

Russell Kelfer

Hungering and Thirsting

532-B

Series: The Beatitudes

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I want to start off with a personal question. How many of you ate breakfast this morning? Now I want you to complete this statement, I ate breakfast because,

- a) I had to or I would offend the person who fixed it,
- b) I always eat breakfast,
- c) I don't know why,
- d) I was hungry.

I have another question for those who ate breakfast. How many of you came to church and had donuts before class started? Those of you who did eat refreshments this morning whether you ate breakfast or not, complete this statement, I ate donuts because

- a) I didn't want to be unsociable,
- b) a friend who brought them was standing behind me and I didn't want to offend him,
- c) they were free,
- d) I was still hungry.

I want to ask one more question. How many of you are still hungry?

The real reason I asked these questions is that the real question is: Do we really understand what it means to be hungry? Jesus said that a blissful, happy life awaits the man or woman who is hungry and thirsty after righteousness. God will fill him. We will look at a two lesson outline.

I- The Principle

A- The Illustration: What is hunger?

B- The Adjustment: What is the spiritual switch?

II- The Practical

I- THE PRINCIPLE

If one of your goals is to be spiritually filled, then listen to the words of Jesus,

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Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness,
they will be filled. (Matthew 5:6)

Jesus does not say they should be filled or they may be filled, but He says they will be filled. Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled.

Now remember that Jesus was in the process of building a Christ-controlled life from the ground up. First of all, He built a foundation on which all of the superstructure would be built. That foundation was poverty of spirit. We are to have no expectations because we know we have no power apart from God. "Blessed is the man who is poor in spirit" is the basis of it all.

Jesus then built the first cornerstone to hold the walls. His statement was "Blessed are they who mourn". These are people who see sin in their lives and sin in the world. They see the fruit of this sin and are grieved to the point of weeping. This is the first step. These people are able to mourn.

The second cornerstone comes when you are able to recognize who you are and what sin is. Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth." The meek are those who become quietly gentle in their responses without vengeance, hostility or harshness. These people are blessed. The happy life, the Christ-filled life, the life of self-contained joy belongs to the one, who having learned to be poor in spirit, also learns to become sensitive enough to sin that he can mourn over it. Then, he becomes gentle and non-retaliatory in his relationships with other people.

Following the foundation and the first two cornerstones, in this lesson we come to the third cornerstone. Having learned to mourn and become meek, Jesus said that blessed is he that not only knows who he is and what sin is, but knows what the solution is. Jesus said, "Blessed is he who hungers and thirsts after righteousness, he shall be filled".

My somewhat unorthodox introduction told us a lot about our eating habits, but not about our spiritual maturity. The problem with studying this passage is that most of us do not have a grasp on the words hunger and thirst. That is why I asked you if you were still hungry. Most of you said yes. In his commentary on this particular Beatitude, William Barclay said this, "*Words do not exist in isolation. They exist against a background of experience and thought. The meaning of any word is conditioned by the background of the person who speaks it.*" This is particularly true

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of this Beatitude. It would convey to those who heard it from Jesus' lips a totally different impression than what it conveys to us. The fact is that very few of us in this country know what it is to really be hungry or thirsty. In the ancient world it was different. A working man's wage was the equivalent of 8 pence a day. Even making allowance for the difference in purchasing power, no man ever got fat on that wage. A working man in Palestine ate meat only once a week. The working man and the day laborer were never far from total starvation.

It was still more so in the case of thirst. In the ancient world it was not possible for the vast majority of people to turn on the tap and get cool, clear drinking water. A man might be on a journey, and in the midst of it the wind might bring a sand storm. There would be nothing for him to do but wrap his head, turn his back to the wind and wait. In conditions of modern, western life, we have no parallel.

So then, hunger, which this Beatitude describes, is no genteel hunger that can be satisfied with a midmorning snack. The thirst of which it speaks is no thirst which could be satisfied with a cup of coffee or an ice cold drink. It is the hunger of a man who is starving for food and the thirst of a man who will die unless he has something to drink.

