

The Beatitudes
(Lesson 8)

Introduction:

1. We are presently studying "the Beatitudes" that Jesus presented as he began His Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-12).
2. In the Beatitudes,:
 - a. Jesus revealed some special blessings that are available to His followers
 - b. Jesus gave His requirements for receiving these blessings.
3. In this lesson we are concentrating on the 4th Beatitude -- "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled*" (Matthew 5:6).
4. Let us begin by considering . . .

Discussion:

- I. SOME GENERAL MATTERS PERTAINING TO "RIGHTEOUSNESS"
 - A. Righteousness: "integrity, virtue, purity of life, uprightness, correctness in thinking, feeling, and acting"
 - B. On his own, man is not righteous (Romans 3:10).
 - C. The Scriptures show how and when God makes us righteous (Romans 6:3-4, 17-18).
 - D. After we become His children, God wants us to live righteously (Titus 2:11-12).
 - E. Those who live righteously enjoy great blessings, including:
 1. the necessities of life (Matthew 6:33)
 2. assurance that our prayers are answered (James 5:16b; 1 Peter 3:12)
 3. eternal life (Matthew 25:46).
 - F. According to these passages, "being filled with righteousness" is extremely important.
- II. HOW TO BE FILLED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS
 - A. We must not be filled with our own righteousness.
 1. Our righteousness must please God (Matthew 5:19-20).
 2. Self-righteousness is condemned in the Bible (Matthew 9:10-13).
 - B. We must "hunger" and "thirst" after righteousness.
 1. Hunger: "to seek with earnest desire"
 2. Thirst: "to desire earnestly"
 3. The tense of these words is important.
 - a. The tense indicates present and continuous action -- "they which are hungering and thirsting."
 - b. In essence, Jesus was teaching: "Blessed are those who are craving and longing after righteousness, for they shall be filled with righteousness" (see 1 John 3:7).
 4. Jesus set the proper example for us to follow (John 4:34).
 - C. The first 3 Beatitudes will motivate us to hunger and thirst after righteousness.
 1. A person who is "poor in spirit" is aware of his unrighteousness.
 2. A person who "mourns" regrets his condition, and he has a constant desire to improve.
 3. A person who is "meek" is submissive to God and His will.
 4. These 3 Beatitudes will lead us to crave and long after righteousness.
- III. ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS THAT WILL HELP US
 - A. Study and meditate upon God's Word regularly (1 Peter 2:2).
 - B. Pray regularly (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
 - C. Worship regularly and associate with Christians (Acts 2:42).
 - D. Stay focused (Philippians 3:13-15).