



Sermon on the Mount
Wk. 5 "Stay Hungry!"
By Pastor Jody May 09/22/2024

Matthew 5:1-11 ESV

The Sermon on the Mount

5 Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

The Beatitudes

2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

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

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

[READ THE TEXT]

Pastor – "People of God, this is the Word of God."

People – "Thanks be to God."

[PRAY]



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[INTRO]

Back in 1989, my first year of college, my roommates and I went to my house for the weekend and visited the Dade County Youth Fair. Students, I have to tell you, when you go next Saturday, it really hasn't changed much in 35 years. You can still ride the Himalayan, the giant swings, and the Enterprise. You can eat cotton candy, sausage peppers and onions, and my favorite an Elephant year, but the one thing you don't have anymore is **THE Recording Booth**. In 1989 the rage was, you can take a modern-day pop song, and you could record your own lyrics on a track, and they would put it on a cassette tape, for you to take home. Although the deal was, you had to be brave enough to sing in public, for they piped it out into the crowd for everyone to hear.

It just so happened that year, one of the most popular songs was, "**But I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For**", by U2. There is a reason why U2 is still tours and is still so popular after all these years, and we discovered why 35 years ago, no one can sing a U2 song and make it sound half as good as Bono! I am convinced that Bono and U2 wrote songs on purpose that if anyone would try to sing their music it just sounds awful, you shouldn't do it. What led me to believe this was because all 5 of us crammed into a recording booth and did our own cover of that song. Oh boy, I kept that tape for many years until after Heather and I were married I finally got rid of it for fear someone would get their hands on it embarrassing my poor wife.

I bring up my shame because in that song Bono wrote about a hunger, a desire that drives people to go looking for something. The problem that the song points out is that **they never name what they are looking for**. They looked for it in fun, experiences, and even in love but they never found it. In the last verse he gives us a clue where people out of desperation will finally have to go, after you have tried everything else:

I believe in the Kingdom Come
Then all the colors will bleed into one
Bleed into one
But yes, I'm still runnin'

You broke the bonds and you loosened the chains
Carried the cross of my shame
Of my Shame
You know I believe it

"But I still haven't found what I am looking for..."



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The clue to the answer is in the line, *"Carried the cross of my Shame."* Who is it that breaks bonds, how does this person break them, and what does that give us in return? Because that is what answers what people are to be looking for. What we want to address today is literally a question that is as old as the Garden of Eden itself, and the answer is found in this Beatitude today. The answer to what men are looking for is **RIGHTEOUSNESS!** Some of us are still running and searching because we think that nagging craving is found in a relationship, or is found in job success, or it is found in the pursuit of happiness, but the reality is you will never find what you are looking for in anything else other than the righteousness of Christ.

So, here's how we're going to pursue our quest today of searching. We are going to break down this pursuit into three parts: first we are going to **address these ravenous cravings**, then we will discover **the only thing that satisfies**, and then lastly, we will **discover how to protect our food source for this life.**

1. Addressing our Ravenous Cravings.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst - So what type of hungry and thirsty are we?

Hungry or 4277 πεινάω (*peinaō*): a continuous not stop type of hungry, it is an unsatiated state, it's what they **make Snicker commercials** about. This word is the same word used to describe the disciples picking grain along the road to eat on the sabbath ([Mat 12:1-8](#)) it is the picture of David and his men breaking ceremonial law when they ate the bread of the covenant when they couldn't get anything else ([1 Sam 21](#)), it is the word used to describe Jesus walking out of the wilderness after a 40 day fasting trial. This is the type of hunger that God recognizes is more important than religious appearances. That type of hunger that can't be fixed with a substitute for what you really crave and outweighs the social norms.

