



Parkway Fellowship

Livin' the Dream • Stay Hungry, My Friends • Matthew 5:6 • 2/2/2020

MAIN POINT

When we surrender our will to God, He gives us a hunger for Himself and satisfies us.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

Thinking strictly in the physical, earthly realm, name one thing you want right now.

Now think about the same question spiritually. What one thing do you want most?

In your experience, which has been more fulfilling: having your physical wants fulfilled or spiritual? Explain.

Whether in a literal or figurative sense, we all know what it is to hunger and thirst. What we hunger and thirst for, though, and how badly we want it, says something about our worldview and our relationship with Christ. In today's session, we'll see what kind of wants Jesus said would end in full satisfaction.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Ask a volunteer to read Matthew 5:6.

As mentioned in this week's message, there are two kinds of righteousness: the righteousness of Christ (relationship with God) and the righteousness to which followers of Jesus are called (lifestyle for God). On the one hand, God gives us His own righteousness through our faith in Christ. On the other, we're called to hunger to become more righteous than we are. We're to desire to be more like Christ and rely on Him for the journey of Christian living.

In your own words, what is Jesus saying in Matthew 5:6?

Does this mean it is wrong to want a new car, to eat at your favorite restaurant after church, or to desire a different job? Explain.

Is it possible to hunger and thirst for worldly things and righteousness at the same time? Explain.

Would you say that people of all religions hunger and thirst for righteousness? What do they typically do about it?

How do Jesus' words here speak to the tendency in people to earn righteousness?

Hunger and thirst are metaphors for the desire for righteousness, which most people hope to attain. The key difference here is that righteousness is not something we can achieve by our own efforts. "They will be filled" describes an act of God. He imparts righteousness, through Jesus' work on the cross, to those who believe.

What does it mean that we're given Christ's righteousness through faith? What are the implications of this truth? How does that reality shape your view of Jesus and your relationship with Him?

What type of people do the world typically view as "blessed"? How does the world define righteousness?

Throughout Jesus' earthly ministry, He encountered people who were impressed by what He could do for them in an earthly sense. He fed thousands when they were hungry; He healed the sick; He turned water into wine at a wedding. In and of themselves, though, being "filled" by those things would never be enough for those people. They would constantly want more. True and lasting joy, however, comes from the assurance that all righteousness will one day be fulfilled. The believer will personally become perfected, never to sin again, and in God's kingdom unrighteousness will be gone forever.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

As ways to apply the test to our lives, in this week's message we were challenged to stop filling up on "junk food", make knowing God our number one goal, and put ourselves in a position to lead others. Which of these stands out to you the most personally as the way you need to "stay hungry"? Explain.

Aside from Christ's righteousness, what are some things you are tempted to pursue for satisfaction in this life? Why?

What have you been doing to pursue righteousness? What are some mechanisms you have in your life to cultivate a hunger for righteousness?

PRAYER

Pray and thank God that our quest for righteousness isn't something we have to do on our own. Thank Jesus that He dwells in us to manifest His righteousness in our lives.

COMMENTARY

| Matthew 5:6

5:6. Hunger and thirst are characteristics, again, of the oppressed and downtrodden. Jesus again clarified that the realm of which he spoke is the spiritual, not the physical. A person who is starving for righteousness, whether in one's own life or in one's environment, is not a happy person, if that person is focused on his or her immediate circumstances. Happiness comes from the assurance that all righteousness will some day be fulfilled. The believer will personally become perfected, never to sin again, and the kingdom will be purged of all unrighteousness.

Skeptics of Christianity argue that the Bible cannot be true because of all the evil in the world. "Why has not God done anything about that?" they sneer. One Christian responded, "Your skepticism only seeks to excuse yourself. For the moment, let us set aside the evil 'out there.' The question you should be asking is, 'What shall we do about the evil in you?' " For kingdom servants, there should certainly be a hunger and thirst for righteousness to be restored in our surrounding world. But there must be an even deeper hunger that such restoration begin within our own heart. (Old Testament parallels include Pss. 32; 37; 51; 73; 139:23–24; Prov. 8:22–36.)