



**THE BEATITUDES**  
**"BLESSED ARE THEY WHO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS"**  
**MATT. 5:6**

OUR CONCERN AS CHRISTIANS IS TO VIEW THIS WORLD IN THE LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL; ONLY THEN CAN WE HAVE A TRUE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT HAPPINESS REALLY IS. IN THE FIRST THREE BEATITUDES WE ARE CALLED UPON TO DO SOME HEART EXERCISES. OUR HEARTS SHOULD BE AWAKENED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD. FIRST, THERE IS A SENSE OF NEED. SECOND, THERE IS A JUDGING OF SELF. THIRD, THERE IS AN END OF SEEKING TO JUSTIFY OURSELVES BEFORE GOD. AND NOW HERE, IN THE FOURTH, THE EYE OF THE SOUL IS TURNED AWAY FROM SELF TO ANOTHER(GOD)----THERE IS NOW A LONGING AFTER THAT WHICH WE KNOW WE DO NOT HAVE AND WHICH WE KNOW WE URGENTLY NEED.

THIS VERSE IS VERY DOCTRINAL; IT EMPHASIZES ONE OF THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL, NAMELY, THAT OUR SALVATION IS ENTIRELY OF GRACE, THAT IT IS THE FREE GIFT OF GOD.

**WE SHOULD ALL HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS**

THERE IS OBVIOUSLY NO QUESTION THAT THE WHOLE WORLD IS SEEKING AFTER HAPPINESS, BUT THE GREAT TRAGEDY IS THAT, THOUGH IT GIVES ITSELF TO SEEK FOR HAPPINESS, IT NEVER SEEMS TO BE ABLE TO FIND IT. THE PRESENT STATE OF THE WORLD REMINDS OF THAT FACT.

WHAT DOES THIS VERSE REALLY MEAN? LET'S LOOK AT IT NEGATIVELY FOR A MINUTE. WE ARE NOT TO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER HAPPINESS, BUT THAT IS WHAT MOST PEOPLE ARE DOING. WE PUT HAPPINESS AND BLESSEDNESS AS THE ONE THING WE DESIRE, AND SO 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.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS? IT MEANS TO HAVE A DESIRE TO BE RIGHT WITH GOD, A DESIRE TO GET RID OF SIN. IT ALSO MEANS A DESIRE TO BE FREE FROM THE POWER OF SIN. IT IS ALSO A DESIRE TO BE FREE FROM THE DESIRE FOR SIN. SUMMING IT ALL UP, TO HUNGER AND THIRST

AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS IS TO WANT TO BE FREE FROM SELF IN ALL ITS HORRIBLE MANIFESTATIONS, IN ALL ITS FORMS.

IN A POSITIVE SENSE, IT MEANS TO HAVE A LONGING TO BE HOLY. IT IS THE DESIRE TO WANT TO PRODUCE THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT, SO THAT WE INDEED BECOME MORE AND MORE LIKE CHRIST. TO HUNGER AND THIRST REALLY MEANS TO BE DESPERATE, TO BE STARVING, TO BE THIRSTING TO DEATH, TO WANTING TO BE SO FILLED WITH THE THINGS OF GOD THAT WE WILL ACCEPT NOTHING ELSE.

**WE SHALL BE SATISFIED**

THOSE WHO HUNGER AND THIRST AFTER THE THINGS OF GOD WILL BE HAPPY! WHY? "FOR THEY SHALL BE FILLED." THEY WILL BE GIVEN WHAT THEY DESIRE SO MUCH. WE CAN NEVER FILL OURSELVES WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS, ONLY GOD CAN DO THAT. THAT IS WHY IT IS THE GOSPEL OF GRACE.

IT IS A FILLING THAT IS INITIAL AND CONTINUOUS. WHEN WE BECOME A CHRISTIAN WE SHOULD DESIRE A FILLING OF GOD'S SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS, AND WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO DESIRE IT ALL ALONG OUR CHRISTIAN WALK.

WHEN GOD CREATES A HUNGER AND THIRST IN OUR SOULS, IT IS THAT HE MAY SATISFY IT. OUR MAIN CONCERN IN LIFE SHOULD BE TO PLEASE GOD, AND IF IT IS, THEN HE WILL BLESS US WITH HAPPINESS.