



Good Hope Baptist Church

Pastor Josh Franklin

The Beautiful Attitudes pt. 4– *The Hunger for Holiness^a*

Matthew 5:6, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.”

Psalm 42:1-2 ¹As the deer pants for the water brooks, 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 ¹O God, You *are* my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.

Isaiah 55:1-2 ¹“Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price.

² Why do you spend money for *what is* not bread, And your wages for *what* does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat *what is* good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance.

Jesus says you must be SPIRITUALLY HUNGRY. **You can feel your need, feel sorry and repent, bring yourself under the control of Christ, but you are still not at the top of the ladder of God’s Approval (Blessedness).** You’ve got to be spiritually hungry. Jesus is not talking about eating hamburgers. He’s talking about something far greater and more wonderful. You know why church members are not happy? **Because they are seeking happiness instead of righteousness.** Those who go after happiness will never find happiness.

Many times, we don’t want to get well, we just want a temporary narcotic to cover the pain. We say, “Doctor, it’s not necessary for you to set my broken bone at all – I just want a little pain pill to keep it from hurting.”

What our society needs and what individuals need is righteousness. To be right with God and to live right. To live in the world like God wants us to by the power of the Holy Spirit. And when that happens, you will begin to enter into blessedness, and not until. You can pursue things, money, position, prestige, power and profession, loves and sex, etc., but they will not bring happiness, ultimately.

Warren Wiersbe notes, *“The believer who hungers and thirsts after righteousness is giving evidence not only of life but also of health. One of the first symptoms of sickness is loss of appetite, and one of the first signs of regained health after sickness is the return of appetite. When the infection of un-confessed sin is at work in the life of the disobedient Christian, he loses his appetite for spiritual things. He spends his money on that which is not bread, and he feeds on substitutes. But when the Christian confesses his sins and is restored to fellowship, his appetite for the things of God returns.”^b*

Are you hungry? Those who are thirsting to be right with God and to what’s right in life. Jesus says they are going to be blessed. How can you tell when a person is hungry? A person is hungry when he has one consuming desire and that is to get some food. Sometimes I’m hungry and I cannot wait to eat. A hungry man is not concerned with politics, football, or anything but food. He’ll eat out of the garbage pail if he is hungry enough. If you’ve got a hungry man on your hands, he is seeking to be fed. **If a man comes to my door and says he is**

^a Adapted from an unpublished Bill Bennett mentoring school handout, www.mentoringmen.net.

^b Warren Wiersbe, *Live Like a King* (Chicago, Ill: Moody Bible Publishers, 1976), 89.

hungry and I fix him a plate of food and I see him push it back I say, "What's wrong with it?" He says, "Well, I noticed the plate was chipped. I noticed the parsley on the right side when it should have been on the left side. The silverware is misarranged." What's the problem? HE IS NOT HUNGRY!!

Let a person come to church. Let him sit back there and he doesn't like the way we open the service. The air conditioning is too hot or too cold. I don't like the way the preacher raises his voice at times. I don't like the way they close the service. I don't believe the man next to me is friendly. I believe that person who sang the solo is a hypocrite. What's the trouble with that brother? HE IS NOT HUNGRY! **If you want to come to church and find fault, there's plenty of faults there. But if you come to church as a hungry soul, you can find Jesus there.** Oh God, give us some hungry people. Some people who hunger and thirst after righteousness, who want to be fed the Word of the Lord, who want to be ministered to in the power of the Holy Spirit. God give them to us.