Ladies in the room, those that have been pregnant and guys, those that have had to go through lovingly a pregnancy with your wife, you all understand



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what this word alludes to. Weird thing trying to eat when you are pregnant, your always hungry and sometimes you can't eat what you like because you get sick and yet your body needs to put on weight, so you end up craving things and sometimes things that are just weird. Coming out of pregnancy Heather has an ongoing craving for cheeseburgers. I can take Heather to a Ruth Chris Steak House and Heather will order a cheeseburger, I can take her to IHOP and she will order a cheeseburger, and of course when we stop for junk food it always has to be Wendy's so she can get the **4 for 4** with a Wendy's double with cheese. **This hungry in the text is like that, it is to desire something that you can never get enough of, but in a spiritual sense.**

The word for thirst, 1498 διψάω (dipsaō): *be thirsty, a basic bodily desire for liquid*, is the same word for thirst that John noted that Jesus used to describe the thirst people had spiritually when they were always drinking from other sources but never satisfied. A thirst that could only be quenched by Him. This is a deep bold desire to drink and satiate a deep-down thirst. Have you ever been so thirsty that it goes beyond dry mouth, that you knew in your bodies you were dehydrated.

Back before internet to check research against personal training ideas, my football coaches believed that training 'for' dehydration was the way to beat it. In the summer we would have two-a-day practices in 95-degree Miami humid heat, and all we got was one cup of juice per practice. We were so thirsty back then, that during our break there was a hose bib that the coaches didn't know about, and we would work our break time like a WW2 concentration camp with lookouts just to get a cup of water without them knowing in fear of losing our one water source. That is **DIPSAO** a bold thirst that will endure danger just to get a sip.

How is it that we got in such a depleted state where all we can think of is satiating a strong desire?

Jeremiah 2:13 ESV

"for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water."



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We are hungry and thirsty because not only did we leave our original source of nourishment, but we drank from self-made contaminated containers. Meaning whatever we took in was only making us sicker.

*"We are not to hunger and thirst after blessedness; we are not to hunger and thirst after happiness. But that is what most people are doing. We put happiness and blessedness as the one thing that we desire, and thus we always miss it; it always eludes us. According to the Scriptures happiness is never something that should be sought directly; it is always something that results from seeking something else. **Whenever you put happiness before righteousness, you will be doomed to misery.**" -
Martin Lloyd Jones*

How do we come to awareness of this predicament? It all starts for the Christian traveling down the road of experiencing these beatitudes, how do I get HAPPY!? That's the problem, the Christian one day, being saved by a gift of faith by Grace finally sees they have been drinking from faulty containers, it can never deliver to your parched throat. Then on top of that they realize that's all they have, are broken cisterns, so now they become aware of the strong desire with no way to quench it, they must wait upon the Lord.

Isaiah 40:31 ESV

but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Now we have a promise, and a promise from the Lord is always better than man's-made cisterns. We wait upon the Lord, and when we wait what's coming?

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for **righteousness**"

MP:

**Happy are they that truly desire righteousness
For they will always have it.**



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2. Discovering the only thing that Satisfies.

δικαιοσύνη (dikaiosynē). n. fem. justice, **righteousness**. The quality of being in accordance with God's law.

This is the thing that everyone is looking for! The good news is you can have it! **You can have the quality of being right with God!** And when that is realized then all those things you have been earning for, being in the Kingdom of Heaven, having comfort from mourning, inheriting the earth and all its' blessings, **WHEN you are made right with God.**

Dr. [Joel Beeke](#), author and Puritan theologian had pointed out to me this week, on this beatitude, that **the way in which all men need to learn to look at themselves is how God looks at us**, which scripture is very clear about, **you are either righteous or unrighteous** (when people self-identify you see they are trying to escape the dilemma of having unrighteousness). He referenced a book by Thomas Watson, for you book collectors, that talks about this called, [Human Nature in its' Fourfold State](#).

Prefall – All men are **Righteous** and in good standing with God.

After Fall – All men are born into sin and are **unrighteous**, and are thus separated from God.

After Regeneration – The regenerated man now has **renewed righteousness**.

Romans 6:11 ESV

"So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus."

After death and into eternity – **Eternal righteousness or unrighteousness** from which that is a state that can never be changed.

Again, the thing that we are all looking for, that we are born in depletion of, like a new baby that spends all its' time crying over, is **we are unrighteous, and we hunger to be made right with God**. You only come into the recognizing of this if you have already gone through the first three beatitudes. This is the thing that satisfies.



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So, let's ask a few questions here about that which can only satisfy.

How much do we need?

Matthew 5:20 ESV

*I tell you, unless your **righteousness exceeds** that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*

Ok that's a lot, you and I need more than the best-looking religious guys of the day, the ones that had made up extra rules so as to gain attention and fame for their standards. You have to have a righteousness that not just equals them but is greater than them!

