

Changing our tastes / Pursuit of Happiness

What do you hunger and thirst for? *What do you long for, what are you constantly wanting?*

Matthew 5:6 (ESV) Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

God tells us, Jesus tells us – in Him we are to hunger and thirst for ... Say it with me - "righteousness"!

Yet, as a culture and as individuals – we more often hunger and thirst or long - **to be satisfied**.

When we flip these words of Jesus, we pervert these words of Jesus. / Jesus is not saying.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for satisfaction. " Rather, "**Blessed are those who hunger ...**"

Matthew 5:3-5 (ESV) His sermon begins by saying – we enter the kingdom – we are made right to be with God – when we embrace that our soul is bankrupt – dead to God and need of a Savior to breath life into it. (vs 3 *poor in spirit*) He then begins to unfold what our life in the kingdom, what a life with a soul alive to God because of Christ alone – looks like. These are not if then propositions. If you do this then you will get that. No, this is revelation of who we are in Christ. (vs 4) As a Christ follower – we will repent of our brokenness and sin – and we will know God's presence. He doesn't say – I'm sorry your broken and messed up but its ok. Rather, Christ in you will move you to repent of your brokenness and you live in the presence of God's comfort. (vs 5) Humbled that we who are broken are in God's comforting presence only because of Jesus – we are moved to live in the meekness of Christ. Submitted to His power – we taste our inheritance everything God gives us. And now Jesus says. Because I live in you, **You can hunger and thirst for righteousness and as you do I will satisfy your soul.**

Today, let's deep-dive into 1, 2-part question:

What do you hunger and thirst for - and why does it matter?

And let's begin today with this prayer: **God open our eyes to see what we long for and why it matters.** Pray: 5

As we dive in, if we are going to answer "What do you hunger and thirst for?", I think we need to begin by answering ...

01. What does it mean to hunger and thirst for righteousness?

Matthew 5:6 (ESV) "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

What satisfies your hunger - when you are really hungry? Candy, Chocolate, Pop Cycles, Bolts and Screws

What satisfies your thirst – when you are really thirsty? Beer, Coke, Clorox.

Some things on this table don't satisfy, may sound good, but they just don't and other things are just dangerous.

In the greater sense of our life. Jesus is saying, "hunger and thirst" is ...

- hunger and thirst = what we long for; what moves us, wakes us, drives us

Righteousness. What is righteousness? *After the Rez, Jesus had left to Father, the disciples were always in the temple...*

Acts 3:14 (ESV) But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, **Jesus righteous: to be right with God and man by God's holy standards.** Jesus life was holy & right before God & men.

Revelation 19:11 (ESV) Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. **Righteousness is Jesus' life that will right all wrongs.**

- righteousness - Jesus, his holy life - that will redeem this broken world

- hunger and thirst for righteousness - to long for the redeeming life of Christ in us and through us (and others) in this world. (*****put up sign*****) *To hunger & thirst for righteousness means ...*

In Christ, I long for or I hunger to see the redeeming life of Christ moving in this world. *It means I long to see orphans cared for, widows love, the disabled served and encouraged to live able lives in Christ. We are desperate to see single moms supported and loved, abused women and men - loved and healed, those without provided for and told of God's grace (Sharing Shed) – because this is what Jesus did on this earth and what he will do when he returns – and what HE wants to do now thru us, redeem and restore all things.* *To hunger & thirst for righteousness also means-*

I long for the redeeming life of Christ to grow in me, to change me, to become who I am I Christ. I don't just want to check the box of reading the word or praying to feel better. Hungering = I long for Christ. *There are times when you are reading God's word and you think, why don't I do this more? It is not just a feeling –of this feels good. It is peace that passes understanding. It is the sense of God's presence. That he is doing a work in here - in the midst of all the brokenness around me. Prayer is another way we can engage righteousness. This is a weakness but Fran and I are begging God to help us grow in this area. A lot of weighty things going on right now. The other day, I rose my head from prayer & just said to myself, I want more of this. No mystical moment, but the presence of God was real. I was full. That was God, not me, because X is still there!*

- satisfied - to be full, complete - because we are with Jesus and being transformed into His image God promises that as we are hungry for the life of Christ in us and through us in this world –

we – will – be – satisfied. That is about Jesus –not us. Because he is that Satisfying, good, beautiful, GOD!

When you hunger and thirst for righteousness – Jesus satisfies!

14

This is truth. But why then – why are we so often – so empty ... **It goes back to our main question.**

What do you hunger and thirst for (in your life)?

Do you hunger and thirst for the very life of Christ in you? Do you? Can we get gut level honest for a moment? God wants to open your eyes, my eyes. Will you answer a few questions? He loves you, no condemnation.

