

“THE KEYS TO A BLESSED LIFE”

Big Idea . . . Part 5: Blessed are the HUNGRY and THIRSTY

Matt. 5:6

INTRO: “Why do some Christians grow and some stagnate?” busy, personality, IQ, etc.? Greatest difference found in this 4th B. Here we find secret to spiritual giantism. The key to blessedness is spiritual growth. The secret to spiritual growth is spiritual desires! The greatest motivator in the world is hunger. This B is about hunger.

“WHY HERE?” Perfect fit. This B takes us from our needs in the first three (to recognize, repent, & respond) to our desires. A deep desire to be right with God arises from a deep awareness of need that I am destitute of true righteousness. This is the pivotal B. Once our great need is established, the natural flow is to desire to resolve the need.

ILLUS: M. L. Jones said...

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HUNGER & THIRST? Defined

- A. H & T are natural desires & basic instincts. They are “survival appetites” for us physically. They are the same for us spiritually.
- B. Two verbs express an intense desire and a passionate craving, not just for some food (righteousness), but for the whole. The desire is not just for some bread, but for the loaf; not a glass of water but an ocean. It is a gnawing hunger and burning thirst. A “can’t-do-w/o-it” attitude! A desperation attitude.
- C. Bible has several examples and exhortations for spiritual hunger & thirst: David (Psa. 27:4; 63:1); sons of Korah (Psa. 42:1-2; 84:2); Isa. 26:9a; Paul (Ph. 3:10); Peter (1 P. 2:2); etc.

II. WHAT ARE WE TO HUNGER & THIRST FOR?

- A. NOT for: mystical experience (holy laughter), power like Lucifer, praise like Neb., pleasure like rich fool, popularity like Prodigal son, self-righteousness, etc. (1 Jn. 2:15-17).
- B. Unsaved people are hungry - they have ambitions for happiness, but look in wrong places and what will never satisfy (2 Pet. 2:22; Isa. 55:1-3).
- C. Define “**RIGHTEOUSNESS**” we are to hunger for:
 1. Again, the *initial* righteousness imparted at salvation. When we see our sin, we need to exchange for His righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21).
 2. Moreso, Jesus refers to daily, *practical* righteousness. Just as I can’t make it physically w/o satisfying the survival appetites of hunger & thirst, I can’t survive spiritually w/o practical righteousness. We need righteousness spiritually as much as we need food & water physically. What is it? Compare 5:10, 20 where primarily refers to a pattern of life committed to pleasing God and doing His will (Jn 4:34; 8:29).

Jesus tells us the quest for blessedness includes an insatiable desire to know and do God’s will (mainly revealed in His Word).

3. Ultimately, who is our righteousness? (1 Cor. 1:30) Jesus Himself! He is our righteousness. The 4th B then could read...also John 7:37 adds...Jesus Himself is the end of famine!

III. WHAT IS THE RESULT? “They will be satisfied” (passive)

- A. Two-fold meaning of “satisfied”:
 1. *Completely satisfied with* - Only Jesus satisfies! All else leaves us wanting. Only when we are driven to please Him and to do the Father’s will are we satisfied. (Psa. 107:9)
 2. *Totally controlled by* - When we hunger & thirst for His will, then His plan takes control of our life & desires (Psa. 37:4 - When we delight in Him, He controls our desires).
- B. Matt. 6:33 is icing on the cake. All God’s blessings are by-products of seeking His righteousness! Blessedness is a by-product of righteousness. No one is blessed unless right with God.

IV. HOW CAN I KNOW...? Signs:

Ask: “What am I hungry for? Do I seek power, praise, possessions, or pleasure? Do I unconditionally hunger and thirst for Jesus and the Father’s will more than anything else? Do I desire to be right with God no matter the cost?” More than power, pleasure, ...? Loss of appetite is symptom of sickness.

V. WHAT MUST I DO TO INCREASE MY DESIRE FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS? Several things:

- A. Eliminate anything/anyone in your life you love more than Christ “Idols” (Ez. 14:3) - Jesus is jealous for us.
- B. Examine carefully what you see (1 Jn. 2:15-16; Psa. 101:3; 119:37).
- C. Embrace the Lord with all you are and have (Ph. 3:10, 12; Lk. 10:38-42) - and keep on hungering & thirsting for Him - never get satisfied. Spiritual hunger never ends.
- D. Evaluate the company you keep (1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:17-18).
- E. Accept all He gives you (Matt. 13:12).

CONC: Usually “righteousness” is not at the top of our desire list, but it should be. If not, Jesus warns in Luke 6:25...I condemn all who either have no righteousness with me or are satisfied with the one they have. The more of Him you get the more of Him you want. Jesus commends the hungry and He satisfies them as well. This is “a thirst no earthly stream can satisfy, a hunger that must feed on Christ or die.” God told Jeremiah, “You will seek me and find me; when you seek me with all your heart” (29:13).