Listen, some of you today that have your own cravings going on, you have made Christianity about rule following, how much you give, how often you attend, how much you know, or how good you can be based on perceive behaviors of Christians around you and if you want to know that's you, **how important is it for you to have others view you in that light?** There is no amount of good you can do to earn righteousness, to gain a rightful standing with God.

Put into other words, how much is that exactly?

Matthew 5:48 ESV

*You must be **perfect**, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

So the standard is **PERFECTNESS (teleios; complete)**, so this tells you it has to be an administered thing because this is nothing anyone can achieve. The other problem is that there is no second-place ribbons in heaven, God views us as righteous or unrighteous. You are either perfect or imperfect and admitting it is the first step in getting any closer to a solution.

How did/do we get it?

2 Corinthians 5:21 ESV

For our sake **he made him to be sin** who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the **righteousness** of God.



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The Gospel says Jesus was made to be sin, sin personified, set up as an example, high and lifted on a cross, to show what unrighteousness requires. He did this SO that we might become the Righteousness of God, so that we would attain His perfect standard, so we could begin to demonstrate His glory, we are now as Peter says we are Holy for He is Holy! ([1 Peter 1:16](#))

Romans 1:17 ESV

For in it the **righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith**, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith."

We got this not by buying it, looking sad, or looking pitiful, that's how you and I are influenced by people, because we are emotionally manipulated by looks or emotional appeals, not God. No, God gives a gift of faith ([Eph 2:8-9](#)) by His choice to His children so that we may believe that Jesus' death was for us, causing us to finally believe we couldn't do it and were helpless without Him. You believe in the righteousness of God by faith, which causes us to keep living in that faith, that we will be continually righteous!

Philippians 3:9 ESV

and be found in him, not **having a righteousness** of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes **through faith in Christ**, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

What to rejoice over!

2 Corinthians 9:8 ESV

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.

And now that I have this righteousness the things I now do, can be deemed as good works, I am able to begin living as someone that has come into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Let me sum up all of this for you, because the Greek leads us to this interpretation:



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Those that continually hunger and thirst for righteousness will continually be filled up by righteousness. The result of that verse is that even though you are taking in the thing that you need, you will always have a desire to take in more, because it is the thing you will always need.

You see, Christians know they are saved but will continually mourn over their sin, as Paul said:

Romans 7:19-25 ESV

¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²²For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Those are the words of a saved man, he was the top pharisee and observer of the law, that is a man that would tell you he is saved by faith alone, but that is also a man that recognizes he is sanctified by righteousness too. Meaning, the way that Paul is working out his salvation with fear and trembling is that he lets his desire for righteousness keep driving him back to the Gospel, the good news, reveling in what God is doing in him. Righteousness IS Justification being made right with God but it is also Sanctification because the desire for it keeps driving us back to God.

**Happy are they that truly desire righteousness
for they will always have it.**

Those that hunger and thirst for righteousness don't worry, the well will never run dry from which you need to drink from, there is always grace for you.



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So we have addressed our ravenous craving, we discovered that which is the only satisfying thing, a continuous Saving and Sanctifying Righteousness, so now let's look at how do we protect this continuous well.

3. Protecting our Fuel/Food Source from Contamination.

[CHALLENGE]

I want to briefly here encourage us all, because while we can't go and get our righteousness, we can do some things to ensure quality control.

Stop eating bad foods.

If you are truly seeking after righteousness, that person that is broken over their need, will avoid everything opposed to righteousness or God's standards. It means you begin to really evaluate if something is good for you or not. The people you are around, the things you watch, the hobbies you have, the job you work, the things you spend time on, and the places you go.

Martin Lloyd Jones said it this way (p.76) *"I cannot obtain it myself, but I can refrain from doing things that are obviously opposed to it. I can never make myself like Jesus Christ, but I can stop walking in the gutters of life."*

Stop eating snacks and in between meals.

These are the things that aren't necessary gutter level things, but they don't hold clean water either. You have things that make you feel good, watching sports, camping, physical exercise, playing games on your phone, going out to eat, these are all perfectly fine things, but these things become fillers if you are doing them and they leave you thirsty, if they quench your desire for righteousness, if they take the place of God in your life. Look at it this way, how is your appetite when you partake of these things, are you like Paul and upset with your desire for unrighteous things? Perhaps evaluate your junk food intake?