The first famine was recorded when Joseph's brothers were in trouble in Egypt. In the pages of history we see that in Rome in 436 B.C. literally thousands of people were committing suicide by throwing themselves into the river because there was nothing to eat. In England in 1005 A.D. and the rest of Europe in 879 A.D., in 1016 A.D. and 1162 A.D., there were great famines and many deaths because of them. In the 19th century in Russia, China, India and Ireland there have been horrible famines. To such a world, hunger meant starving and thirsting to death. It was against this background that Jesus spoke these words.

Several years ago, an article appeared in Eternity Magazine in which Dr. Blaclock illustrated this principle by talking about the need for water from a Scriptural perspective. He gave an illustration of a crusade which was part of the British liberation of Palestine in WWI. He said,

“Driving up from Beersheba, a combined force of British, Australians and New Zealanders were pressing on toward the rear of the Turkish retreat over an arid desert. The

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attack outdistanced its water carrying camel train. The water bottles were empty and the sun blazed pitilessly out of a sky where vultures wheeled expectantly. Their heads ached, their tongues began to swell, their lips turned purple and burst. They continued to go until they reached a place called Shereah. If they had not won the battle at Shereah before nightfall, most of them would have died from thirst.”

The story continued to tell how they won the battle, and then had to stand in line 4 men deep to wait for the huge cisterns of water to quench their thirst. Rather than fighting to be first in line, they waited patiently for each man to have his thirst quenched.

Part of our problem today as we read this passage is that we really don't know what it means to hunger and thirst. In the backdrop of the way you and I use the word hunger and thirst, we don't understand this Beatitude.

A- The Illustration: What is Hunger?

Now I think there are three kinds of hunger in the American vocabulary. The first is responsive hunger. In this hunger, the senses send signals to the brain in response to external influences and say, "I'm hungry!" It may be the sense of smell, sight, hearing or taste. If you walk into the kitchen and someone is fixing fried chicken, you smell the fried chicken, you rub your stomach and say, "I'm hungry!" Before you walked into the kitchen, you may have just finished a hamburger. You may actually at that point be experiencing no hunger at all, until you smelled the fried chicken. This is responsive hunger.

When I was a kid, I used to go to the the Boy Scout's rifle range. The only reason I went was because a few blocks from there was a Buttercrust Bakery. At a certain time every night, the fresh bread came out. They would open those big ovens and the smell would completely permeate the neighborhood. The rifles would go silent and drop. Every one of us would take off down the street with the Scout Masters in pursuit trying to bring all of us back. The one goal was to get some of the bread. No one was really hungry until they smelled the bread, but the minute that aroma came down the street, our motto was "Be Prepared". All of us had brought money, and we would buy the bread just as it had come off of the baking line. Our sense of smell caused us to feel hungry.

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Your sense of sight, also, might lead you to feel hungry. You may be watching TV when all of sudden you see a commercial with some appetizing food. As the person in the commercial bites into his food and has juice running down his chin, you find that you are suddenly hungry and feel a need to go out to get some of that delicious food. It was your sight that made you hungry. You may experience this when you go to a cafeteria for a “light” lunch. You plan to eat “light” at a cafeteria before you get into line and see all of the goodies. When I go to a cafeteria I go for two reasons: one is to get stuffed, and the other is to see the glazed look. I don’t mean on the pastries. I mean on the faces of the people when they get about two-thirds of the way down the line to the desert and pastry section. There is no tomorrow, because their sense of sight has given them responsive hunger.

It may be that your sense of hearing gives you responsive hunger. I told my neighbor I was going to use him for an illustration. Some of you may be old enough to remember Bud Abbott and Lou Costello. They used to have a routine where Bud Abbott would say a certain word while Lou Costello would go into a certain routine. Lou Costello would say, “Slowly I turn, step by step.” Nothing would stop him once a certain word was spoken. My neighbor has a word like that. At our house, we have mud pies. These consist of a flaky, chocolate kind of crust on the bottom, then ice cream piled on top with a lot of syrup and nuts on top. I am allergic to it and can’t eat it. This is one of the reasons my neighbor likes it so much. He comes over and holds it up in front of me while he eats it. The point is that all you have to do is to be driving along and say to Ron, “Mud pie.” His eyes swell, he starts rubbing his stomach and begins to perspire. He feels like he must have one. It is a sense of hearing, but it is responsive hunger. Up until that point he wasn’t hungry for a mud pie.

