

Sermon: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

Matthew 5:6

Righteous means to be what you ought to be.

Two kinds of righteousness

There is righteousness and self-righteousness.

Philippians 3:7-11

Self-righteousness:

God's righteousness:

human effort

God's power

makes us proud

makes us humble

never enough

always enough

Matthew 5:20

separates us from God

unites us with God

The reward: satisfaction

Isaiah 55:1-2

Working for the world never satisfies.

This world is temporary.

God wants to fill your life.

John 10:10

Bible Study: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness

Getting to know you

1. Last Sunday's sermon was on hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Is there anything about the sermon you would like to discuss in your small group?
2. If a financial counselor asked you, "What are your goals for life?" what would you answer?

Going deeper

3. Read Matthew 6:33. What does it look like when someone seeks God's kingdom and righteousness? What behaviors would you look for?

This is a person who really desires to be right with God and the world. He or she will demonstrate an extraordinary desire to take serious things seriously, to know God's will, and to follow God's will.

4. In the sermon, we contrasted self-righteousness with God's righteousness. How does self-righteousness look different than God's righteousness? In other words, how does self-righteousness look different than your answer to questions 3?

The self-righteous person will do the right thing when it fits his or her need for pride, affirmation, and/or reputation. The self-righteous person will also be looking at what is the lowest level of righteousness necessary to stand out from the crowd. They will focus on the areas where they are doing well and ignore areas of weakness or failure. The self-righteous person will usually live by comparison to the righteousness of others since this is an easier way to live than by comparison to God. This often makes the self-righteous judgmental of others.

5. Why does God make seeking after the kingdom and righteousness a condition for giving "all these things" to us?

Often the physical things of this world ("all these things") are the very things that distract us from God. I'm sure he doesn't want to provide for our physical needs if that makes us so content in ourselves that we don't recognize our need for him.

6. In the 11th century, Bernard of Clairvaux wrote his hymn, "Jesus,

Thou Joy of Loving Hearts": We taste Thee, O Thou living bread, And long to feast upon Thee still; We drink of Thee, the fountainhead, And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.

Have you experienced hunger and thirst for God's kingdom and his righteousness that he wrote about? When have you experienced that the most?

Putting it into practice

7. When you learn of some corruption or evil in the world this week, instead of just judging others, pray about what you could do to live more righteously yourself and make your corner of the world better.