Hunger & Thirst for Righteousness

Matthew 5:1-6

Key Verse 6:6

*“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”*

*V.1-2*

## What did Jesus do after “seeing the crowds”? Why? (Mt 4:16 & 23-24)

### After “seeing the crowds” Jesus went up on a mountain side to teach the people.

### Jesus did this to heal the people. The Word of God has healing power and is transformative for those who accept and take it to heart. People need healing from the Word because living in darkness causes a wide variety of spiritual ailments. The side-effects of sinning are destructive in every part of man’s life. With the added oppression of Satan and demons, the majority of people are ruined inwardly and outwardly by the time they’re young adults. Jesus’ healing and Word of truth can save people.

### Mt 4:16 - “the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”

### Mt 4:23-24 - “And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. 24 So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them.”

## What is the significance of “he opened his mouth and taught them”? (Mt 12:33-35)

### Matthew’s gospel has a particular emphasis on the words that come out of our mouth. When we open our mouth we reveal what is inside our heart, the thoughts and attitudes we are carrying around. In Matthew’s gospel, Jesus calls this the “good treasure” or the “evil treasure”. Jesus alone carried all the treasure of the Kingdom of Heaven inside of him. So when he “opened his mouth” to teach the people, Jesus is bringing forth goodness, truth and riches.

### Mt 12:33-35 - “*Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. 34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil.”*

V.3

## What does it mean to be “poor in spirit”? What’s God’s view (Isa 66:1-2) of being “poor in spirit”?

### Fundamentally, “poor in spirit” means to be humble; someone who has a heart and mind that is willing to learn from Jesus, adopt God’s ways and forsaken my own ways. Poor in spirit means to focus on the riches and wealth that come from God through Jesus.

### *Isaiah 66:1-2* - *“Thus says the Lord. “Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool; what is the house that you would build for me, and what is the place of my rest? 2 All these things my hand has made, and so all these things came to be, declares the Lord. But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.’ ”*

## What is the opposite? How is this an offense to God? (James 4:6-9)

### When we think about the opposite of “poor in spirit” we can understand it better. Being “rich in spirit” is a form of pride that is saying to God, “I don’t need your wealth. I have my own already.” This attitude comes in the form of stubbornness to our own ways of doing things, leaning of physical things as our source of strength and a lean appetite for the Words of God.

### <point>

### James 4:6-9 - *“But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.”*

## Why does the kingdom of heaven belong to them but not the rich in spirit? (Rev 3:17-18)

### <point>

### <point>

### Rev 3:17-18 - *“For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.”*

V.4

## What does it mean to “mourn”?

### Mourning means to take things seriously.

### <point>

### Bk 1:1-2 - “Text of the reference verse.

## What is the opposite of mourning? Why is it unhelpful and a hindrance? (James 4:8-10)

### <point>

### James 4:8-20 - *“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.”*

## What does it mean to be comforted? Why is it blessed?

### <point>

### <point>

### Bk 1:1-2 - “Text of the reference verse.

V.5

## What does it mean to be “meek”? (Numbers 12:3) How does the world view the meek?

### Meekness is the humble approach when interacting with others.

### Numbers 12:3 - “Now the man Moses was very meek, more than all people who were on the face of the earth.”

## What is the opposite of meek? Why does the world promote this approach?

### Dominance is the opposite of meekness. Dominance is the way worldly people go about getting what they want. By projecting themselves over others they’re able to bend the will of others to do what they want. It’s a horrible approach to interacting with others and has no place in the Kingdom of Heaven.

* We might even expect Jesus to dominate us like a worldly king dominates his subjects but Jesus’ approach to his people is also humble and meek. Therefore, we have to listen carefully to the Lord’s voice because he won’t yell or scream at us like a worldly ruler. This is not his approach.

## How can the meek possibly “inherit the earth”? How does this make them strong?

### The meek will inherit the earth because God, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, will give it to them. The way of the wicked is to fight, wage war and defend their possessions of the earth. The meek will “inherit” the earth like a son inherits his Father’s estate. The estate is handed to him, without fighting or war.

### The meek, the citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, are strong because they know that God’s authority supersedes that of the wicked. The meek don’t have to fight for a place in this world. In God’s time, in God’s way, the earth will be taken from the wicked and handed over to the righteous to reign and rule. Until then, the meek can be strong and endure by the knowledge that God will do all this.

V.6

## What is righteousness? What does it mean to “hunger and thirst for righteousness”?

### In Matthew’s gospel, “righteousness” is presented with an emphasis on the action of righteousness. As citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven, we are governed by the highest standard for our words and deeds. God’s standard, revealed in his commands, decrees and laws.

### To hunger and thirst for righteousness means to desire righteousness in an extreme way. Just like hunger and thirst plague a person every moment until they are satisfied, so also those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied by God. However, the easier but erroneous way is to just simply throw off God’s righteous standard and say, “It doesn’t really matter because no one can achieve this standard anyways.”

## What is the opposite? Why is it destructive? (Matthew 5:20, 7:13-14)

### The opposite of hunger and thirst for righteousness is to have little to no appetite or desire for being righteous.

* Anyone who isn’t obsessed (in a healthy way) about righteousness will quickly find themselves on an unrighteous, lukewarm path—very dangerous.

### Matthew 5:20 - *“For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

* Matthew 5:13-14 - *“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”*

## How will those who hunger and thirst be satisfied? How can we be hungry and thirsty?

### They will be satisfied by the power of God through Jesus. Anyone who really takes righteousness seriously and hungers and thirsts for it will be satisfied by Jesus’ blessing and anointing that comes from God.

### When we consider God’s righteous standard and how high it truly is, we will naturally become hungry and thirsty. When we hold ourselves accountable to God’s righteousness we’ll certainly cry out for mercy and be satisfied.