

Lesson 3

The Beatitudes - Part 2

Key Scripture Readings: Matthew 5:6-8

Summary

- “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied” (Matthew 5:6). When we think of hunger, we typically attach it to food. We wake up hungry and eat breakfast. We get hungry on the job and eat lunch. We get off from work hungry and eat supper. Due to being fully human (as well as fully God), Jesus became hungry after fasting for forty days and nights (Matthew 4:4). While every person experiences physical hunger, only those who seek to please God hunger and thirst for righteousness.
 - He hungers to know God and be in a relationship with Him. “As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul longs after you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God” (Psalm 42:1-2).
 - He hungers to be made righteous through the word of God. “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). Those who were “pricked” by Peter’s sermon on Pentecost had a hunger to submit to God’s word (Acts 2:36-37).
- “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy” (Matthew 5:7). Mercy involves compassion towards the suffering of others and a willingness to relieve that suffering. It requires trying to ease another person’s hurt, even if they do not deserve it.
 - God demonstrated mercy towards us when we were lost in our sins. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).
 - After seeing a Jewish traveler beaten by robbers and left to die on the road, Jesus says, “But a Samaritan, who was on a journey, came upon him; and when he saw him, he felt compassion, and came to him and bandaged up his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them; and he put him on his own beast, and brought him to the inn and took care of him” (Luke 10:33-34). The Samaritan felt compassion for someone suffering and took action!
- “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). While Christians need to strive for moral purity, this verse probably refers to being a sincere and genuine disciple. J.B. Philips translates the passage, “Blessed are the utterly sincere.”
 - Unlike many Jewish religious leaders of Jesus’ day, disciples must strive for consistency between their hearts and lives (Matthew 23:25-29). They are not hypocrites! Their love for the Lord must be evident before God and men.

Study Questions

1. What is your initial reaction to the hungering and thirsting for righteousness that Jesus speaks of in this sermon?
2. What often hinders us from hungering and thirsting for righteousness? How do we overcome these obstacles?
3. What is your initial reaction to the merciful that Jesus speaks of in this sermon?
4. What often hinders us from being merciful? How do we overcome these obstacles?
5. What is your initial reaction to the purity of heart that Jesus speaks of in this sermon?
6. What often hinders us from being pure in heart? How do we overcome these obstacles?
7. What will the starving for righteousness, merciful, and pure in heart receive from God? Give the meaning of these blessings.