

Blessed - Sermon 5 - Spiritual Appetite

Matthew 5:6

INTRODUCTION: We are in a series of sermons we are calling, “Blessed”.

Remember in our introduction to this series we said that the state of being blessed was a word that outside of scripture was only used in reference the Pantheon of Greek Gods and Goddesses...

We said that biblically it was a word used to denote the - Power, Presence, and Provision of God.

We also learned that the first word of the first sermon Jesus ever preached was, “Blessed”. God wants you to live the Blessed Life. And the beatitudes are a prescriptive for just that.

Three weeks ago: We saw that those who recognized their **Spiritual Poverty** were blessed of God. This week we are in verse 4... let’s look at it together.

Two weeks ago: We saw that those who **mourn** are uniquely positioned to receive God’s blessing.

Last week: We learned that the Meek are blessed for they shall inherit the earth.

Today we look at this mysterious idea of the Spiritual Appetite.

History can be taught as a series of great people, or great events... but scripture often tells us history as a series of great meals. Consider the fact that:

- History begins with a meal - Adam and Eve eating that forbidden fruit.
- History also consulates with a meal - the marriage supper of the lamb.
- There are two great meals in the middle -
 - Passover following the Exodus.
 - And the Last supper preceding the crucifixion.

It shouldn’t surprise us that we see language related to meals throughout the scriptures.

When David gave his grand invitation in Psalm 34, he didn't invite us to come and accept a series of truth claims, but rather he told to “TASTE” and see that the Lord is good.

Nor should it surprise us that our Lord said,

TEXT: Matthew 5:6 (ESV)

⁶ “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”

There are three things I'd like to show you about this verse...

1. The Essence of the Spiritual Appetite

Vrs. 6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst

When God created man and woman and placed them in the garden - they were created BY Him and FOR Him. The fall destroyed that relationship, but in the absence of a relationship with the Divine, a hunger developed, a yearning, if you will to regain something we've lost.

Blaise Pascal described it this way - *“There is a God-shaped vacuum in the heart of each man which cannot be satisfied by any created thing but only by God the Creator, made know through Jesus Christ.”*

So there is, even in a lost person, this yearning for God. We don't identify as such, but it exists as a deep spiritual dissatisfaction.

Major Vee Gilbert, Famous military leader during the first world war. In his book, “The Last Crusade”

He talks about what they experience by way of hunger and thirst. Our heads ached, our eyes became blood shot and dim in the blinding glare, our tongues began to swell, our lips turned to a purplish black, and began to burst. Those who dropped out of the column were never seen again but the desperate force battled on to Sherea. There were wells at Sherea. They had been unable to take the place by night fall. If they did not take it this day thousands were doomed to die of thirst. We fought that day as men fight for their lives. We entered Sherea station on the heels of the retreating Turks. The first objects that met our view were the great stone cisterns full of cold clear drinking water.

Do you see that? Well within the human heart there is a similar appetite... but rather than filling it with God, they fill it with 1,001 other things.

The Prophet Jeremiah says it this way in Jeremiah 2:13 (ESV)

¹³ for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

ILLUSTRATION: We are like that **SOUTH AMERICAN PLANT** - I read about a strange plant in South America that moves around until it finds some moist ground. Then it lets its roots down in that moist ground. It's green for a while but after a while the moisture is all taken up and the plant moves on to more moist ground.

- **Solomon** had that same experience. He tells us about it in Ecclesiastes.

Solomon tried every old well there was to slake his spiritual thirst. But when he came to the end of it all he said, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." You try this old world's wells and they will never fully satisfy.

ILLUSTRATION: Dessert - In the desert when a person becomes dehydrated they basically begin to hibernate. They wake up to the most extreme thirst. At that point they will drink anything, even if it will kill them so long as it has the characteristics of water -

- It could be antifreeze
- It could be salt water
- Perhaps it's liquid perhaps it's sweet. For example if you are really thirsty and someone offers you pancake syrup it will not quench your thirst. As a matter of fact it will do just the opposite.

ILLUSTRATION C.S. Lewis said that for every desire you find in a creature there is a satisfaction.

- Ducks want to swim – there is water.
- Birds are hungry there is such a thing as worms.
- Babies are thirsty, there is such a thing as milk.
- ***If I find within myself a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy there must mean there is another world.***

QUOTE - Lewis also said, our biggest problem is not that we want too much, but that we want too little. We are like a child who insists upon having a peanut butter sandwich when filet minion is offered.

That brings us to #2...

2. The Object of the Spiritual Appetite

Vrs. 6.b for righteousness.

This Spiritual Appetite can only be satiated by one particular feast -You see if a man is truly physically hungry - he will eat anything as long as it won't kill him. But if a man is spiritually hungry - only one meal will he feed on, now it doesn't say that those who hunger and thirst for God will be blessed, but rather those who hunger and thirst for righteousness... Righteousness is the practical experience of God.

According the Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible - *Righteousness refers to the fulfillment of what is necessary to fully experience a relationship.*

Psalm 42:1–2 (ESV)

¹ As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. ² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

Psalm 63:1–2 (ESV)

¹ O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul thirsts for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water. ² So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary, beholding your power and glory.

A.W. Tozer

The great people of the bible and Christian History have had an insatiable hunger for God. He wants to be wanted. Too bad that with many of us he has to wait so very long in vain.

3. The Satisfaction of the Spiritual Appetite

Vrs. 6.c for they shall be satisfied.

Satisfied - A very strong and graphic word, originally applied to the feeding and fattening of animals in a stall. In Apoc. 19:21, it is used of the filling of the birds with the flesh of God's enemies. Also of the multitudes fed with the loaves and fishes (Matt. 14:20; Mark 8:8; Luke 9:17). It is manifestly appropriate here as expressing the *complete satisfaction* of spiritual hunger and thirst.

Keep in mind this satisfaction is not something held up as a promise for heaven... but an experience in life.

Martin Lloyd Jones

If this verse is to you one of the most blessed statements in all of scripture, you can be quite sure you are a Christian. If it is not, you better examine your foundations again.

Psalm 17:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ As for me, I shall behold your face in righteousness; when I awake, I shall be satisfied with your likeness.

David Jeremiah

We all have about as much of God as we really want

ILLUSTRATION;

The great teacher Socrates was approached by a student who asked, "Oh great teacher, I desire knowledge, teach me knowledge." Socrates grabbed the young man by the back of the neck and drug him down to the river, they waded about waste deep then Socrates plunged the student into the water. After about 30 seconds he lifted the young man out and asked him, "tell me again, what is it that you want? KNOWLEDGE the young man replied. Socrates plunged him into the water a second time this time for 50 seconds.... Then pulling him up he said, "What is it you want boy? KNOWLEDGE give me knowledge. A third time Socrates dunked the boy this time for a minute. After bringing the boy up he said, what was it you wanted again, the boy said, AIR I WANT AIR. Socrates said, "young man when you want knowledge like you want air, you will have it.

When you hunger and thirst for righteousness..... you shall be filled.