You will never in the world be truly content until this happens to you. A man comes to church and sits back and thinks, "Well, I've come. If the Holy Spirit moves me, speaks to me, I'll go down, but not until." That man's not hungry. **A man sits back on the bench and says, "I'm hungry." We say, "Well, why don't you get up and get a little food." He says, "If someone feels inclined to get me a little food and opens my mouth and pokes it in, I'll eat it."** There are people who come to church just like that. **Nowhere does God say you have to beg and plead with Him to save your soul or to fill you but the Bible does teach throughout that you must have desire – that you must want – Oh, the blessedness of being hungry and thirsty for God. That's a blessed man. The kingdom of God does not belong to the well-meaning or well-intentioned, but to the desperate!**

Promises to those Who Hunger and Thirst for Righteousness

The resulting promise for hungering and thirsting after righteousness is not a reward for achievement but rather a response to an attribute: "they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6). The word for satisfied is *chortazesthia* and means to be stuffed, or filled to capacity. This word is a passive verb. We do not satisfy ourselves; we are satisfied by God. The promise is filling to satisfaction. **In Greek mythology King Tantalus was punished for offending the gods. As punishment he was placed in a body of water up to his chin. Every time he tried to drink, the water receded. Furthermore, choice fruit hung just over his head. Yet when he tried to reach it, it too receded. He became the symbol of teasing and his name provided the root of our word "tantalize".** Jesus offers a real filling to satisfaction, not teasing. The Bible says "eat what is good, and delight yourself in abundance. (Isaiah 55:2). Matthew 7:7-11, Jesus asks the question, "What man if his son asks for bread would give him a stone?" **The encouraging part of this attribute is that spiritual filling is offered not to the one who is already righteous, but to those who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness.** The possession is available to those still on the pathway.

Adrian Rogers writes, "Everybody wants to be satisfied. The reason most people don't find satisfaction is that they are looking for it in the wrong place. When we see what we have in the Lord Jesus Christ, really understand who He is, this world has no allure for us because we are already satisfied. **What if you were to offer me a wonderful meal—a sizzling sirloin steak, a baked potato, a tossed salad, and a big, tall glass of iced tea. And how about some key lime pie for dessert? That would be great! And then after I eat that, suppose I go outside and somebody hands me a plate of stale crumbs or something that's rotten, and says, "Here, here's something to eat." I'd say, "No thank you, I'm already satisfied."** **When you're fed on Jesus, you don't have to be in the back alley eating tin cans with the devil's billy goats.** **"If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15). "Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace."** A worldly Christian is a person who has not found his or her satisfaction in Jesus Christ."^c

Even though we still may hunger and thirst along the way, ultimately we will feast at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9) in a place where **"They will hunger no more, neither thirst any more" (Rev. 7:16).** In that day we shall truly be spiritually fit disciples.

^c Adrian Rogers, *What Every Christian Ought to Know*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2010), 104-105.

EXTRA TEACHING MATERIAL:

I think we can accurately say that Elvis Presley never understood this. His life was a pitiful pursuit of materialism and sensuality. In Elvis's heyday he earned between \$5 million and \$6 million a year. It is estimated that he grossed \$100 million in his first two years of stardom. He had three jets, two Cadillacs, a Rolls-Royce, a Lincoln Continental, Buick and Chrysler station wagons, a Jeep, a dune buggy, a converted bus, and three motorcycles. His favorite car was his 1960 Cadillac limousine. The top was covered with pearl-white Naugahyde. The body was sprayed with forty coats of a specially prepared paint that included crushed diamonds and fish scales. Nearly all the metal trim was plated with eighteen-karat gold. Inside the car there were two gold-flake telephones, a gold vanity case containing a gold electric razor and gold hair clippers, an electric shoe buffer, a gold-plated television, a record player, an amplifier, air conditioning, and a refrigerator that was capable of making ice in two minutes. He had everything. Elvis's sensuality is legendary. Those friends and relatives most familiar with his state in the last months of his life tragically reveal that Elvis had very much become the victim of his appetites. Elvis Presley's tragic life dramatizes the significance of the Lord's teaching in this fourth Beatitude, because in it Jesus sets forth the appetite and menu that bring spiritual well-being: "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

From Adrian Rogers:^d

The Bible says in [1 John 2:15](#): "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." That's a tremendous verse. Now notice, it doesn't say you don't love the Father because you love the world. It is just the opposite—you love the world because the love of the Father is not in you.

