

August 26th, 2018
Pinecrest Baptist Church
a.m.

Sermon Series: Being Heavenly Happy
Sermon #5 Title: Holy Hunger
Sermon #5 Text: (Matthew 5:6)

We come to the fourth beatitude in our study of heavenly happiness, and it comes with a subject central to life and death, and that is the subject of being hungry and thirsty, and Jesus uses the force of your appetite to explain the blessing of true satisfaction.

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” – Matthew 5:6

*Note – The people in those days, and in other places of the world in our day, know a great deal more about hunger and thirst than we do snuggled in safely and abundantly here in North Mississippi.

- On a daily basis, most of our society and culture, are accustomed to food in arms reach at all times – so much so, we have lost the magnitude of what it means to “hunger” and “thirst.”

(Having said that, we know first hand that there are people in our area, children especially, that do know and understand hunger and thirst.)

- Biblically speaking:

- Life in those days, for the common man, hunger and thirst were his lifelong opponents, front and center, along with all other issues of life.

- So when Jesus used the terms “hunger and thirst” in His message, those two concepts resonated profoundly with the hearers.

What can we understand about Hunger and Thirst?

I. The Nature of Hunger and Thirst

*Note – The first thing to know about Hunger and Thirst is that both of them as a force in life, is designed by God. He created the concept of hunger, and He created the concept of thirst.

A. *They were Wonderful Gifts*

The first thing to realize is that eating and drinking were originally given to us mere enjoyment, and one day that is all they will be again.

1.) Genesis 1:29 – God created food for Adam and Eve. – “And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.”

2.) Revelation 22:2 – “In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

- the term there for the “healing” of the nations, is a word that means to heal, but also has a double meaning, which means to give attention, and attendance to.

*Note – In other words, it doesn’t necessarily mean that there will be wounding that needs healing, as much as it means

there these trees will be an attention, and attendance by the nations.

- We know that one of these days, the Saved will eat and drink with the Lord Jesus when the only kingdom, is the Lord's kingdom.

Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 5:18-19 – “Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God.”

*Note – All of that being said, that originally, food was given and provided for men to enjoy.

(Now I've heard men say, and know some personally that teach, men had to eat, or they would die, they wouldn't go on living forever that's why God gave them food.) – The best I can say to that is, hogwash. The Bible makes it clear that death came by sin . . . where there was no sin, there was no death. – but before there was sin, there was food! – and it was food to enjoy.

B. They are now Wired in Needs

*Note – When Adam fell, they went from being a Wonderful Gift, to being Wired In Needs.

1.) When Adam sinned, eating and drinking were no longer a luxury, they became a necessity, and with that came what I call the only concept in requiring something for “self-preservation.” – It is now his ever present Need.

- Physically speaking –Hunger and Thirst are ultimately matters of life and death.

2.) Our bodies are not “self-existing” or “self-sustaining bodies.”

~ Without consumption of food, there is cessation of life. God has put everything a body needs to carry on – outside of that body, and that body must get it inside in order to keep on living.

- This is what's behind the praise of Psalm 104:14-15 – “He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.”

- There are medical reports that some people may live up to 8 weeks without food, as long as they have water – and of course that depends on the condition you're in to begin with.

- Doctor's tell us that in the very best of conditions, the human body can only live from 3 to 5 days without water.

*Note – Whatever else may be said, when the Lord speaks of “hungering” and “thirsting” He is not merely speaking of personal cravings, He is speaking of something that His audience understood to be a matter of life and death.

C. They serve as Warning Signs

1.) The word for “hunger” here is the word “penaho” – and it means a pinching toil, some tell us that this is where get the idea of “pinning away”, or to “pine” for something. – Inherent in the word is concept of a pain.

True hunger and thirst are warning signs that your body is in peril, and your earthly life is in danger and that warning sign comes in the form of pain.

- We aren't talking about the headache you get from not having your coffee...

- We aren't talking about the nausea you get because you didn't eat breakfast...

- We are talking about a hunger and thirst that takes total command of every priority in your life.

*Note – I heard another preacher one time give a good description of a man who is actually and truly hungry . . .

#1 – He is a Focused Man – He couldn't care less about the stock market, the ball score, the white house, or his next vacation . . . A hungry, starving man, has nothing else in his mind, heart, will, or soul, but to be fed.

#2 – He is a Humble Man . . . a truly hungry man would eat out of a trash can in front of a watching world. A man or woman who will keep their pride over their hunger isn't hungry. – Like the fellow said – “He'll take bread on any terms.”

*Note – I am reminded of an evening during the ministry of our food pantry. There is a movement in my heart when I see a family come and receive the food that has been provided and they receive it with thanksgiving and gratitude, and a great many people we minister to do that.

- But there was one evening, when one particular lady came by one particular table, and turned her nose up at one of the items we had to give. Rather crudely and arrogantly said, “Who eats that?” – To which our delicate angel of truth, Sis. Janie Kingen, replied – “I guess you will if you're hungry.”

- a hungry person turns their nose up at nothing, and their head down in gratitude for everything they receive.

#3 – He is a Searching Man – A person who is truly hungry doesn't sit down and wait for someone to happen by and gleefully put food in their mouth. – A hungry man searches out food necessary to survive.

- it motivates him to search
- it motivates him to work
- it motivates him to move

- In fact, the Proverbist seems to soften the blow of a thief who steals out of hunger. – Proverbs 6:30 – “Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;” – Now that's not permission to steal, but it is a testimony to the magnitude and force of the power of hunger.

*Note – All of that being said, - Hunger and Thirst are a FORCE that has the ability to capture you, to control you, left unharnessed by the Lord.