Start meal planning and food prepping.



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I have never seen anyone get on the road to physical healthy living without first deciding on how they will eat and manage their day. Tremendous things can happen when you take the lure of junk food away, when you plan to eat small meals at multiple times during the day, when you food prep ahead of time so as not to snack, that person becomes healthy and develops lifestyle choices that they will keep for the rest of their lives. Plan out your scripture reading and times, pick times to pray, plan out the nights for your family devotions, set aside time to read a book by a theologian, pick scripture to memorize for the year, do the planning and you will be successful leave it to chance and you won't accomplish much.

Successful meal planning what it can look like:

Put yourself in the church on the Lord's Day as MUCH as you can!

If you want it you will go get it, Dr. Jones speaks about the person that wants and doesn't want righteousness and it starts with being in the right places. *"Quite frequently I find that they do not often go to the house of God, or that they are haphazard in their attendance. The man who really wants it says, 'I cannot afford to lose any opportunity; wherever this is being talked about I want to be there.'"* - **Martin Lloyd Jones** (p.77)

Put yourself in God's Word first BEFORE other recreational pursuits.

Perhaps you can't read first thing in the morning, ok, but perhaps you are playing games or death scrolling in the morning. Train your brain not to crave mindless stimulation, train it for deeper things by not giving it what it wants first but give it God's Word first before engaging folly. If you can't read for whatever reason in the morning engage in more fruitful exercises.

Put yourself under men from the PAST that have charted the journey.

If you want to learn how to pursue righteousness, then read about the struggles from people in our past that you know died finishing the race well.
John Bunyan who wrote Pilgrims Progress from jail
John Calvin - Fighting Spiritual battles through political turmoil
Jonathan Edwards - the abandoned preacher
Charles Spurgeon - prince of preachers kicked out of Baptist Fellowship
William Wilberforce - force against slavery (or other missionaries)



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John Adams
Winston Churchill
Abraham Lincoln

All Biographies recommended by Tim Challies

Family, again these are just suggestions, but if you are truly Hungry and thirsty for righteousness then these things will appeal to you, I pray that they do, and you take serious your pursuit of enjoying the righteousness that God has always purchased for you, and enjoy the journey of striving after that same righteousness that keeps filling you up.

**Happy are they that truly desire righteousness
for they will always have it.**

[PRAYER]

[CALL TO OBEY]

In **John 6:35**, Jesus said to the people following Him, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

To hunger and thirst for righteousness is to follow after Jesus. Obey His Word, follow hard after Him, and He will satisfy you, church.

[COMMUNION]

Matthew 26:26-29 ESV

²⁶ Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."²⁷ And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you,²⁸ for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.²⁹ I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."



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Today when you eat of the bread remember the life of Jesus, that He pursued righteousness every day without fail. It was His desire to be Holy as His Father was Holy and it was His desire to pass on this hard earned righteousness to you. Praise be to Him for His wonderful love.

Today when you drink the juice remember the cost of our sin due to our unrighteousness. Because of the magnificent gift of His perfected sacrifice we gained the forgiveness we needed. Praise be to Him for His wonderful love.

[CONFESSION OF FAITH]

* The Congregation will stand

Elder – "Christians, what do you believe?"

Congregation recites:

LBCF 1689 13.3 of Sanctification

In this war, the remaining corruption may greatly prevail for a time.¹⁰ Yet through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part overcomes.¹¹ So the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. They pursue a heavenly life, in gospel obedience to all the commands that Christ as Head and King has given them in his Word.¹²

[10Romans 7:23.](#) **[11Romans 6:14.](#) **[12Ephesians 4:15, 16; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 7:1.](#)****

[OFFERING+LAST SONG] –

[BENEDICTION]



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Go in the name of the Father, that gave the gift of a righteous Son so that all His children may be made righteous by Him.

Go in the name of the Son, that imputed to us His righteous stance with the Father, so we may come to know the love of the Father.

Go in the name of and power of the HS, that grants us the gift of Faith to believe in this great exchange, now go and live out in front of this world a person that has been changed by Grace.



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