* What were you desperate for this week? For some, this week became overwhelming. When it did ...

What were you hungering for? - The life of Jesus: peace, compassion, mercy, hope – all this is Jesus.

Or, did you long for escape & did your longing take u to Netflix or 3, 4 drinks. Or, did you long for someone to blame. Did you long to complain & blame - believing this would satisfy you. This has been me this week when I wasn't hungering and thirsting for righteousness. With the weighty stuff – I hungered to complain and blame!

God loves you. He wants to open the eyes of your heart, no condemnation, be honest.

* What were you longing for this week? For some, this week became boring. When it did ...

What did you hunger for? - The life of Jesus: boldness, meekness, love - to let him engage others thru you!

*Or, did you fantasize about her or contemplate what life would be like with him? Did you long for a new life, a different life for you? What did you hunger for? **Listen to Jesus ...***

Matthew 5:6 (ESV) "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

Jesus says – it matters what you hunger and thirst for! And because he loves you, He is opening our eyes right now! Have you, like me, flipped these words of Jesus? Have you perverted His words to say ... **"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for satisfaction."** *I think there is one more question we need to ask to help us with our main question.*

02. What is hungering and thirsting for satisfaction and – why does it matter if this is our longing?

I want to use a story and two more visuals to help. *When we live hungering, longing for satisfaction first, when we distort God's word and believe God's first desire for us is satisfaction – we run 1 of 2 places or both!*

● **We hunger and thirst to SATISFY ME. (**put up sign**)**

#2 Son - Prodigal Son – Luke 15. Father, 2 sons, the younger says – give me my share – I'm out. He takes his portion of the inheritance – everything his father had worked for his whole life. He takes this and leaves to satisfy himself. He is saying – you don't satisfy me. Maybe your stuff can help satisfy me – but you don't.

This is you and I when we seek to find satisfaction in God's stuff – and not God.

*We long for satisfaction – to feel good in His creations: family, mountains, fishing, clothes, food, drink. As this younger son, we live like a **functional atheist**. We are living like God doesn't exist. We aren't acknowledging Him, but we are using all of what He has given us to try find to satisfaction! **Is this you? You Hunger to Satisfy me!***

#1 Son: The older never left home and did what was asked; yet as the story unfolds, we see he doesn't long to be with or love His Father either. Rather, he lives with this motto: everything I do earns me this life I have. Older bro doesn't verbalize this motto but it gets exposed when brother #2 comes home. *The Father goes and finds bro #2, brings him in, celebrates: my son was dead and is alive. [Our life in Christ – death to life.] Yet, older brother stays away, complaining. He says, "He earned nothing but punishment – but you give him a party. I earned a party – but I get nothing. exposed* *This is you and I when we seek to find satisfaction in doing good things to satisfy God. Believing – if we please God, if we satisfy God – **he will satisfy us** – make us feel good. **Is this you?** When we hunger for satisfaction, ...*

● **We hunger and thirst to SATISFY GOD. (**put up sign**)**

As this older son, we long for things of God, just not God or Jesus himself. --- And, we believe that if we obey him – at least outwardly – that we will get the things we want from him. And mostly what we want is to feel good, be comfortable, be accepted for who we are. We don't want God to change us – we simply want to feel better.

We can't believe suffering and pain could ever be part of God's plan to give us His righteousness and if it is...

*(Please hear this) **We want to be satisfied so much that we will give up the righteousness of God, we will discard the glory of Christ – if we can avoid pain. It is why we jettison God, community in the body, & stop longing for the word. We will give up the pursuit of righteousness if that is what we believe it takes to be satisfied.***

But it's a lie. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for satisfaction. **Is - a - lie! 26**

Hamilton, is the story of "the ten-dollar Founding Father without a father". It's compelling because he is a broken hero.

"Satisfied" - a flashback where our broken hero meets his future wife & sister in the same night and falls for both. The song begins with everyone at Hamilton and his wife Eliza's wedding. But then Angelica flashes back to the night they met.

HAMILTON: You strike me as a woman who has never been satisfied.

ANGELICA: I'm sure I don't know what you mean. You forget yourself.

HAMILTON: You're like me. I'm never satisfied. / ANGELICA: Is that right?

HAMILTON: I have never been satisfied. *The rest of the song is Angelica realizing she wants him but can't have him. Her place, his place & her sister. The end -* ANGELICA: He will never be satisfied. I will never be satisfied.

Many of us believe we will never be satisfied in this life. We have tried – and are sure now that it's fool's good. Some are still hoping – something in this life will satisfy us. *So we strive.* Some have settled for tiny tastes. *Jesus says, there is satisfaction in me, but if you give up hungering for righteousness – you will never be satisfied.*

Have you traded the righteousness of Christ – in the hopes of finding satisfaction?

