

The Beatitudes

Lesson 4

“Blessed Are Those Who Hunger And Thirst For Righteousness”

Introduction.

1. For the last four weeks we have been studying the beatitudes found in Matthew 5.
2. All of us need to frequently read and meditate on the beatitudes.
3. They are the secret to guaranteed happiness.
4. Everyone who wants to be happy must follow Jesus’ instructions for happiness.
5. No one who ignores Jesus’ instructions on happiness will find it.
 - a. Some may find temporary happiness pursuing the temporary pleasures of sin. See Heb. 11:25.
 - b. Sin can bring temporary happiness, but sin has great consequences. (Gal. 6:7-8).

Gal 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.

Gal 6:8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

6. Jesus is the One who created us (Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:16, 17), and He knows the way to true happiness.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

John 1:3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

Col 1:16 For by Him all things were created, {both} in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities--all things have been created through Him and for Him.

Col 1:17 He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

7. He is the One who gives the abundant life. (Jn. 10:9-10).

John 10:9 "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

John 10:10 "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have {it} abundantly.

- a. The word “abundantly” comes from the Greek “perissos” [peh ris sahs].
- b. It means “over and above, exceeding abundantly, supremely.”
- c. It means here “exceeding abundantly” as it is translated in the American Standard Version in Ephesians 3:20.
- d. The New American Standard Bible reads.

Eph 3:20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us

Fourth Beatitude

MAT 5:6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

1. "Hunger and thirst" are very strong, powerful urges.
 - a. Unfulfilled these powerful desires can become intense, consuming desires.
 - b. Unfulfilled they lead to severe health problems and even to death.
2. **What is the hungriest you have ever been?**
 - a. Most people have gone at least a day without food.
 - b. Some have gone much longer without food.
 - c. There are claims of people going without food for 40, 60 or even 90 days or more.
 - d. Some people have done horrible and loathsome things when hunger became unbearable.
3. It is hard to imagine how hungry Jesus was in the wilderness. (Matt. 4:1-2; Lk. 4:2).

Matt 4:1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Matt 4:2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry.

Luke 4:2 for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry.

- a. Note Luke states Jesus "ate nothing during those days."
- b. Jesus was not the first to fast forty days. (Deut. 9:9, 11).

Moses On Mount Sinai

Deut 9:9 "When I went up to the mountain to receive the tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant which the LORD had made with you, then I remained on the mountain forty days and nights; I neither ate bread nor drank water.

Deut 9:11 "It came about at the end of forty days and nights that the LORD gave me the two tablets of stone, the tablets of the covenant.

1. Moses "neither ate bread nor drank water" while "on the mountain forty days and nights."
2. It is hard to imagine how Moses did that, but we should in mind what he was doing on the Mount and who was watching over Him.

The Fast Of Jesus

1. As already mentioned, the Bible states **Jesus ate nothing** during His fast in the wilderness. (Lk. 4:2).
2. Both Matthew and Luke are silent about Jesus' consumption of water.
3. He may or may not have consumed water during His long fast.
4. The may or may not be viewed as a miracle, but it should be kept in mind Matthew's account of the temptations of Christ records some miracles.

Miracle One

Mark 1:12 Immediately the Spirit *impelled Him {to} {go} out into the wilderness.

Mark 1:13 And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and **He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.**

- Mark affirmed during the forty days Jesus was being tempted in the wilderness by Satan, He was "with wild feasts"
- He also affirms "the angels were ministering to Him."

Miracle Two

Jesus Taken To Temple In Jerusalem

Matt 4:5 Then the devil took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple,

Matt 4:6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON {their} HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'"

Matt 4:7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

- Satan miraculously took Jesus to Jerusalem and "had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple.
- This was a miracle - not merely a dream or vision.

Miracle Three

Jesus Taken To A Very High Mountain

Matt 4:8 Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory;

Matt 4:9 and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me."

Matt 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

- Once again we learn the devil took Jesus to a very high unknown mountain and "showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory."
- This is again a miracle since "all the kingdoms of the world" cannot be seen from any mountain.

Miracle Four

Angels Ministered To Jesus

Matt 4:11 Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and {began} to minister to Him.

- Assuming Jesus drank no water for 40 days like Moses, we have a powerful account of God’s miraculous intervention.
- This may very well be a miracle since human experience cannot explain going without water for such a long time.

Some Lessons Learned From The Fourth Beatitude

“Hunger And Thirst For Righteousness.”

1. We should have an intense desire to do what is right and to be right with God.

PSA 106:3 How blessed are those who keep justice, Who practice righteousness at all times!

PSA 42:1 As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for Thee, O God.

Ps 119:5 Oh that my ways may be established [directed] To keep Your statutes!

