



Hunger for Christ

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

— Matthew 5:6

Bible Texts: Matthew 5:1–12 (key verse: Matthew 5:6); 1 Corinthians 1:30ⁱ; Galatians 4:19ⁱⁱ; Philippians 3:8–9ⁱⁱⁱ; Matthew 6:33^{iv}; John 6:35^{viii}; John 7:37–38^{vi}; John 4:13–14^{vii}; Amos 5:24^{viii}

Jesus describes the truly blessed person as someone with a deep spiritual appetite. Just as physical hunger is evidence of life, a growing hunger for God is evidence of spiritual life. The fourth Beatitude marks a turning point: after recognizing our poverty of spirit, mourning our sin, and coming to God in meekness, the Lord begins changing what we desire. He gives His people an appetite for Himself and for the righteousness that reflects His character.

1. A Holy Hunger — What Do You Crave Most?

Jesus deliberately uses the strongest physical cravings we know: hunger and thirst. For His first-century hearers, these were not mild inconveniences; they could be matters of survival. When a person is truly starving or dying of thirst, lesser concerns fade into the background. Jesus is not describing a casual interest in God, but a deep longing that makes righteousness the soul’s greatest desire.

Our appetites reveal what matters most to us. Success, comfort, security, approval, career, family activities, and entertainment are not necessarily wrong, but they can crowd out our desire for God. We can become so busy that we feel “full” while remaining spiritually empty. Recognizing that God has been pushed to the edges of our lives is an invitation to reorder our loves, reprioritize our lives, and seek Him again.

Reflection: What has been competing most strongly with my appetite for Christ?

2. A Holy Righteousness — Christ Is What We Need

Righteousness is more than outward rule-keeping. It is a life brought into harmony with God’s will and character—holiness, truth, mercy, justice, integrity, faithfulness, and obedience. Jesus moves righteousness inward: anger matters, lust matters, love for enemies matters, and the condition of the heart matters. The deeper Jesus defines righteousness, the more we realize that we cannot manufacture it ourselves.

The righteousness we need is ultimately found in a Person: Jesus Christ. Paul says Christ has become our righteousness. We cannot earn perfect standing before God; it must be given to us. Through faith in Christ, His righteous record is credited to us—often called imputed righteousness, meaning righteousness counted as ours because we belong to Him. Then, over a lifetime, Christ’s character is



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cultivated in us. Paul modeled this hunger when he counted his religious accomplishments as loss compared with the surpassing worth of knowing Christ. When Christ becomes our greatest treasure, becoming like Him becomes our greatest pursuit.

Reflection: Am I relying more on my own goodness and accomplishments, or on Christ and His righteousness?

3. A Holy Satisfaction — Only Jesus Satisfies

Jesus attaches a promise to this hunger: “they shall be filled.” The world continually offers substitutes—more money, recognition, possessions, achievement, or relationships—but the goal line keeps moving. Pastor Mike compared sin to seawater offered to a desperately thirsty person: it can seem to promise relief, yet it only deepens the thirst. Sin promises satisfaction while leaving the soul emptier.

Christ does not merely point us to living water; He is the living water. He is the Bread of Life. The beautiful tension of the Christian life is that we can be genuinely satisfied in Christ and still hunger for more of Him. This hunger also looks outward: we long for the day when Christ returns and righteousness fills the earth, while even now His righteousness shapes how we serve others, pursue justice, practice integrity, care for those in need, and honor Christ in our homes and communities.

Reflection: Where is Christ inviting me to seek His righteousness more deeply—in my heart, my priorities, or my treatment of others?

Closing Thought

The deepest hunger of the human soul is for Christ. Everything else eventually leaves us wanting more, but Jesus promises that the soul that hungers and thirsts for righteousness will not be turned away empty. Bring Him your hunger. Seek Him first in His Word, in prayer, in worship, and in obedience. As Christ’s righteousness is credited to you and cultivated within you, you will discover the truth at the heart of this Beatitude: only Jesus can satisfy the soul.



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ⁱ 1 Corinthians 1:30 - English Standard Version

³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

ⁱⁱ Galatians 4:19 - English Standard Version

¹⁹ my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!

ⁱⁱⁱ Philippians 3:8-9 - English Standard Version

⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—

^{iv} Matthew 6:33 - English Standard Version

³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

^v John 6:35 - English Standard Version

³⁵ Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

^{vi} John 7:37-38 - English Standard Version - Rivers of Living Water

³⁷ On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'"

^{vii} John 4:13-14 - English Standard Version

¹³ Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

^{viii} Amos 5:24 - English Standard Version

²⁴ But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.