What you hunger and thirst for in your life – does matter!

When you hunger and thirst for satisfaction, you kill your appetite for righteousness (Jesus), and miss the very thing you hunger and thirst for - satisfaction. (repeat) When you hunger and thirst for

satisfaction – you don't hunger for the transforming Word, you don't hunger for real honest community with other believers, you don't hunger for God to move in your home, in your work place, you don't hunger to see wrongs righted through the Christ's righteous life – through us. And we miss the thing you hunger for.

I think God in his mercy has shown us what we hunger for and why it matters. But – loving, gracious Jesus says – this isn't you. You are a new creation – hunger for me. How? Let's end by answering this last question ...

03. How do you increase your appetite for righteousness (Jesus)?

Turn from the lies of “Satisfy Me” or “Satisfy God – to the truth that “God is satisfied with me (you).” **(*put up sign*)** *This will stir your hunger for righteousness (Jesus).*

Ask God to help you believe this truth against the lies of “satisfy me” or “satisfy God!”

It is a lie that there is satisfaction in trying to satisfy God or yourself. But this is truth – God is satisfied with you.

Why does that matter? When the enemy begins to accuse you of hungering and thirsting for satisfaction, when your own old nature shames you & says you have traded any pursuit of righteousness over this last year to be satisfied – remember: HEAR this son – daughter of God our Father – God is satisfied with you. God is still satisfied with you. Why?

• God sees you as righteous - by Jesus' work. **Anchor deep in this truth!**

Romans 4:5 (ESV) And to the one who does not work but believes in Him (Jesus) who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, **(imputed righteousness)** *Given to us because of Christ's work alone!*

Visual: When shame accuses and your file is pulled up – it says see Jesus. And his account is full – perfect, right with God. God is fully satisfied with His son – and this means – in Christ – he is fully satisfied with you. Jesus stood in your place at the cross – so you could have his righteousness. Now, he stands by your side – everyday you are accused.

When I see this – I mourn all my pursuits of satisfaction and how I have discarded the righteousness of Christ to try and obtain this – and yet I realize with great happiness: **God is STILL satisfied with me.**

This moves me to hunger and thirst for the very life of Christ in me and through me – righteousness.

• As we hunger for righteousness – the life of Christ grows in us, and we find that which we can never get on our own – satisfaction.

Heb 10:14 For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy. **(imparted righteo.)**

God has credited Jesus righteousness into your account – but even more amazing – he is changing us into His righteousness. And in this righteousness – is satisfaction. Nixon was our 37th Pres. He was pardoned. Lived with the guilt and shame – because all knew he was guilty. Never could escape that. You are not guilty and you are being transformed from unrighteous to righteous – from a broken sinner to the image and life of Christ. No shame, because sin is gone.

Believer: Do you want to hunger and thirst for Jesus' life right now? Turn from pursuing satisfaction.

Ask Him to help you believe deeper that **GOD is satisfied with me (u).** What will this lead to: a hunger for the Word- not to satisfy God, but to see His life grow in you & others. You will hunger to apply his Word not to satisfy God – but to bring mercy, hope, love, peace – so His righteous life can make right all things that are wrong.

What would happen church if 10 if 20 if 50 of us begged God to increase our hunger for His righteousness – believing he is satisfied with us? What if we believed he is satisfied with us and it

made us desperate for his life in us and through us? Can you imagine what could happen in this place, in our homes, in our neighborhoods? I believe – people would fill the couches in our homes wanting this Jesus. They would fill this place - hungering for righteousness. They would overflow the Sharing Shed. Our work places and neighborhoods would see friends lives changed. Every place we went would see the righteousness of Christ at work – and do you think that would satisfy you to see God at work in us and thru us like that! Oh – yes it would! Let's beg for this in us. Let's pray for this – please. I'm going to ask you to pray for this together before communion. I'm going to ask you to come pray with staff, pastors, and others who will be at the walls. *As you begin to repent & pray where you are – I want to say one more thing to a few others in this room.*

If all you have known is deep wanting. If all you have know is hungering to satisfy God or self. Today, come to the one who says: my righteousness alone, My life alone will satisfy. How? We get the righteousness of Christ because Jesus took on our unrighteousness (*pursuing our satisfaction*).

1 Peter 3:18 (ESV) For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit,

In Christ, life, death, and resurrection, He says I am satisfied with you. You will be able to say, God is satisfied with me. Trust Christ with your soul now – give him your unrighteous life – and receive His. How – we ask!