What to Do When the Red Light Comes On

You're driving down the road in your automobile, and you look up on your dashboard. A red light comes on that you've never noticed before. It has the symbol of a little oil can on it. If you know anything about automobile mechanics, that light is a warning; it means you've lost the oil in the crankcase, and you're low on oil. If you continue to drive that way, you'll burn up the engine.

If that ever happens to you, and you see that little red light come on the dashboard, let me tell you what to do. Keep a hammer under your front seat. When that little light comes on, take the hammer and break it. It will go out and there'll be no more problems. That will take care of it—just take a hammer and break it.

Is that good advice? Of course not! That red light on the dashboard is only a warning. What is the warning? There's no oil in the crankcase, and attacking the light is not the answer.

You're never told to fight the world. If you're worldly, there's one reason you're worldly. You've got no spiritual oil in your crankcase. "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" ([1 John 2:15](#)). "This is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith" ([1 John 5:4](#)). It is faith that makes Jesus a reality in our lives. People who are worldly have never found their satisfaction in Jesus.

From D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones^e:

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." What does it mean? Let me put it negatively like this. We are not to hunger and thirst after happiness. But that is what most people are and blessedness as the one thing that we desire, and thus we always miss it; it always eludes us. According to the Scriptures happiness is never something that should be sought directly; it is always something that results from seeking something else...

The world is seeking for happiness. That is the meaning of its pleasure mania, that is the meaning of everything men and women do, not only in their work but still more in their pleasures. They are trying to find happiness, they are making it their goal, their one objective. But they do not find it because, whenever you put happiness before righteousness, you will be doomed to misery. That is the great message of the Bible from the beginning to end. They alone are truly happy who are seeking to be righteous. Put happiness in the place of righteousness and you will never get it...

^d Adrian Rogers, 104-105.

^e D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), 75-77.

Think of a man who is suffering from some painful disease. Generally the one desire of such a patient is to be relieved of his pain, and one can understand that very well. No-one likes suffering pain. The one idea of this patient, therefore, is to do anything which will relieve him of it. Yes; but if the doctor who is attending this patient is also only concerned about relieving this man's pain he is a very bad doctor. His primary duty is to discover the cause of the pain and to treat that. Pain is a wonderful symptom which is provided by nature to call attention to disease, and the ultimate treatment for pain is to treat the disease, not the pain. So if a doctor merely treats the pain without discovering the cause of the pain, he is not only acting contrary to nature, he is doing something that is extremely dangerous to the life of the patient. The patient may be out of pain, and seems to be well; but the cause of the trouble is still there. Now that is the folly of which the world is guilty. It says, 'I want to get rid of my pain, so I will run to the pictures, or drink, or do anything to help me forget my pain.' But the question is, What is the cause of the pain and the happiness and the wretchedness? They are not happy who hunger and thirst after happiness and blessedness. No. 'Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.'...

...the fact that it is not right to define righteousness in this connection even as justification. There are those who turn up their Concordance and look at this word 'righteousness' (and of course you will find it in many places) and say it stands for justification. The apostle Paul uses it like that in the Epistle to the Romans, where he writes about 'the righteousness of God which is by faith'. There, he is talking about justification, and in such cases the context will generally make it perfectly plain to us. Very often it does mean justification; but here, I suggest, it means more. The very context in which we find it (and especially its relation to the three Beatitudes that have gone before) insists, it seems to me, that righteousness here includes not only justification but sanctification also. In other words, the desire for righteousness, the act of hungering and thirsting for it, means ultimately the desire to be free from sin in all its forms and in its every manifestation."

Specific Prerequisites for Being Truly Hungry for Righteousness

1. If we are dissatisfied with ourselves spiritually.
2. The self-righteous have no hunger for God.
3. If we crave the things of God: The Word, the Holy Spirit, Prayer, Soul Winning.
4. If we desire the house of God (Psalm 122:1 – "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord.").
5. If we desire to be around the people of God (Acts 4:23).

***"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." What does it mean?
The desire for righteousness means that you desire to be free from sin in all its forms
and in its every manifestation.***