

Sunday Centerpoint

Key Takeaway:

1. Desensitization is a real danger. The brokenness of the world is constant and overwhelming, and it is easy to become numb to it unless it affects us personally. Hungering and thirsting for righteousness means resisting that numbness and moving toward the broken places rather than shrugging them off.
2. Righteousness has layers. The surface layer of Matthew 5:6 points to a personal hunger for God and His Word, and a desire to grow in holiness. But the deeper layer points outward. As the sermon put it: "Self-righteousness or purity is avoiding the world's corruption, whereas righteousness here is actively pursuing the world's restoration."
3. God has always moved toward the marginalized. From the daughters of Zelophehad to Hagar to Ruth to the Samaritan woman, Scripture consistently shows God caring for those pushed to the fringes of society. His people are called to reflect that same movement.
4. We are given a ministry of reconciliation. Second Corinthians 5 describes believers as ambassadors for Christ, entrusted with reconciling the world back to God's standard of justice, love, and mercy. This is bigger than personal piety alone.
5. Filling the gap leads to being filled. Jesus promises satisfaction to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. When we step into the world's brokenness with purpose, we do not just give something away. We receive something as well.

Discussion Questions:

1. The sermon opens with specific examples of brokenness close to home: people waiting for a food pantry, a prayer request about losing a house, children in foster care entering the sex trade. How do you personally tend to respond when you encounter that kind of need? Be honest.
2. Jason admitted to having a "laissez-faire attitude" toward bad news unless it affects someone he personally loves. Why do you think familiarity and emotional distance make it easier to disengage? What does that tendency reveal about us?
3. The daughters of Zelophehad saw a gap between the way culture was treating them and God's standard of justice and righteousness. In Numbers 27, they had the courage to name that gap publicly and bring it to Moses. What do you think it cost them to do that? What fears might they have had to overcome?
4. God not only affirmed the daughters but changed the law for all of Israel going forward. What does that response tell you about God's character and what He values?
5. The sermon draws a distinction between personal righteousness and a righteousness that actively pursues the world's restoration. Do you think most Christians you know tend to emphasize one over the other? What are the risks of focusing too narrowly on only one?
6. The sermon mentions that early Christians were known to walk the edges of forests to rescue infants left to die, which baffled the Romans. Why do you think acts of unexplained, costly love have historically been one of the most powerful witnesses to the character of God?

Practical Applications:

1. As a group, research one need in your local community that is going unmet or underserved. This could be foster care, food insecurity, housing instability, or something else entirely. Spend time in prayer together about whether God is calling your group to take a step toward filling that gap.
2. Consider what it would look like to move from being a consumer of information about the world's brokenness to being an active participant in its restoration. What would need to change in your schedule, your budget, or your priorities to make that shift?

