

KINGDOM ATTRIBUTES

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST FOR JUSTICE

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

The beatitudes are the code of conduct for the believers to maintain kingdom standards here on earth. They set out the expectations for our behaviour in different situations. The beatitudes contrast kingdom standards and earthly standards.

It Is Important We Define Two Words To Gain A Better Understanding Of This Scripture

Blessed – means more than happiness, the experience of hope and joy independent of outward experiences.

Righteousness – the condition that is acceptable to God. Your life is perfect before God; you are perfect, you have never lied, gossiped etc.

In other words, we could say your experience of hope and joy is based on your hunger and thirst to be perfect before God and this will fulfil you.

This beatitude is telling us to hunger and thirst for something that does not come naturally to us and even with the greatest of strength we cannot achieve it. In the Bible if something is beyond your capacity God provides the way and God is the answer.

Some Key Characteristics That Can Help Us Towards Righteousness Or Nudge Us In The Right Direction

A hungry person is a focused person – this is the type of hunger that will drive you to find food. A hungry person will not stop until they are satisfied. We need to have a desire for God.

A hungry person is humble – if you are truly hungry when someone offers you something you would prefer not to eat, you would accept without hesitation. When God has shown you THE solution to your hunger there is no choice, you accept it because that is the option that's there and that is the best solution.

Humility is key!

A Hungry Person Does Not Entertain Distractions

... If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith. (Philippians 3:7-11, NIV)

The Apostle Paul lists his earthly credentials and to the human eye these can be seen as righteous acts. However he goes on to say we can never attain righteousness through works but through faith in Jesus Christ. Jesus is the solution for our hunger for righteousness.

Seeking Righteousness Will Go Against Our Own Desires

Paul writes that he is a full-blooded Jewish person. His background did not give him first dibs. It did not take him to the front of the Godly queue. It does not matter what race, class, caste or level of education. Jesus levels the playing field.

Paul was well educated in the Jewish law (Pharisee). Attaining a high level of education is a source of pride for many however even this before Jesus does not give you favours.

Paul had tremendous passion and zeal. Paul's passion came under control when he had an encounter with Jesus.

Your background, education and passions are important however in the bigger picture how much influence will you allow these to have over your faith?

In our pursuit of righteousness, we need to be ready and willing to give up the things that could stop us seeking God. Paul says he considers everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus.

For Me This Is A Very Challenging Standard However Let's Have A Look At The Solution God Has Given Us

But now I am going away to the one who sent me, and not one of you is asking where I am going. Instead, you grieve because of what I've told you. But in fact, it is best for you that I go away because if I don't, the Advocate won't come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God's righteousness, and of the coming judgment. The world's sin is that it refuses to believe in me. Righteousness is available because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more. Judgment will come because the ruler of this world has already been judged. (John 16:5-11, NLT)

The work of the Holy Spirit will convict the world of its sin calling it to repentance.

The Holy Spirit will reveal the standard of God's righteousness to anyone who believes. What is that standard?

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. (Romans 3:22, NLT)

God the father sent Jesus Christ to earth to live as a human being. He was the embodiment of a perfect life on earth demonstrating love peace and justice. Jesus then became a sacrifice for our sins and died for our sins. When we have faith that Jesus has saved us, He forgives our sins and now through faith in Jesus we are presented as perfect before GOD!

Practical Pointers On Things That Can Help US Cultivate A Conducive Environment To Hunger And Thirst For The Things Of God

But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said "Lord, who has believed our message?" So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ. (Romans 10:16-17, NLT)

1. Put yourself in the environment of faith around other believers. With COVID-19 it has made it physically not possible to do this. However continue to engage with the online services and zoom meetings.
2. Read your Bible, really seek God, have a desire to understand His word. Give yourself time to understand God's word and look to see what He is saying to you through His word.
3. Seek guidance from the Holy Spirit. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal things that could be killing your thirst for the things of God.
4. If you are watching this for the first time your journey to right standing with God begins by accepting Jesus into your life.
5. Be accountable. You cannot walk this Christian journey alone you need to have other Christians around you who you can talk and share your struggles. (Proverbs 13:20) Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffers harm.

As a believer it is up to you to cultivate this desire for righteousness. God rewards those who genuinely seek him. The Bible says the reward of righteousness is satisfaction/fulfilment and I know the fulfilment from God is permanent and everlasting.