:1
 - Matthew 6:33
 - Matthew 9:13
 - Matthew 21:32
 - Matthew 23:28
 - Matthew 25:37

3. Based on your study of the uses of the term “righteousness” in Matthew, what is your personal conclusion about what righteousness means in this beatitude?

Read Psalm 42:1-2 and Psalm 63:1.

4. With these verses as a backdrop to this beatitude, what message is Jesus conveying by the phrase “*hunger and thirst* for righteousness?”

Read Proverbs 16:26.

5. According to this Proverb, what is the value of hunger? How would that apply to hungering for righteousness?

6. What is Jesus saying about what is essential to being a disciple He longs for? How is this speaking to you?

Read Luke 6:44-46, John 10:10, and Ephesians 3:14-19.

7. What do these verses suggest about what it means to be filled?

APPLY

1. Jesus is teaching his disciples the importance of hungering and thirsting for righteousness. How are you doing in this area? Rate yourself on scale of 1-10 with 1 being, “I haven’t been very concerned about it” and 10 being, “I’m desperate to be right with God and do what is right for God.”

2. The following verses will add to your discussion about how we can develop a hunger and thirst for righteousness.

Psalm 143:5-6

What was David doing that caused him to thirst for God? Why would that work?

Philippians 1:9-11

According to this prayer, what leads us to be filled with righteousness? How would you accomplish this?

Romans 7:21-25

Why is Paul so miserable? How can this lead to hunger and thirst for righteousness?

Matthew 25:31-46

What can this parable teach you about how to develop a thirst for doing what is right?