We can have responsive hunger from our sense of taste. The advertisement for a certain brand of potato chips is, “No one can eat just one.” That is true. I used to get these dry roasted peanuts in a little sack. I can eat that little sack and quit. But, if I get a jar and put it in my desk, I will take it in and out of my desk all day until the jar is empty. The whole point is that we have responsive hunger.

The second type of hunger is relative hunger. It is hunger that draws conclusions about its needs based on experience. Many of you have had this experience. I have a habit at 9:00 every night to

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go to the freezer and get some unsweetened frozen fruit and pour diet grape Shasta over it. Everyone in my neighborhood thinks it is sickening. The reason I have learned to like it is that you are never in danger of anybody coming in and wanting to take it away from you. The idea is that no matter if I ate supper at 4:00, 5:00, 6:00, 8:00 or 10:00, at 9:00 my stomach says, "Fruit Shasta. Fruit Shasta." Off I go like a robot. Maybe you go after something different, like ice cream, or mud pies. When I come in at 6:00 from work, I expect supper. My wife has been slaving all day to please me. It doesn't matter what time I have eaten lunch, early or late, I still expect to eat at 6:00. My body clock says "I am hungry," whether it is true or not.

The same thing is true on Sunday at 12:01. Have you ever noticed that at 12:01 while you are sitting in church, a little alarm clock goes off and says, "Food, food, food." The rest of the week you may not eat until 1:00. Why is it that on Sunday just at the most crucial part of the message, your stomach goes off and says, "Food, food, food."? It is relative hunger.

The third type of hunger is real hunger. This is what Jesus was talking about in this Beatitude. Jesus said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness." The word "blessed" here is the Greek word, "*makarias*" which we have discussed several times in the past. It means "oh, what self-contained joy belongs to the man" or "oh, what bliss for the man who is hungry." You may say, "I can vouch for It literally means to seek with eager, compelling desire, because you suffer want. It is used in Romans 12 where we read,

If your enemy is hungry, feed him. (Romans 12:20 NKJV)

Paul uses in Philippians 4,

I know both how to be full and I know how to hunger.
(Philippians 4:12)

Paul tells us that he knew what it was to be without food.

Let's erase in our minds the present wording, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst," because that does not create in us an awareness of what God is trying to say. Let's substitute it to say, "Blessed are the starving ones, for they shall be filled." That is the literal meaning of the word: *blessed are the starving ones*. Another way to state it is to say, "Blessed are those who are starved for spiritual things for they will get filled!"

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The second word used here is the Greek word “*dipsao*” which literally means to suffer thirst. It is used in John 4 when the woman at the well said,

“Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst,”

(John 4:15 NKJV)

To be hungry means that you need to be strengthened and sustained. To be thirsty means that you need to be refreshed and renewed. When we put the two together, it becomes a total need that leads to a desperate desire. This is what it means to be hungry and thirsty after righteousness.

We have all heard of a sports team that hadn’t won any games. The coach is in trouble and at risk of losing his job. Then we hear sports writers use the expression, “They are really hungry for this one.” This means that they are desperate to win the next game. You have heard of a salesman who is on commission and hasn’t made a sale all month. He says, “This is the right day to make a sale. I’m hungry.” This means that he is desperate to make a sale today, because there may be no tomorrow. So the idea is describing one who has a total need, therefore, he is desperate with desire.

Lawler translates these two Greek words, “*paenao*” and “*dipsao*”, in the derivative, present tense, meaning that they go on and on and on and on in this present life. You are never totally satisfied. He says that they literally increase in the very act of being satisfied, because they increase the capacity to be satisfied. We will deal more fully with this aspect in the next lesson.

So what this Beatitude says to us is, “Oh, what bliss there is for the man or the woman who is starving and dying of thirst for God.”