- They knew in principle what Jesus was speaking of:

II. The Picture of Hunger and Thirst – “for righteousness”

*Note – Jesus is not speaking of food and water. He is using a fleshly force to picture the ultimate truth. The Blessing in the message is not “THAT you hunger and thirst” but WHAT you hunger and thirst for . . . righteousness!

- Let me tell you who this message resonated with – it resonated with people who knew the pains, and voids, and effects of being “unrighteous.”

*Note – Now this is not unfamiliar to those people who had a working knowledge of the Bible. If there were people in that crowd familiar with the scriptures, the language Jesus used is the language Isaiah used . . .

Isaiah 55:1 – “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

Furthermore whoever would follow Jesus would hear Him use this kind of language again later on in His ministry . . .

John 6:35 – “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”

This is the spiritual language of the Bible! – Hungering, and Thirsting for RIGHTEOUSNESS is the Craving of every heart that is turned toward the Lord!

What is Jesus speaking of? – When he said that to those people on that day, He spoke not of a specified righteousness, but a hunger that the only thing that exists is righteousness.

- A craving for righteousness is a complete distaste for unrighteousness!

A. A Hunger for Personal Righteousness

1.) Following the first 3 conditions mentioned in the kingdom – Poor in Spirit, the Mournful, and the Meek, He was speaking of people with a distaste, and loathing for their own sin, and desire for restraint in their own lives.

Remember 2 Corinthians 7:10 – the Bible explains to us the kind of mourning, and sorrow that brings about happiness is sorrow over sin that leads to repentance.

- 2 Corinthians 7:10 – “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of:”

- the theme of personal sin, and personal righteousness is the first desire in the heart of anyone whose heart will get under Jesus.

2.) David prayed in Psalm 139:23-24 – “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

3.) He wrote in the 5th Psalm vs 8 – “Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine

enemies; make thy way straight before my face.”

*Note – Now here is a distinction that needs to be made – Jesus is speaking about people who really, really, really want to go to heaven . . . He is speaking of people, who grieve because they are sinners, and they do not just desire to *do* right, but crave that they may *be* right.

- It is the same attitude of Isaiah, when he said, “Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips.” – Woe unto me for being a sinner.

B. A Hunger for Prevailing Righteousness

1.) A hunger to see righteousness prevail over sin, over all sin...

In the 9th Psalm King David, prayed fervently – “Arise, O LORD; let not man prevail: let the heathen be judged in thy sight. Put them in fear, O LORD: that the nations may know themselves to be but men. Selah.”

- A true Hunger for Righteousness, begins with a craving to be righteous personally, but desires to see righteousness prevail in the world.

a.) To see the Kings of the world rule righteously

b.) To see the Cultures of the world conformed to the righteousness revealed by the Lord.

*Note – It is not rooted in “self-righteousness” but rooted in seeing the Righteousness of God flowing without restraint, hindrance, or opposition in the whole of society.

- Where there is Godly Righteousness, - there will be PEACE – Isaiah 32:17 – “And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.”

- If you really want to see “world peace”, it will only come through Prevailing righteousness. This is the craving of the kingdom minded Christian.

C. A Hunger for Permanent Righteousness

1.) This is the anticipation and longing of every believer who holds to the promises from the Lord. – Daniel 9:24 – “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

Every Hebrew son on that mountain side that day, that had learned the writings and the prophets knew enough to know that everlasting righteousness was a promise of the Lord... and the ones whose heart was under the Lord, LONGED for that day to come.

When John the Revelator was allowed to gaze into glory, he wrote in Revelation 22:3 – “And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:”

- that is, and is to be, the craving of the Christian, that day when there is no more curse!

Now that’s the nature of Hunger and Thirst, and the Picture Jesus gives of Hungering and Thirsting, but there is also the Future of Hungering and Thirsting

III. The Future of Hunger and Thirst – “shall be filled.”

- They shall be satisfied . . . – literally “saturated.”

- They will get what they want!

*Note – When you want what God wants you to want, He will give you what you want!

God personified as wisdom in Proverbs 8:17 – “I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me.”

Speaking through the prophet Jeremiah 29:13 – “And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

- The Bible gives us clear warning . . . “Let not a double minded man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord.” – James 1:8

- there are two certainties here . . .

- A double minded man will receive nothing.

- A single minded man, desiring what the Lord desires for him to desire, will receive all that he desires.

Conclusion: There is an old anecdote that goes like this... I don’t know if it’s a true story, but it is a truth story...

- A young man went to an old preacher one time, and said, “Preacher, just what does it mean to hunger and thirst for righteousness.” – The old preacher said, “Follow me.” – He lead him down to the side of a river and stepped in, and said follow me. The young man stepped into the river, and the old preacher said alright, now come to me. The young man did. When he did the Old Preacher grabbed him by the throat, and plunged him under water, and held him there. The preacher was older, but he was stronger, and he held him under that water with an iron grip. The young man wiggled, and thrashed, and fought, and swung, and the Old Preacher wouldn’t let go, and just as the young man’s strength abated, and before his lights went out the Old preacher, yanked him back to the surface for a lifesaving gulp of air. The young man had no more strength to fight, no more resistance, and just

wilted on to the shore and collapsed weeping. When the young man caught his breath, he cried, what are you doing to me? – The Old Man replied, - just how bad did you want me to let you up when I had you pinned under that water? “The young man cried I thought I was going to die, all I wanted to do was to breathe!” The Old man replied . . . THAT’s what it means to hunger and thirst for righteousness.

- how do I get that righteousness personally – “Jesus”