Ps 119:10 With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments.

Ps 119:11 Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.

Ps 119:12 Blessed are You, O LORD; Teach me Your statutes.

Ps 119:15 I will meditate on Your precepts And regard [have respect of] Your ways.

Ps 119:16 I shall delight in Your statutes; I shall not forget Your word.

Ps 119:18 Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law.

Ps 119:26 I have told of my ways, and You have answered me; Teach me Your statutes.

Ps 119:27 Make me understand the way of Your precepts, So I will meditate on Your wonders.

Ps 119:40 Behold, I long for Your precepts [commandments]; Revive me through Your righteousness.

Ps 119:105 Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.

2. **Note:**

- a. Jesus always pursued righteousness in His life and He taught others to seek God’s righteousness first. (Matt. 6:33).
- b. Jesus warned we must not practice “righteousness” to be seen of men as did the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matt. 6:1-4).

Beware

Matt 6:1 "Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them; otherwise you have no reward with your Father who is in heaven.

Giving To The Poor

Matt 6:2 "So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and

in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.
Matt 6:3 "But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,
Matt 6:4 so that your giving will be in secret; and your Father who sees {what is done} in secret will reward you.

- The religious leaders and all hypocrites called attention to their giving that they might gain the praise of men.
- Jesus taught we are to keep our giving as secret as possible and especially not to give to receive the praise of men.

Praying To Be Seen Men

Matt 6:5 "When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.
Matt 6:6 "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees {what is done} in secret will reward you.

- This was not a prohibition against public prayer. (1 Tim. 2; 1 Cor. 14).
- It was not a prohibition against praying with others.
- We are not to pray to be seen of men, that is, to gain their praise.

Vain Repetitions

Matt 6:7 "And when you are praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose that they will be heard for their many words.
Matt 6:8 "So do not be like them; for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him.

- Prayers do not have to be long, but can be very brief as was the model prayer Jesus taught.
- Jesus prayed "all night" before He appointed the twelve apostles.

3. "Righteousness" often has the idea of justification [being right with God]. See Rom. 4:11; 10:3,4.

Rom 4:11 and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, so that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, that righteousness might be credited to them,

Rom 10:3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

Rom 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

- a. "Righteousness" comes from the Greek word "dikaiosune" [dee ki ah soo nay].\
- b. It means to be pardoned and treated as innocent - not on probation.
- c. **This is what God promises.** (Heb. 8:12).

Heb 8:12 "FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE."

- d. This beatitude means we should have an intense desire to be right with God.

1) Right refers to what is right in God's sight.

2) It does not refer to doing what is right in our own eyes nor to doing what men desire is right. (Prov. 14:12; Isa. 55:8-9; Jer. 10:23; Matt. 15:9).

Prov 14:12 There is a way {which seems} right to a man, But its end is the way of death.

Is 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways," declares the LORD.

Is 55:9 "For {as} the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Jer 10:23 I know, O LORD, that a man's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.

Matt 15:9 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.'

The Blessing

1. "for they shall be satisfied" - NIV "filled" Gr. "chor **tah** zoh" - "satisfied, filled."

a. This means those who "hunger and thirst for righteousness" will be satisfied, that is, obtain justification.

b. This means they will obtain salvation by God's grace.

1) Cornelius was a man who hungered and thirst to be right with God. (Acts 10:2).

2) Though he loved God and was striving to be right with Him, he was lost.

3) Peter went to his house to teach him words [the gospel] by which he and his family could be saved. (Acts 11:13, 13).

4) Peter then commanded them to be baptized. (Acts 10:48).

2. Here is a description of those who have a deep desire to be right with God.

a. They shall find themselves walking in the light. See Col. 1:12, 13; 1 Jn. 1:5-7; Eph. 5:8.

Col 1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

Col 1:13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

1 John 1:5 This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.

1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him and {yet} walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;

1 John 1:7 but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Eph 5:8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light

b. They shall stand justified [pardoned, approved and forgiven] by God.

3. Here are some facts we must never forget.

- Receiving God's righteousness is more important than all human wisdom and education.
- Receiving God's righteousness is more important than race, nationality or family lineage.
- Receiving God's righteousness should be more important than food, drink or clothing. (Matt. 6:33).
- Receiving God's righteousness should be more important than the praise of men. (Matt. 6:1).
- Receiving God's righteousness must be more important than family and friends. (Matt. 10:37).
- Receiving God's righteousness should be more important than worldly power. (1 Cor. 1:26).
- Receiving God's righteousness must be more important than wealth. (Matt. 16:26).

Conclusion.

1. In the next lesson we will examine the 5th beatitude.
2. Only merciful people will enjoy happiness now and forever.

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