Now the word righteousness will be studied in the next lesson, but I want to remind us that righteousness has a definite article before it so that it literally says, “Blessed is the man who hungers and thirsts after the righteousness.” So content yourselves to understand that it is, “Oh what bliss for the man or the woman who is starved for Jesus Christ”. It literally means the blessed life which God fills with Himself is characterized by an insatiable hunger and an unquenchable thirst that can only be satisfied by Jesus alone.

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B- The Adjustment: What is the Spiritual Switch?

Physically, how many of you have ever really been starving? Some of you have been to boot camp or training camp. Some of you have been to a stress camp where you were intentionally made to go without food. Have you ever experienced starvation for a brief or extended amount of time? Most of us are not dealing experientially with this passage. Physically, there are certain characteristics of a hungry man. We are about to make the spiritual switch as we compare these physical characteristics with the spiritual characteristics of hunger and thirst.

1- A hungry man is desperate to be filled. He has an attitude of intensity that will drive him to wherever the food is.

2- A hungry man takes nothing for granted. He won't wait for the banquet. He will get excited over the scraps.

3- A hungry man will let nothing stand between him and food. He is single-minded. If he has to choose between pleasures or nourishment, he will take nourishment because he is dying.

4- A hungry man is aware of his weakness. He knows he is not as strong as he would be if he were filled. His knowledge of his weakness is in itself a strength.

5- A hungry man eventually loses his capacity to eat if he is not fed. His stomach shrinks. His capacity to eat lessens. Finally his appetite begins to diminish.

Let's make the Spiritual Switch. As the Lord was speaking these words, He was speaking from deep personal experience. I believe this is one reason that Matthew 4 was written. In this chapter, verses 1-2 tells us that Jesus, being filled with the Spirit, was led by the Spirit into the wilderness where He didn't eat or drink for forty days. Have any of you ever experienced that? It goes on to say that afterwards He was hungry. We need to grasp the significance of this. He fasted by His own choice for forty days and forty nights. Scripture tells us that He was tempted in all points just as we are. He was hungry. Having drawn from the wellspring of that which was personal, physical and experiential in His own life, He turns to the disciples, and in one sentence He paints a spiritual portrait so rich they would never forget it. He says, "Blessed are those who hunger like that for Me." Have you ever done that?

Jesus had simply made the Spiritual Switch. The Spiritual

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Switch is taking a physical illustration or truth and then translating it into the realm of the spirit. The whole principle is that God's basic concern for man is spiritual. Spiritual truth is everywhere, and everything on this earth was created by Jesus Christ, for Jesus Christ as we see in Colossians 1:16. With God's spirit in control, we can translate from one realm to another. That is when it becomes truth. Just as Jesus made the Spiritual Switch, we can go back over the same 5 principles applying it to hunger.

Principle 1- A hungry man is desperate for physical food.

Jesus was saying, "I want you to be desperate and driven to be filled with righteousness." Are you?

Principle 2- A hungry man takes nothing for granted, he hangs on every morsel. Jesus was saying that applied in the spiritual realm, He wants you to savor every word, every experience you have. Do you?

Principle 3- A hungry man will let nothing stand in his way. Jesus wants you to be single-minded, starving for the Word, ever choosing your priorities as though there were really no choice at all. Do you?

Principle 4- A hungry man is aware of his weakness. Jesus wants you to be so dependent on God for your existence, that there is no shred of self-sufficiency. Are you?

Principle 5- A hungry man eventually loses his capacity to be fed if he never satisfies his hunger. Jesus wants you to be aware that as your appetites change to never become apathetically anemic in your spiritual life. Have you?

This is a Spiritual Switch. It is a God's eye view of spiritual hunger and thirst. Let's now translate it from the Scripture into three basic principles.

Principle 1- God will fill you in proportion to your hunger.

Not everyone is going to be filled. Not everyone wants to be filled with God and the Holy Spirit. Not everyone will be filled. Everyone can possess the Spirit and be baptized of the Spirit, but not everyone will be filled with the Spirit continually.

An illustration of this can be seen when we look at a situation in California during the gas crisis in the early 1980's. There was only so much gas to go around. If necessary, people would hunt until they found a gas station with a supply. They wanted

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desperately to be filled. They would pay whatever price necessary. It was foremost in their minds, and they were desperate. Everyone wants to be spiritually filled, but Jesus asks, “How badly do you want it? That will determine how fully you receive it.” Jesus said,

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they shall be filled. (Matthew 5:6 NKJV)

He has filled the starving with good things and the full He
has sent away empty. (Luke 1:53)

In an empty tank, there is room to be filled, but in a tank that is full of the world, there is no room. You can drive in and say, “Top it off, Lord. Put a little in.” But the tank that is empty and knows it is empty will stay by the pump until the filling comes. We see in Isaiah:

“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you
who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine
and milk without money and without cost.

Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on
what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is
good, and you will delight in the richest of fare.

(Isaiah 55:1,2 NKJV)

The ones who thirst and the ones who are hungry will be filled.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures
forever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord tell their story—those he
redeemed from the hand of the foe,

those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from
north and south.

Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a
city where they could settle.

They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.

Then they cried out to the Lord in their trouble, and he
delivered them from their distress.

9 for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good
things. (Psalm 107:1-6,9 NKJV)

To summarize the first principle, God has an abundance of Himself to give to His children. He gives it in proportion to the intensity of the spiritual hunger of each Christian. It is all of grace, as no one deserves it, but there is a valve which you can activate which releases more of His grace into your life. We

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need to be hungry for it. So the first principle is, God fills you proportionate to how hungry you are. Ask yourself this question. How hungry are you for spiritual things?

Principle 2- Not only does God fill you proportionate to your hunger, but many times your hunger is simply proportionate to your need or the desperation of your circumstances.

This is why there are no atheists in foxholes as the saying goes. When we are desperate, we cry out. We read in Psalms:

O 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;

My soul follows close behind You; Your right hand upholds me. (Psalm 63:1,8 NKJV)

That is why I seek the Lord, because I am looking for water. While I am looking, there is nothing. If there had been water there in the first place, I wouldn't have sought the Lord, I would have sought the water. So He created a situation which would remind me of my life verse,

So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord. (Deuteronomy 8:3 NKJV)

God created circumstances to produce starvation so that He could feed us His way. He created a need in our lives to whet our appetites for spiritual things. Only when we are desperate do we become hungry. Therefore, God sometimes has to create situations to make us spiritually hungry. Isaiah 41 tells us that not only does He sometimes have to make us hungry, He does it so that we can recognize our need and cry out to Him.

“The poor and needy seek water, but there is none, their tongues fail for thirst. I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. (Isaiah 41:17 NKJV)

I want you to underline “and there is none”. Some of you may think that the Lord is holding bait in front of you. Just about the time you think you are “getting there”, a new set of circumstances comes and it seems that God is moving the carrot in front of you to keep you moving. This is, in essence, occasionally true. God realizes that the only time we will seek Him is when we are desperate. The only time we are hungry is when we are desperate.

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The only time we are desperate is when circumstances in our lives create that spirit of desperation. He does that because in recognizing our need, we cry out to Him.

A satisfied soul loathes the honeycomb, but to a hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet. (Proverbs 27:7 NKJV)

We appreciate God's help when we get it, because we have been desperate. I don't know how many of you can testify to that, but many of you have had desperate circumstances that have drawn you to a closer walk with God. There are times when God has created or allowed situations in our lives to the point that desperation sets in. We cried in anguish to the Lord as we were hungering and thirsting to be filled. Then at that moment, deliverance came, and we appreciated it and loved Him as we never had before. We read:

(The Lord) who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The Lord gives freedom to the prisoners.

The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord raises those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous.

(Psalm 146:7,8 NKJV)

How do we get judgment executed, receive food, become set free and get to see, while at the same time, being oppressed, hungry, prisoners and blind? It is the hungry that get filled. God desires, if necessary, that needs be created in our lives to develop an insatiable hunger and thirst after righteousness so that we will call on Him.

Principle 3- God not only fills proportionate to our hunger and our hunger is not only proportionate to our need, but the level of hunger God wants is something most of us do not understand.

It is intense.

My son, if you receive my words, And treasure my commands within you,

So that you incline your ear to wisdom, And apply your heart to understanding;

Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding,

If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures;

Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, And find the knowledge of God. (Proverbs 2:1-5 NKJV)

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Most of you live like I do. We are on a door to door treasure hunt. We ring the doorbell and say, "Lord, I am on a scavenger hunt, and I need a certain experience to put in my bag of tricks. Lord, would you take care of it?" We then ring the next doorbell and then the next. That is not the kind of hunting God is talking about here. He is not talking about a scavenger hunt where we ring doorbells and look on the surface. He is talking about a deep hunger that means we dig and we dig and we dig. It means that if there is a lost person hidden in a mine and we know that person may still be alive, we don't just pass by and yell at the entrance to the mine. We get down on our hands and knees, if necessary, to dig and dig and dig to search him out, trying to find that treasure, that person who may still be alive.

You may be searching for someone through the fog, and that person may die if you don't find him. You don't simply look up and call out his name. If there is no answer, you don't just walk away. You walk a step at a time to penetrate the fog, searching at whatever cost to yourself. You may slip or stumble or even hurt yourself. It is worth it as you are searching with all your heart through that fog.

As intensely as you would dig for the most valuable treasure in the world, Jesus wants us to dig for Him. That is the kind of hunger He wants us to have for Him. Psalm 42 says,

As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God.

My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?

My tears have been my food day and night, while they continually say to me, "Where is your God?"

(Psalm 42:1-3 NKJV)

Bill Gothard has a book of character sketches. In it he says that there are two times when a deer develops a tremendous thirst for water. One is when he is running from danger. The other is when he is withstanding an opponent in combat. Dake in his commentary says that the deer is fond of feeding near the water. When he is hunted, he will take to the river and stay submerged as long as he can hold his breath. He will then swim downstream in the middle so as not to touch the branches on either side. Sometimes he will stay completely submerged except for his nose. In a chase on land, he becomes so faint that he longs

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intensely for the refuge and refreshment of the waters.

In other words, as intently as a hunted animal longs for refuge and refreshment, that is the way we are supposed to long for the presence and the righteousness of God. Psalm 84 says,

How lovely is Your tabernacle, O Lord of hosts!

My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh cry out for the living God.

Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young—even Your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God.

Blessed are those who dwell in Your house; they will still be praising You. Selah

Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, whose heart is set on pilgrimage. (Psalm 84:1-5 NKJV)

In other words, as intensely as a bird longs to come back to its nest, that is the intensity that our hunger for the things of God is supposed to be.

God is searching the earth for hungry people. How many of you now think that you are hungry? Really hungry? How many of you think that you are spiritually hungry? How many of you want to be hungrier than you are? God doesn't want us to be hungry as we know hunger. He wants us to have real starvation for spiritual things. He wants us to starve for righteousness.

I would like to suggest that you take some time to make the Spiritual Sswitch. Study what it means to starve to death. Study what it means to be in a state of almost total starvation where if you do not eat in a short period of time, you will die. Read about it in books or watch a program or movie about it. Find out the best you can, how you can relate to physical starvation so that you can translate it into the spiritual realm. Ask God to give you some kind of an indicator as to how hungry you really are for spiritual things. Some of us are simply not desperate enough for spiritual things. We are stuffed with spiritual tidbits from morning until night. We exchange spiritual sayings until they spoil our spiritual appetites for the real thing, God's righteousness.

What is God's righteousness? How do we get spiritually hungry if we are not? How can we be hungry and full at the same time? These questions will be addressed in the next lesson as we conclude our study of this Beatitude. "Blessed are the ones

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who are starved for Jesus, who are dying in the desert for a taste of His life. For those who are that desperate,” Jesus said, “will be filled.” Some of us can remember times when we were that starved spiritually, and we long to return to that state of being.

God, may we become that hungry and that thirsty for You. Amen.

Note: Russell wrote each of these lessons in a manner that would enable him to clearly communicate them to his weekly class. The grammar or punctuation you encounter may not be technically perfect, but you will certainly “hear” his unique gift for making the message applicable to the common man in everyday situations.

It’s been said of him that he was really a writer who read his stuff. And that’s a very accurate statement!

May you be richly blessed as you “hear” as you read.

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